

Celebrating the World Migratory Bird Day in the East Asian Flyway.

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) is an annual event that celebrates and promotes migratory birds through awareness-raising campaigns highlighting their conservation needs. This event is celebrated globally through various public activities such as bird festivals, educational programs, exhibitions, and bird watching excursions. Due to different peak migration times among countries and regions, WMBD is celebrated twice a year: on the second Saturday in May and in October. This year, the theme “Protect Insects, Protect Birds” emphasized the essential role insects play in the survival of bird species and the interconnectedness of ecosystems, as the decline in insect populations can significantly impact bird species. Big appreciation to the locally led East Asian Flyway Acoustics (LEAFA) Outreach Working Group, as they created this beautiful poster for the WMBD.



Focusing on this theme, several of our LEAFA Program participants went out on that day and engaged in migratory bird-related activities with their communities. Lead by Heri Tarmizi, the Aceh Birds Club (ABC) marked the occasion with a series of events in Ujong Pancu, Aceh Besar, Indonesia, a vital region in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF) that serves as a crucial stopover for various migratory birds. The event in Aceh began with a gathering of bird enthusiasts and conservationists, featuring bird observations, and discussions on migratory patterns. Participants, equipped with binoculars, cameras, and field guides, embarked on a bird observation hike from the coast to inland areas. They spotted several shorebird species, including curlews and plovers, and notable terrestrial birds such as the Asian Koel. The highlight was the sighting of raptors like the Chinese Goshawk, Oriental Honey Buzzard, and Shikra, providing valuable data on their migratory routes. The trail cleanup activity further reinforced the importance of maintaining clean habitats for wildlife.



LEAFA Team members visiting different sites on the East Asian Flyway searching for migratory birds. Credit: LEAFA Team.

Another LEAFA Program participant, Alexander Kurniawan Sariyanto Putera also went on a collective birdwatching activity with undergraduate students from Universitas Sulawesi Barat which was held in Mampie, West Sulawesi, as a part of the celebration of WMBD. They had identified the species of migratory shorebirds such as Common Greenshank, Wood Sandpiper, Common Sandpiper, Pied Stilt, Whimbrel, Kentish Plover, and many other shorebirds. The event was sponsored by Locally-led East Asian Flyway Acoustics (LEAFA) Program and K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Cornell University.



Banda Aceh mangroves, until May several species of shorebirds are still found in the Banda Aceh area, such as plover, terek sandpiper and whimbler. Credit: LEAFA Team.



Amira Rahman and group of Yang Center team members on a bird watching trip in Ithaca, New York. Credit: Yang Center.

Not only was this event celebrated around the EAAF pathway but two of our organizers also engaged in birding activities with a few folks from the K. Lisa Yang Center for Conservation Bioacoustics at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology on a cold misty morning in Ithaca, New York. After a couple of hours, Ashik Rahaman and Amira Rahman managed to spot some interesting and hard-to-see warbler species, as well as few colorful birds such as Indigo Bunting, Northern Cardinal, and Eastern Bluebird.

Another LEAFA participant, Munira Azman, who is also the coordinator of the Shorebirds Peninsular Malaysia Project (SMPM), organized an online educational quiz about shorebirds: “On the Trail of the Shorebirds 2.0” during WMBD. Using resources from the official SPMP website and Dave Bakewell, the quiz attracted over 20 dedicated participants, aimed to enhance public awareness and interest in shorebirds, their habitats, and migratory journeys. The valuable feedback from the quiz participants and their sharing of the materials with a wider audience showed that the event was successful and achieved its target.



The event underscored the challenges faced by migratory birds, such as habitat loss, pollution, and climate change. Advocacy for habitat conservation and sustainable practices, coupled with public awareness efforts, were key components of the event. Overall, the WMBD celebration among our participants was a success, demonstrating the power of community engagement in bird conservation. That inspiring day was a reminder of the importance of protecting both birds and their ecosystems, and we look forward to more activities for the upcoming WMBD in October.

- **LEAFA Education and Outreach Working Group.**

Please visit [our website](#) more information about LEAFA initiative and team members.