

2016-2017 Report



Cathy King



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Co-Chairs

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Red List Authority

BirdLife International

Location/Affiliation

⁽¹⁾ Weltvogelpark Walsrode, Germany
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Number of members

196

Social networks

Facebook:
Flamingo Specialist Group
Twitter:
@flamingospecgrp



Mission statement

The mission statement of the WI-IUCN SSC Flamingo Specialist Group (FSG) is to actively promote flamingo research and conservation worldwide by developing conservation action plans for the most threatened species, and by encouraging information exchange and cooperation amongst flamingo specialists, and with other relevant organisations, particularly the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), Wetlands International, Ramsar Convention, WWF International and BirdLife International.

Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

Capacity building

■ Synergy

i. New strategies for future FSG work to be implemented.

Communications

■ Communication

i. Continue to manage the FSG e-mail forum, hosted by WWT's IT infrastructure. E-mail traffic dipped in 2016 (29 e-mails around the group), increasing in 2017 to 47. In 2015, 55 e-mail messages were sent around the forum.

ii. Twitter had been largely neglected. Whilst the profile of the FSG on Facebook has grown (2,793 followers on 1st January 2017) to 3,609 followers (01/01/2018), Twitter remained stagnant. Linking Facebook posts to Twitter means that coverage is now spread over both platforms. Tweets are now up 143% and there are 1,428 followers currently. (KSR #28)

Acknowledgements

We thank Rebecca Lee for her hard work in running the FSG from 2012, and in successfully maintaining the database and ensuring that members had a forum for discussion of important points or for sharing current flamingo information. We thank Robin Jones at WWT Slimbridge for his help in maintaining the e-mail database, and providing technical assistance for any interruptions or irregularities in this system. Finally, we thank Arnaud Béchet, Felicity Arengo and Laurie Conrad for their help as regional coordinators to the FSG.

Targets for the quadrennium 2017-2020

Barometer of life

Synergy: maintain collaboration with field-based programmes (e.g., Grupo Conservación de Flamencos Altoandinos-Peru / Tour du Valat).

Capacity building

Synergy: identify and recruit a programme officer for the FSG.

Technical advice: organise a workshop for flamingo keepers to increase awareness of current science in flamingo management.

Communications

Communication: (1) develop a new website for the FSG to link to current activities and social media campaigns; (2) build social media presence across various platforms to promote wider education on flamingo conservation issues, and to use as a platform for fund raising and capacity building.

Research activities: relaunch *Flamingo* newsletter in the form of an on-line scientific publication.

Synergy: integrate the role of the FSG with the work of established zoo organisations (e.g., AZA, EAZA).



Two Greater flamingos with a newly hatched chick
Photo: Paul Rose

Conservation action

Proposal development and funding: develop funding opportunities and availability of grants for in situ flamingo conservation.

Conservation action planning: Initiate revision of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor*. 2008. Technical Series No. 18 (CMS) and No. 34 (AEWA).

Increasing diversity of SSC

Membership: renew and over-haul membership, including collecting details on individual member roles in FSG.

Projected impact for the quadrennium 2017-2020

By the end of 2020, we hope to have succeeded in our aims of re-launching the FSG website and newsletter (as an online publication). We hope to have strengthened and developed links within the membership to identify roles that individuals can play in the running of the FSG. We plan to recruit new members from specific areas of the world (i.e. the Middle East and Asia) and attempt to build our links with existing in-situ flamingo conservation / management / ecology organisations. We aim to build capacity across our membership by encouraging interaction with online forums and across group email discussion, as well as encourage members to submit papers to the new, re-launched newsletter. Finally, we hope to provide a new resource centre of flamingo-centred information (both *in* and *ex situ*) in the form

of a website, for all (members and non-members) to engage with. Promoting the work of conservation scientists and flamingo biologists will result in increased exposure for these species, and therefore, a better chance of secured populations for the future. We hope that by continuing to support the work of scientists and flamingo biologists in the field, the conservation status of all six species does not get raised, and that those species currently Vulnerable or Near Threatened can be more secured in their habitats, so that future assessments of populations show an upward trend in numbers, rather than a decline. The good work currently undertaken with the Andean and Puna flamingos (showing a stable population trend) needs to be monitored, as current Red Lists assessments suggest potential declines due to past poor breeding success and human-caused impacts on populations. Continued observation of mining activities around breeding locations of lesser flamingos in East Africa is required, as this is potentially the biggest threat to the largest wild population of this Near Threatened species.

Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 2/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Capacity building (1 activity)
- Communications (2 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 28

KSR: Key Species Result