

# IUCN SSC Flamingo Specialist Group



## 2020 Report



Cathy King



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### Co-chairs

Cathy King (1)  
Paul Rose (2)

### Red List Authority

BirdLife International

### Location/Affiliation

(1) Zoo de Lagos, Portugal  
(2) WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre, UK

### Number of members

135

### Social networks

Facebook: Flamingo Specialist Group  
Twitter: @FlamingoSpecGrp  
Website: [www.flamingo-sg.org](http://www.flamingo-sg.org)



### 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.

### Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, we have succeeded in our aims of re-launching the FSG website and newsletter (as an online publication). We have strengthened and developed links within the membership to identify roles that individuals can play in the running of the FSG (for example, with communication aims, increasing our reach in South America by diversifying social media postings). We are recruiting new members from specific areas of the world (i.e. the Middle East and Asia) and we are attempting to build our links with existing in situ flamingo conservation, management and ecology organisations (for example, with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) SAFE: Saving Animals From Extinction Andean Highland Flamingo Programme). 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 are providing a new resource centre of flamingo-centred information (both in situ and ex situ) in the form of our 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 deteriorate, 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 important work undertaken for Andean and Puna Flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus andinus* and *P. jamesi*) conservation needs to be continued and effectively monitored, as the current Red List assessment shows potential future declines due to past poor breeding success and human-caused impacts on populations. This is partly due to the long generation time of flamingos and the impact of past threats on current population numbers. Continued observation of mining activities or industrial product extraction activities (e.g. lithium extraction) around key wetland sites in South America and in East Africa is essential to ensure that future populations of specialised flamingo species do not decline.

### Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

#### Assess

Green List: assess flamingos as part of the IUCN Green Listing test.

Red List: provide new data for the 2020 Red List assessment.

#### Plan

Planning: (1) investigate logistical, technical and funding needs for a pan-African Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*) population survey; (2) establish working groups to address three priority actions.



Least Concern American Flamingo,  
*Phoenicopterus ruber*,  
Washington Slagbaai Park, Bonaire Island  
Photo: Jafet M. Nassar

## Act

Conservation actions: (1) work with the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) to assess implementation of Lesser Flamingo Species Action Plan conservation objectives and tasks; (2) work with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) on the Andean Highland Flamingo SAFE programme.

## Network

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

Proposal development and funding: develop funding opportunities and availability of grants for in situ flamingo conservation. Advertise and promote funding options for in situ flamingo conservation and work on the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) small grants fund.

Synergy: (1) identify and recruit a programme officer for the FSG; (2) maintain collaboration with field-based programmes (e.g. Grupo Conservación de Flamencos Altoandinos – Peru, Tour du Valat) and continue to help, support and promote in situ flamingo conservation strategies with those organisations working in the field.

## Communicate

Communication: (1) re-launch the *Flamingo* newsletter in the form of an online scientific publication; (2) develop a new website for the FSG to link to current activities and social media campaigns; (3) build a social media presence across various platforms to promote wider education on flamingo conservation issues, and to use as a platform for fundraising or capacity building; (4) re-visit and re-draw the FSG mission statement.

Scientific meetings: (1) organise a workshop for flamingo keepers to increase awareness of current science in flamingo management

(provide information based on best practice to zoo professionals); (2) integrate the role of the FSG with the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA; FSG aims at annual EAZA meetings to encourage links between different flamingo stakeholders).

## Activities and results 2020

### Assess

#### Green List

i. Two species were green listed in a paper being published in *Conservation Biology* as part of a larger group of authors. (KSR #11, 12)

### Act

#### Conservation actions

i. Communication between AZA and the FSG steering committee has been instrumental in linking together International Flamingo Day and AZA events around their SAFE conservation project for Andean Highland Flamingos. (KSR #21, 26, 29)

### Network

#### Membership

i. Membership is being managed by a new list-serv hosted by Tour du Valat and with the IUCN Portal.

#### Proposal development and funding

i. There is continued discussion by the FSG steering committee on how to manage and advertise the Small Grants Fund, including the number of grants per year. Four meetings have been held so far. This is to be developed into the future. (KSR #30)

#### Synergy

i. Dialogue and communication is ongoing between FSG and conservation organisations to respond to their needs. (KSR #29)

## Communicate

### Communication

- i. The 2020 issue of the *Flamingo* journal is available on the FSG website. (KSR #28)
- ii. The website is up and running and free to access at [www.flamingo-sg.org](http://www.flamingo-sg.org). (KSR #28)
- iii. The number of followers on the FSG Facebook page is nearly 6,400, and we have a Twitter reach of nearly 1,000 followers. (KSR #28)

### Scientific meetings

- i. Dialogue and communication is ongoing between various parties, along with continued involvement between zoos and the FSG. (KSR #29)

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to WWT for hosting the email list-serv for the duration of 2020 and for assisting with support of the FSG website. We thank all those who participated in the inaugural International Flamingo Day 2020. We thank members of the FSG steering committee for their assistance with editing, translation and proof reading of manuscripts for *Flamingo* 2020. Finally, we thank our social media volunteers for their assistance with maintaining the FSG's presence on Facebook and Twitter.

## Summary of activities 2020

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 4/5

Assess	1	█
Act	1	█
Network	3	███
Communicate	4	████

Main KSRs addressed: 11, 12, 21, 26, 28, 29, 30

Resolutions addressed: WCC 2016 Res 041, WCC 2016 Res 085