



Spoonbills Speak

echoes across the Pacific

The Official Newsletter of SAVE (Spoonbill Action Voluntary Echo) International

SAVE TO FUNDRAISE FOR STUDENT DELEGATION TO TAIWAN



Berkeley students at Nan-Kuen-Shen temple during the 1997 visit to Taiwan.

In late March 1999, SAVE will send another scientific delegation to Taiwan to meet with politicians, fishermen, and local environmental groups to further advance the alternative sustainable development plan. Students, faculty and staff in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning program at the University of California, Berkeley will join experts to present newly developed conservation

plans and case studies on ecotourism. During the visit, the delegation will also meet with local groups and politicians to learn about the ecotourism efforts already underway in Chiku, observe the black-faced spoonbill and learn more about Tsengwen estuarine ecology.

SAVE MEETS WITH VICE PREMIERE LIU

During the first week in January, SAVE Advisory Board member Randy Hester, University of California, Berkeley, traveled to Taiwan to meet with Vice Premiere Liu and other politicians to discuss potential funding for a sustainable alternative plan for coastal Tainan County, Taiwan. The Vice Premiere expressed interest in funding the alternative plan provided the effort has strong local support. Hester also met with several local politicians regarding the alternative development plan. With the uncertainties surrounding the approval of Bin-nan, these local elected officials were very interested in the development of an alternative plan for Tainan County. SAVE members in Taiwan will work at both the local level and with the Vice Premiere to communicate the interest in supporting and funding the development of the sustainable alternative plan.

During his stay, Hester also paid a visit to the Hunting Territory, an ecocenter and restaurant in one of the best black-faced spoonbill birding areas in Taiwan. Also present at the Hunting Territory with Hester was

Legislator Su, Tainan County's national representative, and several world famous black-faced spoonbill photographers, including the photographer that took the photo of the black-faced spoonbills featured in the National Geographic (January 1999) Canon advertisement. The photographers presented Hester with additional photographs, postcards and a calendar featuring the spoonbill. To thank SAVE for its efforts, Legislator Su also presented to Hester a recently printed book on the black-faced spoonbills which features the work of these photographers.



Hester (center) receives book on spoonbills from Legislator Su (second from right), with photographers.

SAVE SEEKS RAMSAR SITE RECOGNITION

The 7th Conference of Parties (COP7) of the Ramsar Convention will convene from May 10-18 in San Jose, Costa Rica. The triennial meeting will be an important gathering of government agencies, NGOs and researchers from around the world to discuss the protection and management of wetland and waterfowl habitats. The Convention on Wetlands, adopted in 1971 and popularly known as the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty on conservation and wise use of wetlands. Presently, more than 100 nations have ratified the treaty, and approximately 900 wetlands have been designated as Wetlands of International Importance.

To raise international awareness and recognition of the black-faced spoonbill's wintering ground at Taiwan's Tsengwen Estuary, SAVE International is planning to send a delegation to participate in COP7. Under one of the Ramsar Convention's official criteria, a wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterfowl. As the wintering ground of more than 50% of the world population of black-faced spoonbills, the Tsengwen Estuary site is well qualified. However,

Taiwan's exclusion from international institutions has prevented consideration of the estuary as a Ramsar site. Taiwan's lack of participation and representation in Ramsar could undermine the protection of the most important wintering habitat in the world for the black-faced spoonbill.

The designation of the estuary site would require Taiwan to develop a national wetland policy and to adopt a more effective management plan to protect the black-faced spoonbill habitat. The designation would also enhance the prestige of the Tsengwen Estuary site and raise awareness of the plight of the endangered spoonbill. SAVE International intends to send a strong message to the international community to push for designation of the Tsengwen Estuary Habitat as a Wetland of International Importance.



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SAVE UPDATE

Spoonbill Featured in Magazines

The black-faced spoonbill was featured in an article in *Birding Magazine's* September 1998 issue and in a Canon advertisement in *National Geographic's* January 1999 issue.

SAVE Plans for the Future

In December, SAVE International held a strategic planning session to refine its vision for the future. Assisted by an Earth Island Institute facilitator, the group assessed their strengths and weaknesses and set goals to continue their progress.

Last Great Spoonbill Migration 1998

In October, 150 students of a UC Berkeley Environmental Design class built models of the black-faced spoonbill for the second annual Last Great Spoonbill Migration. Models were on display on campus, culminating in a student procession and awards ceremony, celebrating the bird's annual migration to coastal Taiwan.

MESSAGE FROM CHI-CHAO THE SPOONBILL



Hi! Sorry it's been so long since my last letter. I've been in Chiku for about three months and boy, have I met a lot of new people. There are all of these places now for people to look through telescopes and watch me and my friends while we are showing off. I guess the work you guys are doing to get people to pay attention to our situation is really working. I can't wait to see you in March.

Love, Your Friend, Chi-chao.