

## Editorial

Welcome to the third instalment of *Flamingo*, the e-version of the FSG's popular annual journal. We are pleased to continue to bring you a new volume of *Flamingo* after its relaunch in 2018. It's especially pleasing that, in this difficult year of so much uncertainty and upheaval, people all around the world have still found the time to observe flamingos, to collect information on them, to manage and protect their habitats, and to write about their work for this newsletter.

The global Covid-19 pandemic has impacted greatly upon the lives of those who work in conservation, education and research that involve animals. Many zoological collections, who do important work towards fighting the rising tide of extinction, have been closed and many dedicated animal care and conservation professionals have been furloughed or found themselves out of employment. It is important that, in such difficult times, the conservation community comes together to support each other and ensure that vital work to understand more about flamingos and their unique homes can continue.

We see some great papers in *Flamingo 2020* that discuss how flamingos are being monitored out in the wild; to gain a better understanding of their population numbers and dynamics. Articles on coordinated surveying across huge areas of flamingo habitat show the importance of working together for a common goal. We also see how local people can successfully mobilise lobbying and action to protect their local wetlands from development, which would have meant the loss of an incredible "pink bird spectacle" so loved by many.

*Flamingo 2020* also highlights the excellent work of the zoo community in its constant efforts to develop improved management practices for flamingo population under human care. Papers cover everything from checking foot health using novel methods, to hand rearing protocols and enclosure modifications to improve breeding. We even see an article that explains how this *ex situ* flamingo knowledge can be take out to the field and directly applied to a major conservation crisis; a situation that needed the expertise of those working in all areas of flamingo science and management to bring about a positive ending.

In 2020 the FSG was sad to hear of the death of one of the greatest champions of flamingo research, Dr Adelheid Studer-Thiersch, who added so much information on flamingo behaviour to the available literature, thanks to her long-running observations at Basel Zoo in Switzerland. Adelheid's work fed into numerous areas of flamingo management and husbandry practice; it encouraged those housing flamingos in *ex situ* flocks to always consider the bird's behaviour and what they need to do to keep them healthy and breeding well. Thank you, Adelheid for so many years of valuable contributions to flamingo science and we send out best wishes to Adelheid's family.

We are also saddened by the death of Dr Bhavbhuti Mukundray Parasharya in October, due to Covid-19. An accomplished ornithologist and long-time member of the Flamingo Specialist Group, Bhavbhuti conducted extensive research on the ecology, distribution and conservation

of flamingos in Gujarat, in western India. He will be sadly missed by all whose lives he has touched.

We are accepting articles for Flamingo e4, due out in December 2021. Given that flamingo habitats worldwide are threatened, it is critical that we compile and disseminate research and studies on flamingos to the widest audience. Long or short reports, original research or descriptive pieces are welcome. Guidelines for publishing can be found on the FSG's website (<http://www.flamingo-sg.org/journal/>) and at the back of this volume.

I think my colleagues Cathy King (co-chair of the FSG), Dr Felicity Arengo and Dr Arnaud Bechet for their assistance with translations for this edition. And I take this opportunity to warmly welcome Dr Maria Cecilia Chiale to the *Flamingo* team, to thank her for her work promoting the FSG on Twitter and helping with the abstracts for this volume. Finally, the FSG is grateful to the efforts of Enver Ortiz Lopez who has been volunteering to post information in Spanish on the FSG's Facebook page, to increase accessibility and diversity in our outreach. Thank you, Enver.

With very best wishes for this holiday season.

Dr Paul Rose

[paul.rose@wwt.org.uk](mailto:paul.rose@wwt.org.uk)

WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre, Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, GL2 7BT, UK

December 2020