

IUCN SSC Pelican Specialist Group (Old & New World)

2019 Report



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Co-Chairs

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Number of members

78

Social Networks

Website:

<https://www.wetlands.org/our-network/specialist-groups/pelican-specialist-group/>



Mission statement

The mission of the Pelican Specialist Group (Old World and New World Sections) is to carry out, support and promote scientific research and conservation activities aimed at Old World and New World pelicans and enhance cooperation and diffusion of knowledge.

Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2021, we envision increasing our membership (both Old World and New World sections) and being able to collect and compile better data on the global status and populations of the two (out of five) Old World pelicans which are classified as Near Threatened: the Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) and the Spot-billed Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*). Particularly, we will strive to assist in obtaining more knowledge about the status (distribution, populations and threats) of the highly endangered Mongolian sub-population of the Dalmatian Pelican of the East Asian flyway. In parallel, this knowledge will allow us to plan and implement necessary conservation measures. We would also like to have a better understanding of what is happening with the breeding populations of the Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*) in its Eurasian range, as important changes have been observed in recent years. Finally, we would like to contribute to the maintenance of the small and dwindling populations of Dalmatian Pelican in South-eastern Europe and Turkey. In addition to the above, we will establish a New World membership roster.

Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

Assess

Red List: improve the assessment of the global population of the Dalmatian Pelican.

Research activities: (1) collect and disseminate data on the status of pelicans in Kazakhstan; (2) review publication on the causes of morbidity and mortality for the Dalmatian Pelican in South-eastern Europe.

Plan

Planning: contribute substantially to the preparation of the Dalmatian Pelican International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP).

Network

Membership: (1) expand membership to experts on species other than Dalmatian Pelican and Great White Pelican; (2) recruit more members working in Central Asian countries and the Russian Federation; (3) build New World membership list.

Proposal development and funding: provide substantial support to individuals and organisations keen to set up new conservation projects for pelicans.

Synergy: enhance interaction with the WI-IUCN SSC Cormorant Research Group.

Communicate

Communication: enhance the degree of contact and information exchange between our members.

Scientific meetings: organise and chair a 'Pelicans of the World Symposium', jointly with both Old World and New World Pelican Specialist Group sections, at the 2019 Waterbird Society Annual Conference and General Meeting.



Adult female and chick. Gippsland Lakes are home to only one of two remaining Pelican rookeries in Victoria from a historical 11 sites. Gippsland Lakes, Victoria, Australia
Photo: Deb Sullivan - Birdlife Australia.

The normally pale gular pouch takes on a specular flush of colour during courtship. Once mated these colours fade and return to pale pink/purple. Gippsland Lakes, Victoria, Australia.
Photo: Deb Sullivan - Birdlife Australia.



Activities and results 2019

Assess

Red List

i. We have made some progress assessing the global population of the Dalmatian Pelican but not sufficient: we have got the most updated and integrated estimation of the Russian population through the European Breeding Bird Atlas (EBBA2) programme and the estimation of the population of Kazakhstan through the paper described under 'Research activities'. (KSR #1)

Research activities

i. One publication was accepted and will be released in 2020: Christopoulou, A., Manolopoulos, A., Catsadorakis, G. (2020). The distribution and numbers of Dalmatian Pelican *Pelecanus crispus* on the Central Asian flyway between 1990 and 2015. *Sandgrouse* 42:1–28. (KSR #12)

Network

Membership

- i. With four new members from Australia, we are now at 78 members.
- ii. We've made some progress building the New World membership list but not sufficient.

Communicate

Scientific meetings

i. The 'Pelicans of the World Symposium' was accomplished in November 2019, jointly with both Old World and New World Pelican Specialist Group sections, at the 2019 Waterbird Society Annual Conference and General Meeting. (KSR #28)



One and half years old Spotbilled Pelican, *Pelecanus philippensis* at Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu, India
Photo: Varadarajan Gokula

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The work of the chairman of the Old World Pelican Specialist Group is supported by the Society for the Protection of Prespa, which is partly funded for this work by the Prespa-Ohrid Nature Fund (PONT). The work of the chairman of the New World Pelican Specialist Group is supported in part by the United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services, National Wildlife Research Center. Travel support (in part) for the 2019 Pelicans of the World Symposium was provided by the Waterbird Society.

Summary of activities 2019

Components of Species Conservation Cycle: 3/5

Assess	2	
Network	2	
Communicate	1	

Main KSRs addressed: 1, 12, 28

KSR: Key Species Result