

# Darwin Initiative for the Survival of Species

## Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

<b>Project Ref. No.</b>	162/14/044
<b>Project Title</b>	Building a bird conservation and environmental network in China
<b>Country(ies)</b>	China
<b>UK Organisation</b>	BirdLife International
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Hong Kong Bird Watching Society (HKBWS)
<b>Report date</b>	30 October 2006
<b>Report No.</b>	HYR 2
<b>Project website</b>	<a href="http://www.chinabirdnet.org/index_f.html">www.chinabirdnet.org/index_f.html</a>

### **1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).**

The progress of the project over the last 6 months is summarised below against the Project implementation timetable (including project activities scheduled outside the reporting period where appropriate). Despite the resignation of the original China Programme Officer and the recruitment of her successor during May, considerable progress was made and the project activities continue to be broadly on the schedule set in the Project implementation timetable.

#### Recruitment of China Programme officer

The China Programme Officer, Carrie K. W. Ma, obtained a new post with the Hong Kong government and left the project on 2 May 2006. Interviews for a replacement were held in late April 2006, and Fion Cheung Ka Wing was appointed as the new China Programme Officer and began work on 15 May 2006.

#### Production and distribution of quarterly China Birdwatching and Conservation Network newsletter.

Issues of *China Bird Watch* were published and distributed in April, June and August 2006. The format of *China Bird Watch* was adapted during this period from a birdwatchers magazine into network newsletter, including through the inclusion of reports in each issue on the activities of the main Chinese birdwatching societies.

#### Completion of assessment of China Birdwatching organisations, and plan prepared for the structure and operation of the China Birdwatching and Conservation Network.

A China Birdwatching and Conservation network planning meeting was held in Chengdu, Sichuan Province on 1-2 May 2006, hosted by Chengdu Birdwatching Society. Representatives of 21 established and emerging birdwatching societies from many regions of China attended the meeting. The agenda included reports on the activities of the societies and discussions on future plans. Some of the larger societies were given responsibility for the organisation of national activities, including an annual bird race and coastal waterbird counts. A standing committee of 10 birdwatching society representatives was appointed to help coordinate the activities of the Birdwatching and Conservation network.

The China Programme Officer conducted an assessment of Hunan Birdwatching Society on 28 August 2006.

#### Launch event for China Birdwatching and Conservation Network.

The planning meeting in Chengdu in May 2006 was the launch event for the China Birdwatching and Conservation network. The Project Manager (Mike Crosby) gave a presentation about BirdLife International and the BirdLife/HKBWS China Programme, and how the Darwin Initiative project will provide support for the development of the national network. The Important Bird Areas and threatened species advisor (Simba Chan) gave a presentation about BirdLife's IBA Programme, and how the China Programme will promote the monitoring and conservation of these key sites.

#### Announcement of the enlarged China Conservation Fund.

At the China Birdwatching and Conservation network planning meeting in Chengdu, Ho-Fai Cheung (Chairman, HKBWS) announced the enlarged China Conservation Fund, and encouraged the birdwatching societies to develop projects for the conservation of globally threatened species and IBAs.

#### Chinese-language training manuals in (1) bird survey and monitoring and (2) site conservation completed and distributed.

A Chinese-language manual entitled *Methods for bird surveys: a practical handbook* was published ahead of schedule in March 2006, as described in our annual report for 2005/2006. A second manual covering project management and site conservation was drafted by the previous China Programme Officer. The new Officer has not yet had time to complete the manual, but we will ensure that it is published before the end of 2006/2007.

#### Workshop on how civil society organisations can contribute to species and site conservation.

Two Darwin training workshops in public awareness and conservation education were held, in Kunming, Yunnan Province from 25-27 August 2006 and in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province from 1-3 September 2006. About 25 people attended each workshop, which were designed to provide training for trainers. The training was provided by the International Education Manager from the RSPB, who visited China especially for these workshops, and trainers from HKBWS and the BirdLife Asia Division.

#### One-week training for trainers course for network members in bird survey and monitoring techniques, species and site conservation, and fund-raising.

A Darwin training course in bird survey and monitoring techniques was held at Xiamen, Fujian Province from 31 March-2 April 2006, as described in our annual report for 2005/2006. A similar course will be held for the birdwatching societies in northern China at Beidaihe, Hebei Province during October 2006.

#### First China Bird Festival.

The first China Bird Festival was originally scheduled to take place in June 2006. The Darwin project steering committee decided to re-schedule this event to October in both 2006 and 2007, to coincide with the public holidays that take place in China in the first week of October and (in 2006 only) with BirdLife International's World Bird Festival. At the planning meeting in Chengdu in May 2006 the birdwatching societies were invited to submit applications to organise China Bird Festival events in their cities; applications have been received from 11 societies and approved for funding by the project steering committee. The Darwin workshops in Kunming and Hangzhou in August and September were used to provide training in public awareness techniques, to help the birdwatching societies with their preparations for the China Bird Festival.

#### Mid-term evaluation of project by UK BirdLife International staff.

A mid-term evaluation is being conducted from August-December 2006. A questionnaire (with seven questions) regarding the project has been adapted from the Darwin Initiative annual monitoring form and is being answered by members of the project steering committee and the China Programme Officer. A second questionnaire (with four questions) has been designed for the Chinese birdwatching societies, which has been translated and distributed by the China Programme Officer.

**2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.**

The main problem that we have encountered over the past six months has been the resignation of the original China Programme Officer, which meant that we had to find a replacement during May 2006. Despite this development, the main project activities that we had planned have gone ahead, including the network planning meeting in May and two training workshops in August-September, with another workshop and the China Bird Festival scheduled for October.

The main project activity that is behind schedule is the completion of the second project training manual. A draft of this manual was prepared by the original China Programme Officer, Carrie Ma, but Fion Cheung has not yet had time to complete it. We will ensure that this output is completed during the current year of the project.

**Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Several changes to the timing of project activities (some of which are mentioned above) were discussed with the Darwin Secretariat through email correspondence and on the telephone in April 2006. A revised project schedule was included in our annual report for 2005/2006.

**Discussed with the DI Secretariat:**                      **no/yes, in..... (month/yr)**

**Changes to the project schedule/workplan:**    **no/yes, in.....(month/yr)**

**3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?**

**If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.**

**Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.**

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, [stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk](mailto:stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk) . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**