



REPORT ON THE WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY EVENT

SUMMARY

The world migratory bird day event holds globally in the second weekend of May and the October annually. The 12th of May was the recognised date for the event this year all around the world and different countries began to celebrate before that date. In Nigeria, the event was marked in Omo forest reserve from the 10th through 11th May 2018. It was marked a day earlier in order to allow for members of the community to participate fully in the activities lined up for the day.

The two day event with the theme “Unifying our Voices for Bird Conservation”, began on Thursday 10th of May with productive awareness visits to some selected communities within Omo forest reserve. It was important that this message was taken to these communities and that we go to them and identify with them and part of the habitat they occupy. Five communities were selected around the reserve and members of the Omo-Shasha-Oluwa forest initiative gave talks in both English and the local language (Yoruba). We also gave the members of these selected communities media materials like posters as well as customised shirts. The second day event began with a bird watching exercise by some members of the community and students from the Omo conservation club from 7:00 am through 8:30 am. This was followed by a gathering from 10:00 am where there were talks and plays by individuals and students respectively. The event was also covered by various media houses and also shared on social media platforms. The event was a success and participants looked forward to more engaging events like this in the future.

DAY 1

Awareness Visits to Selected Communities around Omo Forest Reserve

While preparing for this program, the OSO team selected five communities for the awareness visits, these were, Osoko, Mokore, Aba Bridge, Mile 1 and Fowowa. We visited these communities and the first port of call was the house of the local chief (Ba'ale) who assembled members of the community for educative and interactive sessions. We had opportunities to talk to the people in both the local language (Yoruba) and English and we talked about the features of migration, the threats and mitigation actions to these threats. We also talked about conservation generally and responded to questions from the local residents on the issues discussed. Find below some pictures from these community visits.



Figure 1: Awareness Session with members of Mokore Community



Figure 2: Awareness Session with members of Mokore Community

DAY 2

Bird Watching Event

The bird watching event took place on Friday morning between from 07:00 to 08:30 am. A 2km transect was covered and students attempted to identify all the bird species sighted. Find below pictures from this exercise.



Figure 3: Bird watching session with students of the Omo conservation club



Figure 4: Bird watching session with students of the Omo conservation club



Figure 5: Bird watching session with students of the Omo conservation club and representative from FRIN

Main Event

The main event held at the Area J4 plantation hall from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. Members of the audience included the Project Manager of the J4 plantation project, the Director of forestry of the same project, the head of the media from NCF, members of the Safari Hunters' Association of Nigeria (SAHAN), staff from the project, invited guest from Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), staff from the J4 forestry plantation project, members of the print media and also the students and staff from Plantation High School which is the only secondary school in the area.

The main highlights of the event was a play by the students of the Omo Conservation Club on bird migration, a brief talk on bird migration by Stella Egbe and a general overview of the Omo-Shasha-Oluwa conservation activities by Emmanuel Olabode.

There was also a brief talk by Rev. Fr. Marie Tito Adelaja on his experience with migratory birds. A persecuted Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), a migrant was brought to him by members of his community a few weeks ago. We have been able to retrieve the rings and make contact with the Finnish ringing centre and they have confirmed the details of the bird from the ring.



Figure 6: A cross session of students from Omo conservation club during the program



Figure 7: A cross session of students from Omo conservation club during the program



Figure 8: Students rendering a play titled “My First Migration Story”



Figure 9: Students rendering a play titled “My First Migration Story”



Figure 10: Members of SAHAN who attended the WMBD Event

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge the AFRIBIRD project and NABU for providing the financial support for this year's world migratory bird day. We also acknowledge the support of the Ogun state forestry plantation project for their support during the program.