

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PALEARCTIC STEPPE BIRDS

ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION CHALLENGES



**25-29
MARCH
2025**

Universidad de
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CIUDAD REAL
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Tuesday 25th march

9.00 - 13.30 h. Reception

Hall IREC

10.00 - 13.30 h. Workshop 1

Classroom 1

Conservation research perspectives on Pin-tailed Sandgrouse *Pterocles alchata* and Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra*

Axel Wolff

10.00 - 13.30 h. Workshop 2

Classroom 2

Automated acoustic detection of steppe birds: Learn to use BirdNET GUI

Cristian Pérez Granados

Centre de Ciència i Tecnologia Forestal de Catalunya.

10.00 - 13.30 h. Workshop 3

Classroom 3

Applications of Remote Sensing for Steppe Bird Conservation Using Google Earth Engine

Francesco Valerio

13.30 - 15.00 h. Lunch break (not included)

15.00 - 18.00 h. Reception & placement of posters

Hall Paraninfo

16.30 - 17.00 h. Opening ceremony

UCLM Paraninfo

17.00 - 18.00 h. Inaugural Plenary Session.

UCLM Paraninfo

Dynamic land use shapes the bird community of the Eurasian steppe

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Johannes Kamp

Head of the Conservation Biology Department, University of Göttingen, Germany.

18.45 - 19.45 h. Opening cocktail

Sótano del Antiguo Casino De Ciudad Real (Calle Caballeros 3, 13001, Ciudad Real).

Wednesday 26th march

9.00 - 10.00 h. Invited Plenary 1

UCLM Paraninfo

Using PECBMS and EBBA2 data on steppe birds in European policy and research

Alena Klvaňová

Head of monitoring and research department, Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme manager, Czech Society for Ornithology and European Bird Census Council, Prague, Czechia

10.00 - 10.30 h. Coffee Break

Hall Paraninfo

10.30 - 12.30 h. Thematic session 1. Population monitoring and trends 1

UCLM Paraninfo

Yves Hingrat

Research Manager at Reneco International Wildlife Consultants located in the United Arab Emirates.

Specific monitoring method for the common quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) during the breeding season.

Assessing bird communities in Mediterranean agricultural landscapes through acoustic monitoring: BirdNET, Merlin and acoustic indices.

BirdNET, a user-friendly acoustic algorithm, complements traditional field censuses for describing grassland bird communities in Europe.

The study of the distribution and resources of the Saker falcon in Mongolia.

Drones and Biodiversity: Impact on Lanzarote's Avifauna.

10.30 - 12.30 h. Thematic session 2. Life-history strategies

IREC auditorium

Ana Benítez

Researcher at the Natural Museum of Natural Sciences. Spain.

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Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*) in the abyss: discrepancy between habitat preferences and breeding success.

Surviving the heat: climate change challenges for steppe birds.

Malaria-like parasites of European rollers breeding in a semi-arid zone.

Low breeding success in two declining steppe birds revealed by remote tracking and field data.

Estimating apparent survival of Pin-tailed-sandgrouse (*Pterocles alchata*) through non-invasive genetic mark-recapture.

12.45 - 13.30 h. Poster session

Hall Paraninfo

13.30 - 15.00 h. Lunch break

Hall Paraninfo

15.00 - 17.00 h. Thematic session 3. Population monitoring and trends 2

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Teresa Marques

Researcher at the University of Porto, Center in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources. Portugal.

Long-term continued decrease in productivity of Montagús harriers (*Circus pygargus*) across Spain explains recent trends and predicts further decline.

Population status and trends of the Little Bustard in its Eastern range.

Demography and viability of a reinforced North African houbara bustard population.

Status and migration the Eastern Great Bustard population breeding in the Uvs Nuur Basin of Western Mongolia.

Significant decline of the houbara bustard in the Canary Island.

15.00 - 17.00 h. Thematic session 4. Dynamics and Drivers of Habitat Change in Steppe and Pseudo-steppe ecosystems

IREC auditorium

Carlos A. Martín

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Professor of the Faculty of Biological Sciences, Department of Biodiversity, Ecology and Evolution, Complutense University of Madrid. Spain.

Effects of farming specialisation on steppe birds in southern Portugal.

Fungicide exposure in declining Iberian steppe birds.

Dynamic occupancy models and citizen science reveal steppe birds range dynamics and priority conservation areas.

Habitat structure and landscape composition determine the occurrence of steppe birds in natural grasslands and shrublands.

Contractions in the distribution of farmland and steppe bird species in Spain in relation to agriculture intensification.

17.00 - 17.30 h. Coffee break

Hall Paraninfo

17.30 - 18.30 h. Round table. Role of agricultural practices for steppe birds conservation

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Mario Díaz Esteban

Research Professor of the Spanish Research Council and coordinator of the AGRIAMBIO Thematic Platform

Participants

Aldina Franco

Professor of ecology at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom.

Rocío Tarjuelo

Researcher at the Natural Museum of Natural Sciences. Spain.

Nyambayar Batbayar

Director and researcher at the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia.

18.45 - 19.45 h. GIAE Assembly

Thursday 27th march

9.00 - 10.00 h. Invited Plenary 2

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Bustards and Powerlines – a major conservation concern.

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Joao Paulo da Silva

Researcher at the University of Porto, Center in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources. Portugal.

10.00 - 10.30 h. Coffee Break

Hall Paraninfo

10.30 - 12.30 h. Thematic session 5. Movement strategies and migration patterns

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Inês Catry

Researcher at BIOPOLIS-CIBIO, University of Porto. Portugal.

Microclimate refugia availability shapes environmental niches and predicts movement strategies of little bustards.

Stone-curlews show a remarkable variability in movement patterns: a case study in Northern Morocco.

Movement ecology of little bustards (*Tetrax tetrax*): migration strategies, connectivity and corridor features across the Iberian Peninsula.

Factors affecting survival of GPS tagged steppe land birds.

Post-breeding dispersal patterns and ecological niche modelling of Lesser Kestrel in the Iberian Peninsula.

10.30 - 12.30 h. Thematic session 6. Evolutionary and behavioral ecology of steppe birds 1

IREC auditorium

Juan Traba Díaz

Researcher at the Autonomous University of Madrid. Spain.

Long-distance relatives: genetic structure and diversity of eastern imperial eagle populations across Eurasia.

Coexistence of two diverging lineages of common quails in southern Spain.

Cultural evolution and changes in the song of the Dupont's Lark (*Chersophilus duponti*) over time and space.

An accelerometry based model to identify the behaviours of the Little Bustard.

Use of waste disposal sites by the globally endangered Steppe Eagle *Aquila*



nipalensis in Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman.

Using accelerometer data to track the behavior of elusive birds: the case of Eurasian Stone Curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*).

12.45 - 13.45 h. Poster session

Hall Paraninfo

13.45 - 15.00 h. Lunch Break

Hall Paraninfo

15.00 - 17.00 h. Information point and poster exhibition

15.00 - 17.00 h. Thematic session 7. Impact of human infrastructures

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Francisco Manuel Ferraira Moreira

Senior researcher at the University of Porto, into the Biodiversity and Genetic Resources Research Centre (CIBIO), Portugal.

Current and future conflicts between utility-scale photovoltaic power plant and sandgrouse distributions.

The global impact of solar photovoltaic expansion on the worlds birds.

The European Green Deal must be fully implemented: the acceleration of renewable energy endangers target and threatened steppe bird species.

Steppe Habitat Compensation in Solar Energy Projects: Analysis of Environmental Impact Statements in Spain.

Identifying conflicts between renewable energy developments and taxonomic, functional and phylogenetic diversity of steppe birds.

Alarming state of steppe bird habitats in southern Spain. ZAPRAEs, olive groves and photovoltaic plants.

15.00 - 17.00 h. Thematic session 8. Evolutionary and behavioral ecology of steppe birds 2

IREC auditorium

Carolina Bravo Párraga

Researcher at the Autonomous University of Madrid. Spain. Member of GIAE and the Organizing Committee.

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The Palaeoecological Links between Climate Change, Vegetation change and British Farmland Birds in the Archaeological Record.

Good neighbours: habitat partitioning and coexistence in a steppe bird community.

Direct and indirect effects of rainfall variability on steppe bird abundance under climate change: the species-specific ecological profile matters.

Interannual and seasonal variations in niche partitioning between two sympatric sandgrouses.

Winter habitat selection of Eurasian Stone curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*) in Southwest Iberia revealed by high-resolution data.

Feeding habits of the male Little Bustard during the breeding season: the role of habitat and land use in diet selection.

17.00 - 17.30 h. Coffee Break

Hall Paraninfo

17.30 - 18.30 h. Round table. Renewable energy and the impact on steppe birds.

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Gerard Bota Cabau

Researcher at Forest Sciences Centre of Catalonia. Spain. Coordinator of the Steppe Forward Chair.

Participants

Ana Benítez

Researcher at the Natural Museum of Natural Sciences. Spain.

Luis Benvente

Programme Director. Subdirector General for Environmental Assessment. Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge

Gankhuyag Purev-Ochir

Director of the Mongolian Bird Conservation Centre. Representative of an energy company (tbc).

20.00 - 23.00 h. Congress dinner

Hotel Exe Doña Carlota

Friday 28th march

9.00 - 10.00 h. Invited Plenary 3.

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The plight of Palearctic bustards

Nigel Collar

Research Fellow, BirdLife International, Cambridge UK, and Co-Chair, IUCN Bustard Specialist Group.

10.15 - 11.20 h. Thematic session 9. Conservation strategies and policy mechanisms: Present and future 1

UCLM Paraninfo

Nyambayar Batbayar

Director and researcher at the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia.

Haemosporidian diversity in captive and wild Asian houbara bustard populations: implications for conservation and ecosystem stability.

Scenario planning and participatory processes: a useful tool for European steppes' conservation.

Coexistence conservation: The potential of behaviour-based methods to mitigate predation on steppe birds in farmland ecosystems.

Long-term Systematic Conservation Planning for Two Declining Steppe Birds in Iberia.

Bustards Without Borders: A Collaborative Approach to Global Bustard Conservation.

11.20 - 11.50 h. Coffee Break

11.50 - 13.30 h. Thematic session 10. Conservation strategies and policy mechanisms: Present and future 2

UCLM Paraninfo

Aldina Franco

Professor of ecology at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom.

Can habitat management and human-induced mortality mitigation reverse the decline of the little bustard in Extremadura?

A demographic evaluation of the conservation management of the Little Bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*) in Catalonia.

Assessing the Effectiveness of CAP measures for the conservation of endangered steppe birds.

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Restoration of Iberian Shrub Steppes: Effects on Arthropod Biomass and Dupont's Lark Populations.

Results of two years of translocations of a steppe passerine in continental Europe: the endangered Dupont's lark.

Conservation actions and assessment of hunting (un)sustainability to recover the Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*).

13.45 - 15.00 h. Lunch Break

15.00 - 16.00 h. Closing Plenary

UCLM Paraninfo

30 years studying harriers, bustards and stone curlews: new knowledge and lessons for conservation

Vincent Bretagnolle

Senior Scientist CNRS, at Centre d'Etudes Biologiques de Chizé.

16.00 - 17.00 h. Closing Ceremony

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17.30 - 19.00 h. Presentation of the documentary. "URPA: un glop fresc per salvar l'arpella cendrosa"

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Saturday 29th march

8.00 - 15.00 h. Excursion. A Journey Through the Steppes of La Mancha

UCLM entrance (Ronda de Toledo)

10.30 - 12.30 h. Excursion. Cultural visit to Castilla La Mancha cultural heritage, in collaboration with the regional administration.

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