

**BirdLife International Tokyo**

**Annual Report 2017**

(1 January–31 December 2017)



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## Highlights in 2017

Since 2017, the role of BirdLife Tokyo has changed to become under the direct control of headquarters, BirdLife International (UK). BirdLife Tokyo plays the role of secretariat of the Honorary President, and also raises funds from a global perspective. In 2017, we set up various projects with BirdLife Partners in a total of 17 countries (Map as below).

We also launched some new projects in cooperation with the private sector, including a programme for protecting the habitats of migratory birds in Japan, and conservation projects to improve efficiency by using ICT (Information and Communication Technology) solutions. Another major success is that we won a big fund from the Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund 25th Anniversary Special Fund Grand Programme, and have started a joint project with Japan Environmental Education Forum (JEEF) and Conservation International Japan (CI Japan). Moreover, BirdLife Tokyo supported the development of the “PRISM” (**P**ractical methods for evaluating the outcomes & **I**mpacts of **S**mall-**M**edium sized conservation projects) toolkit led by BirdLife Headquarters and relevant NGOs. The toolkit was released in November 2017, and it is expected to be used by various organisations. These are all challenging new fields for us, and we have set up the foundation for future development.



The project sites implemented by BirdLife Tokyo together with Partners in 2017.

# 1. Conservation Projects

## 1.1 Species Conservation

### ➤ Conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper

The Spoon-billed sandpiper (Critically Endangered) is particularly popular among birdwatchers, with its charming bill. Its population, however, is rapidly decreasing, due to the degradation of its habitat, including tidal flats, with just 500 individuals left in the world. In 2017, BirdLife Tokyo started a project to conserve the species and its habitats in a salt pan along the eastern coast of the Gulf of Thailand (Pak Thale) in collaboration with BCST (Bird Conservation Society of Thailand), our BirdLife Partner in Thailand. By restoring an abandoned salt pan into habitat for waterbirds, about 18,000 birds, including seven Spoon-billed Sandpipers, were observed at the project site in December 2017, which was funded by **the Toyota Environmental Activities Grant Program**. We also renovated and re-opened the visitor centre at the site, which will be co-managed by BCST and local communities to promote bird-tourism and conservation by involving local people.

### ➤ Conservation of the Chinese Crested Tern

BirdLife Tokyo has made great achievements regarding the conservation of the Chinese Crested Tern, which is a globally threatened species (Critically Endangered). These achievements include the successful restoration of its breeding colonies in Tiedun Dao, in the Jiushan Islands, China, from 2009 to 2015. Since 2016, we have implemented the survey of its wintering status, along with Burung Indonesia, BirdLife Partner in Indonesia, to investigate its ecology in detail, as well as to promote the conservation in wintering and stopover sites. In 2017, with the support of **the National Geographic Society**, we conducted surveys at wintering sites, and prepared for the satellite tracking project. This project will be operated at full scale from 2018.

### ➤ Conservation of the Yellow-breasted Bunting

The Yellow-breasted Bunting used to be a species with extremely high population numbers, distributed widely throughout North-east Asia and the Eurasian Continent. In Japan, it was once commonly observed in Hokkaido. However, the population of this species noticeably declined due to the large-scaled poaching for food in China and South-east Asia, and was finally designated as a Critically Endangered species (CR) by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in the Red List in 2017. The status of this bird is critical in Japan too. Thus, BirdLife Tokyo, with the support of **the Japan Fund for Global Environment**, has set up an international project to conserve the Yellow-breasted Bunting, which involves the

cooperative efforts of 10 countries, including Japan, Russia, China and South Korea. In 2017, an ecological survey was conducted in Sakhalin, Russia, to investigate the relationship between the bird's populations there and those in Japan.

➤ **Toyota Car Donation Programme for the Conservation of Red List Species**

This project is funded by **Toyota Motor Corporation**, and provides BirdLife Partners with Toyota's durable cars to promote more efficient and effective conservation of IUCN Red List species, particularly those that occupy habitats in areas that are difficult to access. The initiative started in 2016, and 10 cars will be donated to 10 BirdLife Partners over 5 years. In 2017, two Hilux cars were donated to SAVE Brasil, BirdLife Partner in Brazil, and Viet Nature Conservation Centre in Vietnam, which have placed enormous effort on conserving the Black-fronted Piping Guan (Endangered) and Edwards's Pheasant (Critically Endangered), respectively.



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Photo 1. Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Pak Thale, Thailand (Conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpiper)



Photo 2. Field survey for endangered species in Brazil  
(Toyota Car Donation Programme for Conservation of Red List Species)

## 1.2 Conservation of Migratory Birds

### ➤ East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership

The migratory route of waterbirds through Japan is known as the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, and extends through Oceania, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia (including Japan, China and Korea), and Alaska. Thus, it is essential for the countries along the same flyway to work closely together to conserve migratory birds. BirdLife has been a member of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), which is an international conservation network dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds. With the contract with **the Ministry of the Environment Japan (MoEJ)**, BirdLife Tokyo has been playing a role of a national secretariat for the Partnership, and taking a lead in conservation initiatives with the MoEJ and other ornithological organisations in Japan.

In 2017, a workshop for Flyway Site managers was held in Nagahama, Shiga, to discuss and share capacity building ideas for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats among 12 local governments and three related organisations recommended by local governments.

With grants from **Dow Chemical Japan Ltd.** and **Pacific Century Premium Developments Ltd.**, BirdLife Tokyo also has launched “Flyway Site Programmes in Japan,” to enhance conservation actions in the Flyway Sites. Within this framework, collaborative projects for promoting local conservation activities were started in five Flyway Sites in Hokkaido, two in Niigata, and one in Okayama.

### ➤ Consultative Meeting of Migratory Bird Treaty

The Japanese government has concluded bilateral agreements with Russia, U.S.A., China, Korea, and Australia. The consultative meetings under these agreements are held almost every two years. In November 2017, the 11th Consultative Meeting between Russia and Japan hosted by **MoEJ** was held in Moscow, Russia. BirdLife Tokyo arranged the meeting as the national secretariat, and also participated in the meeting as a specialist of the goose study, and proposed joint research for the Brent Goose in East Asia.

### ➤ Asian Wetland Symposium

With support from **Taisei Corporation**, BirdLife Tokyo, together with the EAAFP secretariat and Ramsar Network Japan, organised a side event entitled “Population Decline of Migratory Waterbirds and Habitat Changes- Shorebirds as Indicators” at the Asian Wetland Symposium 2017 in Saga, Japan. The aim of the side event was to create an opportunity to share the past and current status of tidal flats, human activities, and shorebirds in Japan among

stakeholders from different age groups, regions, and countries. The event was successful, with more than 80 attendees.



Photo 3. White-fronted Geese at a flyway site in Hokkaido  
(East Asia-Australasian Flyway Partnership)

## 1.3 Forest and Wetland Conservation

### ➤ **Mangrove Restoration Projects**

*The Ricoh Co., Ltd (Ricoh)* has supported more than 10 Forest Ecosystem Conservation Projects since 1999. These projects focus on improving local livelihoods and conserving habitats for endemic species through conserving forests and promoting their sustainable use. With the support of Ricoh, BirdLife Tokyo is running two projects in Malaysia and Mexico. Both projects focus on restoring and conserving mangroves, which are critical for local biodiversity and the livelihoods of local people, including fisheries. The project in Malaysia started in 2011 along the North-central Selangor coast of the Malay Peninsula, while the site of the project in Mexico is located in the southern states of Oaxaca and Chiapas.

### ➤ **Plant a Tree for Africa**

The area around Lake Oursi, in the northern part of Burkina Faso, is suffering from forest degradation and desertification. Consequently, the livelihood of local people is also threatened, as they face difficulty in meeting basic needs, including water and sufficient arable farmland. The area is also an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA), supporting more than 20,000 birds of 100 species. To address the issues of this region, BirdLife Tokyo is supporting forest restoration by planting trees with the support of *Ricoh*. The number of trees is uniquely determined by the performance of players in the professional golf tournament sponsored by Ricoh. We planted about 13,000 trees in 2017, totalling about 67,000 trees since 2011.

### ➤ **Wetland Conservation in South East Asia**

Stung Sen Wetland is an IBA that is located at the southern tip of Tonle Sap Lake, which is the largest lake in Southeast Asia. As a habitat for many endangered species, and an important site that generates critical ecosystem services for local people (such as fisheries), BirdLife Tokyo, funded by *MoEJ*, has been supporting the Cambodian Government to designate the Stung Sen wetland as Cambodia's fourth Ramsar site under the Ramsar Convention. In 2017, the national meeting was held to obtain endorsement of the designation from the relevant Ministries and stakeholders, and we also provided a training program for local rangers to improve their monitoring and patrolling capacity in the wetland.

### ➤ **Forest Conservation in Harapan Rainforest**

The lowland rainforests of Sumatra, Indonesia, host some of the most extensive and biologically diverse tropical forests in the world. However, the lowland rainforests have been devastated by large scale logging and Oil Palm plantations. To conserve these areas, BirdLife, RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), BirdLife Partner in the UK, and Burung

Indonesia launched the Harapan Rainforest Project in 2006, applying the Ecosystem Restoration Concession: ERC endorsed by Indonesian Government. In 2017, BirdLife Tokyo started the project with Burung Indonesia to improve the efficiency of forest patrols and monitoring with ICT (Information and Communication Technology) solutions, supported by *Fujitsu Ltd.*

➤ **IBAs in West Papua and Papua Provinces, Indonesia**

IBAs are the most important sites for the conservation of birds and biodiversity. BirdLife International has already identified and documented more than 12,000 IBAs in 200 countries, using standardised science-based criteria and data on birds. The global inventory of IBAs is now almost complete; however, the last remaining significant gap in the IBA network is the island of New Guinea. Despite its extremely high importance for biodiversity, IBAs have not yet been identified in West Papua and Papua Provinces, Indonesia (the western half of the island) or Papua New Guinea (the eastern half of the island). With the support of BirdLife *Gala Dinner*, Burung Indonesia started gathering data, in parallel to desk and ground surveys, with local people.



Photo 4. Mangrove planting in Malaysia (Mangrove Conservation Projects)

## 1.4 Marine and Seabird Conservation

### ➤ **Publication of Marine IBA Booklet**

The Marine IBA Programme is an international programme in which BirdLife and BirdLife Partners around the world work together. Extending the concept of IBAs to the ocean, the programme aims to identify priority sites of high marine biodiversity, using seabirds as indicators, and to contribute to marine and seabird conservation. With the support of **Tiffany & Co. Foundation** through a grant to American Friends of BirdLife International, BirdLife Tokyo and the WBSJ (Wild Bird Society of Japan), the BirdLife Partner in Japan, finished identifying marine IBAs in Japan in 2016. Information on the 27 identified marine IBA sites were summarised and published in English as the Marine IBA Inventory in 2017.

### ➤ **Working with Fishermen to Tackle Seabird Bycatch in Gillnets**

Gillnet bycatch has been identified as a major cause of seabird mortality globally, estimated at 400,000 birds per year. The Northwest Pacific region has the highest estimated bycatch, with 140,000 seabird mortalities being documented annually. The sea around Hokkaido, northern Japan, hosts 90 seabird species, and gillnets are widely used in this area. Although very limited information on seabird mortality in gillnets is available, major declines in Common Murre and Tufted Puffin populations around Hokkaido have been linked to gillnet bycatch. In 2016, a bycatch mitigation testing project was initiated in a partnership with WBSJ, with support from the Fishermen's Association in Haboro Town, MoEJ, and the government of Haboro Town. In 2017, with support from **the Keidanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF)**, bycatch data were collected. Overall, 45 seabirds were caught during 21 trips. In addition, at-sea experiments were conducted, proving that the updated version of a potential mitigation measure was more efficient in handling than the previous version.

### ➤ **Reducing Seabird Bycatch in Asian Longline Fisheries**

Almost half of all seabird species are in decline and under threat globally. Albatrosses are especially imperilled, with 15 of 22 species being listed in the IUCN Red List. A key threat to seabird species is incidental capture in fishing gear in longline fisheries. The countries of Asia that use longline fisheries, particularly Japan and Taiwan, remain central to reducing albatross and petrel bycatch globally. Through support from **the David & Lucile Packard Foundation**, BirdLife Tokyo has worked with the CWBF (Chinese Wild Bird Federation), BirdLife Partner in Taiwan, and MWF (Mauritius Wildlife Foundation), BirdLife Partner in Mauritius, with support

from the Taiwan Fisheries Agency, to develop a plan to engage in port-based outreach with Taiwanese vessels using the port of Mauritius. It was agreed to implement this plan in 2018. In addition, BirdLife Tokyo supported the production of a seabird identification booklet in Taiwan. Furthermore, to help Japan and Taiwan improve their ability to identify seabird bycatch species, BirdLife Tokyo held a seabird identification workshop with experts from New Zealand, and invited scientists from Japan, Taiwan and Indonesia.

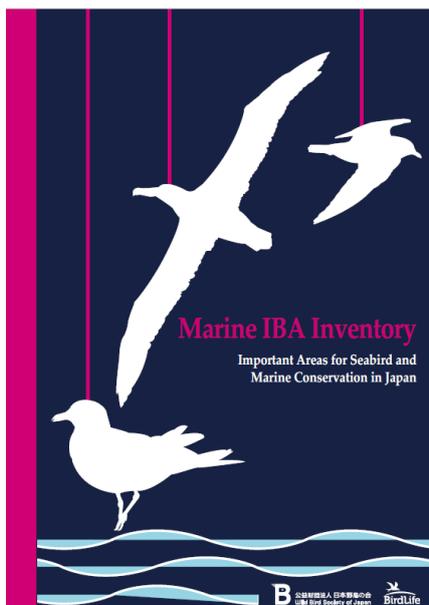


Photo 5. English version of the Marine IBA booklet (Publication of Marine IBA Booklet)



Photo 6. Fishermen from Hokkaido testing a potential mitigation measure for seabird bycatch in gillnets (Working with Fishermen to Tackle Seabird Bycatch in Gillnets)

## 1.5 Capacity Building and Improvement of Livelihoods

### ➤ “SATO YAMA UMI” Project

SATO YAMA UMI Project is funded by *the KNCF 25th Anniversary Special Fund Grand Programme*. It is a joint project of the Japan Environmental Education Forum, BirdLife Tokyo, and Conservation International Japan, with each organisation having a wide range of experiences in environmental conservation globally. The project takes advantage of the knowledge and strengths of each organisation. The project addresses global challenges by implementing multi-tiered programmes on capacity building for future generations. It aims to contribute to the sound development of human societies built on conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. BirdLife cooperates with three local BirdLife Partners, including the BirdLife Cambodia Programme, RSPN (Royal Society for Protection of Nature), BirdLife Partner in Bhutan, and Viet Nature, BirdLife Partner in Vietnam, to implement activities in each country. The project was started in 2017, and will reach full scale from 2018.

### ➤ Livelihood improvement in Flores Island, Indonesia

Flores Island is located to the east of Java, and has an extremely rich in unique biodiversity. Its forest, however, is being rapidly degraded by the unsustainable use of forest resources, due to the high poverty level of local communities, as they need to meet their basic needs. Thus, with support from *the Toyota Environmental Activities Grant Program*, BirdLife Tokyo initiated a project with Burung Indonesia to provide local people with an alternative source of income and reduce the unsustainable use of forest resources. Specifically, we supported the improvement of trade in candlenuts, which are produced by agroforestry, by building the capacity of the local cooperative and purchasing candlenuts from local people at a higher price. The project has been highly successful, as the cooperative started trading directly with trading companies, and the purchasing price of candlenuts almost doubled since the onset of the project.

### ➤ Establishment of an Environmental Education and Sustainability Centre at Thein Ngu Village, Mon State in Myanmar

BANCA (Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association), BirdLife Partner in Myanmar, has been central in pioneering the conservation of globally threatened wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers and shore birds in the Gulf of Mottama, a vast tidal mudflat area. To raise the level of awareness of coastal communities, BANCA has been providing training on conservation and basic education to students in the coastal areas of Mon State. With the support of funds raised by BirdLife *Gala Dinner*, BirdLife Tokyo and BANCA decided to establish a site-based multi-purpose station at Thein Ngu village, which is the centre of communication and monitoring for

GoM, Myanmar's fourth Ramsar site, to be more effective in the long term provision of education in this area (registered in May 2017).



Photo 7. Environmental Education class in Vietnam (Sato Yama Umi project)



Photo 8. New education centre (Establishment of an Environmental Education and Sustainability Centre at Their Ngu Village, Mon State in Myanmar)

## 2. Evaluation Method for Conservation Projects

Conservationists are increasingly seeking to improve the ways in which they evaluate the outcomes and impacts of their work. Good evaluation practice is essential for demonstrating achievements, avoiding wasted effort, and modifying projects to improve delivery. There are some methodologies used for evaluating the outcomes and impacts of projects; however, it is difficult to apply such evaluations to smaller projects, because of the shortage of capacity and resources to implement evaluations. In 2016, CCI (Cambridge Conservation Initiative) launched a project to develop the PRISM toolkit, which aims to evaluate the outcomes and impacts of small/medium-sized conservation projects (PRISM: **P**ractical methods for evaluating the outcomes & **I**mpacts of **S**mall–**M**edium sized conservation projects). BirdLife is taking a lead in this project, as one of the CCI members (see below). BirdLife Tokyo also supports this project through a fund from *the Toyota Motor Corporation*.

In 2017, two pilot evaluations were held in Thailand and Indonesia, and we confirmed the efficiency of the toolkit. In November 2017, the PRISM toolkit was completed and released on the website. This toolkit is separated into four main sections:

- Section 1. Introduction and Key Concepts
- Section 2. Step by step guide to evaluating project outcomes and impacts
- Section 3. Thematic Modules
- Section 4. Method Factsheets and Annexes

For more detail, please see the website: <https://conservationevaluation.org/>

The CCI is composed of BirdLife International, Fauna & Flora International, Tropical Biology Association, WWF, Conservation Evidence, UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, RSPB, British Trust for Ornithology, and the University of Cambridge.



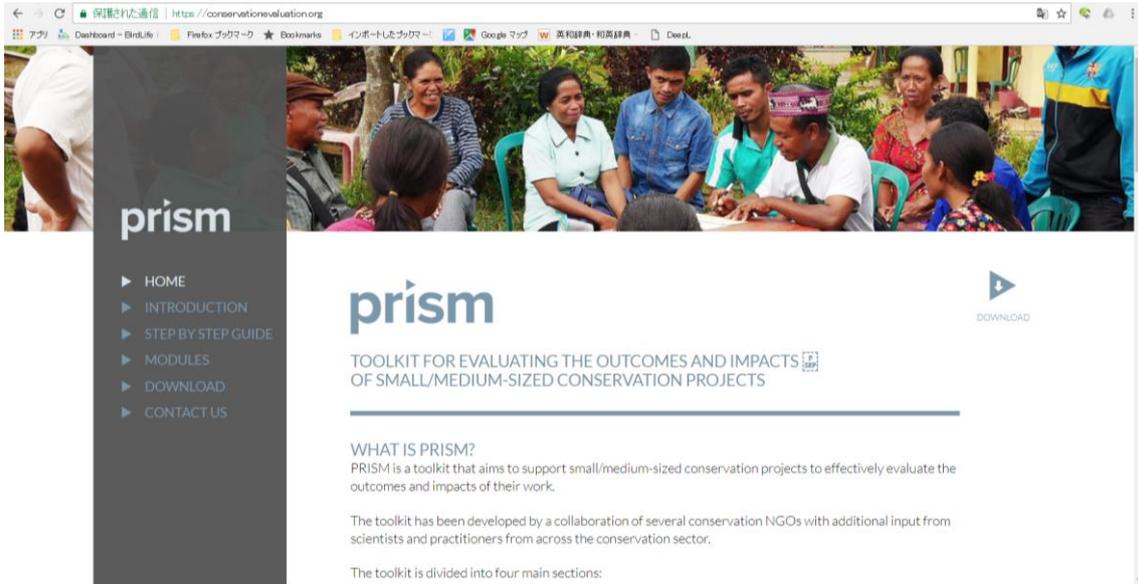


Photo 10. Website of the PRISM toolkit. Toolkit is available on this site



Photo 11. Pilot evaluation with local people on Flores Island, Indonesia

### 3. Charity Events

BirdLife considers birds as the most sensitive indicator to environmental change, and we have supported various conservation actions to promote the conservation of species and their habitats by working together with local Partners. To move forward with these activities, we hold Gala Dinners every year in Tokyo and Osaka. In 2017, Gala Dinners were held for the purpose of habitat conservation in the South Pacific Islands. On 9 March, 2017, a Spring Gala was held in Osaka. A total of 591 people participated and donated JPY 13.73 million. At the Tokyo Gala Dinner held on 27 October, 2017, 618 people participated and donated JPY 29 million. We have allocated JPY 26 million for South Pacific Islands, and JPY 5 million was retained as the Gala Fund for emergency use. The rest of the proceeds were delivered to Myanmar, Indonesia, and Vietnam, etc.

Gala Dinners are held to support nature conservation efforts, and, at the same time, provide a great opportunity for the participants to understand the importance of environmental protection, as well as the necessity for their support.



Photo 11. Gala dinner at the Palace Hotel, Tokyo

## Protecting Paradise in the Pacific

The islands of the tropical Pacific are very important for endemic birds, but are under great threat from invasive species. Over the last 700 years, bird extinctions have been higher in the Pacific than anywhere else on Earth. Island restoration in the Pacific is, therefore, one of the most important conservation priorities, but is also extremely challenging, due to the vast distances between islands.

In recognition of the urgency of the situation, BirdLife International has been working on island restoration in the Pacific since 2007. Since then, the organisation has developed significant experience, and is now a leader in this field. Over 35 islands in French Polynesia, Fiji, French Polynesia, Palau, and the Cook Islands have been subject to restoration activities implemented by BirdLife International, largely through the management of invasive species.

This project follows-up on management work of invasive species in four countries. BirdLife Tokyo is taking three important subsequent steps towards the long-term conservation of islands in the Pacific.

- Biosecurity (French Polynesia)
- The recovery of island ecosystems (French Polynesia, Fiji, Palau, Cook Islands)
- Strengthening the capacity of the partnership for habitat restoration (French Polynesia, Fiji, Palau, Cook Islands)



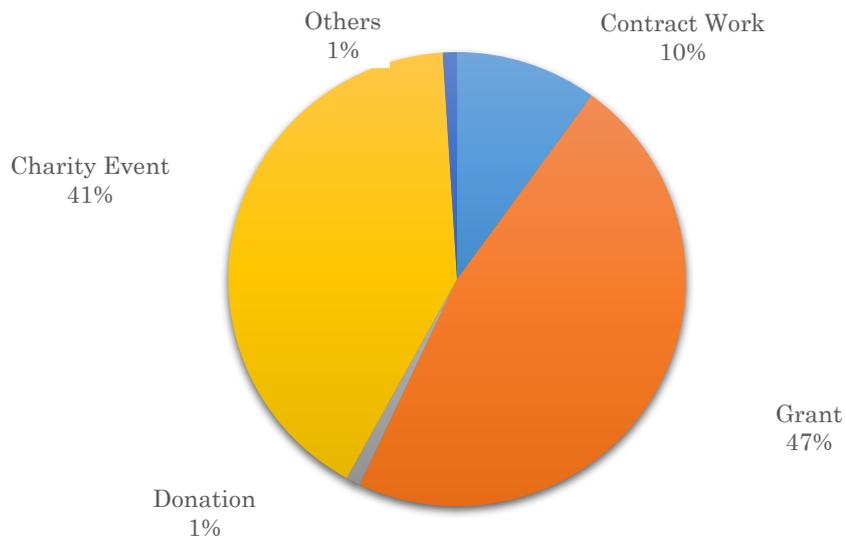
Photo 12. Pacific Islands supported from the funds generated by the Gala dinners

## 4. Financial Report

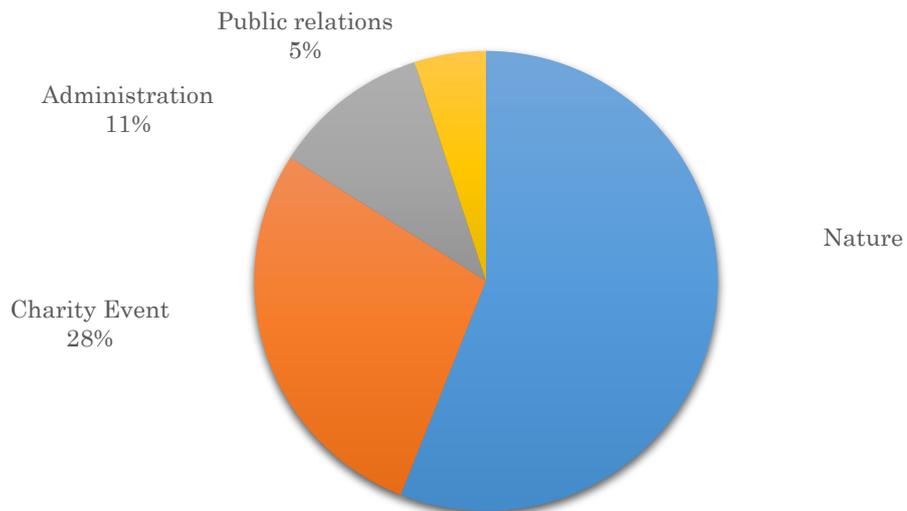
Financial Report for FY 2017 is as follows:

- Income : JPY 242,918,000
- Expenditure : JPY 242,918,000

### ➤ Income



### ➤ Expenditure



## 5. Support from Individuals and Organisations

BirdLife welcomes individual and corporate supporters. There is also a unique supporter system allowing members to support actions to conserve endangered species as foster parents called the RBC (Rare Bird Club).

### ➤ Rare Bird Club

This is a global programme of BirdLife, and has members worldwide. In Japan, there are about 20 members who participate in bird watching and environmental seminars. On 5 September, 2017, a gathering with Thomas Lovejoy, Ph. D. was held in Tokyo, with 20 members and guests participating in the event.

### ➤ Supporter System

“Friends of BirdLife” is a support system involving a donation of 5,000 JPY per person, 50% of which is allocated to environmental conservation efforts. From September 2017, we are asking for support for projects such as “Save the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Southeast Asia”, “Conservation of the African Penguin”, and “Release the poached birds into the wild in Brazil.” We received support from 12 donors in 2017.

### ➤ Donation for Conservation Projects

We have set up a donation program via Yahoo! Internet Fund Raising. In 2017, we called for contributions for three conservation projects: “Save the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Southeast Asia,” “Conservation of the Africa Penguin in South Africa,” and “Release the poached birds into the wild in Brazil.” We received over 900,000 JPY in total in 2017.

### ➤ Corporate Members

Birdlife has received generous support from corporations and group members. Below is the list of corporate sponsors from 2017 (in the alphabetical order).

- Alpha Food Co., Ltd.
- Izumo Oyashiro
- Izumo Oyashiro Cultural Foundation
- Fushimi Inari Taisha
- Hokkaido Jingu
- Masumida Shrine
- Samukawa Shrine

➤ Other Support

Other groups and corporations also generously supported our organisation (in the order of the Japanese alphabet)

- Cedyne Financial Corporation
- One Step Co., Ltd
- Sydnia Consulting
- STEP Co., Ltd
- BirdLife Supporters Club (BLS)

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