EAAFP Small Grants Fund 2020 - Application

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Relevant Working Group or Task Force Chair/Coordinator - DETAILS

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Relevant Working Group or Task Force Coordinator - DETAILS

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PROJECT DETAILS

Project Title: Please provide a concise and informative title of your entire project (not just the component for which funds are sought)

Comparing the different breeding strategies and migration patterns of two closely related shorebirds-the endangered Nordmann's Greenshank (Tringa guttifer*) and ubiquitous Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus) for enacting efficient conservation planning.

Part A. Project Proposal

Details of your entire project (not just the component for which funds are sought) (2.5 page maximum)

1. Objectives:

Goal: Inform conservation efforts for Nordmann's Greenshanks and Common Redshanks in Schaste Bay, Sea of Okhotsk, Russia

Objective 1: Assess the population and breeding ecology of Nordmann's Greenshanks and Common Redshanks

Activity 1.1: Estimate Nordmann's Greenshank breeding populations by systematically surveying several sections of Schaste Bay.

Activity 1.2: Find and monitor the survival of nests of both species.

Activity 1.3: Study the habitat selection of both species by measuring nest-site features, assessing habitat changes throughout the breeding season, and characterizing brood rearing habitats.

Activity 1.4: Band and resight previously banded birds of both species within the study site.

1. Background:

Study Site: The study site is in Schaste Bay (N 53.47000, E 140.91000), a coastal lagoon in southwest Sea of Okhotsk, Eastern Russia. Schaste Bay was recognized as a site of international importance for several migrating species including Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica)* and Great Knot (*Calidris tenuirostris)* (Conklin et al. 2014). Our 2019 field expedition to Schaste Bay indicated that it should also be considered a site of international importance to Nordmann's Greenshanks (*Tringa guttifer)* based on Criterion 6 of the Ramsar Convention, which states "a wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbird" (Bamford et al. 2008). The lagoon has a combination of expansive tidal mudflats, coastal meadows, and inland hummock bogs. Dividing the meadows and the bogs is a ~ 20-m wide belt of mixed spruce and birch forest that stretches along the entire study site. The presence of coastal meadows and nearby larch stands allows for the simultaneous study of both Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus)* and Nordmann's Greenshank.

Nordmann's Greenshank is listed as endangered in the IUCN Red list of Threatened Species because of its small and declining population (BirdLife International 2020). Based on surveys conducted along stopover sites, the most optimistic population estimate is 600-1300 individuals. The species breeds in isolated spots on the Russian mainland along the north and west coasts of the Sea of Okhotsk (Nechaev 1991, Pronkevich and Voronov 2013). The breeding range has contracted throughout the past half-century (Kuroda 1936, Nechaev 1991; Fig. 1). The best information on breeding Nordmann's Greenshanks comes from Sakhalin Island; in the 1970's, Nechaev (1978, 1982) collected the only nesting data prior to our study. Research on the species throughout its breeding range has been limited due to the vast and inaccessible Far-East

Russian landscape, compounded by the extremely low density of breeding birds. Thus, accurate population estimates and life-history information relevant to conservation efforts are difficult to acquire. Only six nests have ever been found, five by Nechaev, and one by us in Schaste Bay. Currently, our study is the only one gathering information on Nordmann's Greenshank' demographic traits such as adult survival, egg and brood survival, mate and site fidelity, or natural history traits such as incubation period and parental roles.

Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus)* includes 6 subspecies, including two in Russia (Hale 1971, Bakewell 2013); the subspecies in Far East Russia is *T. t. ussuriensis*. The species is an abundant migrant and nesting species on the western coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. Although the species is listed as Least Concern (BirdLife International 2016), true population trajectories are uncertain and several studies are projecting a marked decline (Ottvall and Härdling 2005). The species breed in abundance along elevated sections of coastal meadows throughout Schaste Bay. Our study on the species is imperative for efficient conservation planning because it is one of only a handful of studies providing detailed data breeding ecology and movement.

Previous Work: From mid-May to late July 2019, our research team (Pronkevich, Maslovskii, Maleko) conducted a pilot study in Schaste Bay focused on the breeding ecology of Nordmann's Greenshanks and Common Redshanks. The primary objectives of this pilot study were to (1) determine the possibility of finding and monitoring Nordmann's Greenshanks nests, and (2) capture and band adults and chicks. We documented the presence of approximately 7 Nordmann's Greenshank pairs in a 3-km radius of our base camp and, by conducting a more extensive survey of other sections of the bay, found a total of 28 breeding pairs using the area (Fig. 2). We found the first Nordmann's Greenshank nest since 1976 (Fig. 3), and for the first time conducted quantitative measurements on the species' nesting habitat. This finding provided data on nest initiation date, nest structure and contents, and a search image that will help us find nests in the future. We also successfully captured and banded 7 adults and 8 chicks during the brood-rearing period when attendant adults and young had moved to intertidal areas. After the 2019 summer field season, observers recorded 4 of our banded birds at Tiaozini, China – a section of the Yancheng Wetland Reserve along the coast of the Yellow Sea that was recently established as a World Heritage Site. We also found 23 Common Redshank nests and conducted detailed habitat assessments. We recorded the phenology of territorial displays, nest initiation, and hatching. We captured 17 adults and 9 chicks. We acquired detailed incubation information by using i-button temperature loggers. We also determined that a major threat to nesting Common Redshanks in the region is an increased Large-billed Crow (*Corvus macrorhynchos*) population, likely due to anthropogenic food resources created by the nearby village of Vlaseyvo. A follow-up year study in 2020 will allow us to assess adult site and mate fidelity, natal philopatry, and obtain better information on breeding ecology (e.g., more information on nest locations and nest-site features, information on nest survival and predators, and more captures of adults and chicks).

2. Project plan, timeline and methods:

Timeline:

1. March 25-April 7: Winter survey of Schaste Bay in search of previous years' Nordmann's Greenshank nests.
2. May 5-8: Potentially present results from the 2019 expedition at the EAAFP Shorebird Science Meeting.
3. May 10-13: Travel from Khabarovsk to the Schaste Bay.
4. May 14-August 10: Field data collection in the Schaste Bay.
5. August 11-12: Departure from the Schaste Bay and travel to the city of Khabarovsk.
6. August 13-October 30: Analysis of data and preparation of a report for the EAAFP.

Methods:

Objective 1: Assess the population and breeding ecology of Nordmann's Greenshanks and Common Redshanks

Activity 1.1: Estimate Nordmann's Greenshank breeding populations within Schaste Bay.

Conducting systematic surveys for pairs across several sections of Schaste Bay: In 2020 we will repeat surveys conducted in 2019 during the Nordmann's Greenshanks brood-rearing breeding stage (early July) when breeding pairs are most reliably and accurately detected. These surveys will will help estimate the breeding population in Schaste Bay, as well as the population trajectory since similar surveys were conducted in 2009 (Pronkevich 2011), and 2019. If broody adults are found, we will temporarily pause the survey and attempt to capture and band adults. Banded adults will help us determine how much greenshanks move within Schaste Bay and add to the banded population for resighting elsewhere throughout the EAAF.

Activity 1.2: Find and monitor the survival of nests of both species.

Conducting winter nest searching surveys: The Nordmann's Greenshank nest we found and collected in 2019 showed signs of multi-year use (i.e. deeply imbedded lichens). To test this hypothesis, we will travel to Schaste Bay during the winter and search for old nests throughout the study site (Fig. 4) while larch trees are foliage free and the snowpack allows for easy transportation (snowmobile and skis). We will also search for Oriental Turtle Dove (*Streptopelia orientalis)* and Brown Shrike (*Lanius cristatus)* nests because it is hypothesized that greenshanks could use these species' nests as well. We will map these nest locations with GPS units and check for nest activity during the subsequent breeding season.

Finding and monitoring nests: We will search for Common Redshank and greenshank nests along the entire coastal meadow of our study site (Fig. 5). For each Common Redshank nest found we will estimate nest age by either finding nests during laying, or finding complete clutches and floating eggs via methods in Liebezeit et al. (2007). Upon discovery, we will insert a temperature-recording sensor (i-button) to remotely-monitor nests throughout the breeding period. These sensors will provide information on incubation patterns, minimize disturbance while not sacrificing nest activity data, and allow us to accurately assess true nest fate and nest fate date (Hartman and Oring 2006, Weidinger 2006). We will search for Nordmann's Greenshank nests by visiting sites found during the winter survey and by observing adults from strategic points within inland bogs, watching adults fly from coastal meadows to suspected breeding sites, and following their trajectory until reaching the suspected nesting location. Nordmann's Greenshanks nests will be monitored with caution. To reduce the possibility of nest abandonment or predation, we will carry out observations of the nest at a distance of at least 100-m using a portable blind and spotting scope. To minimize risk of nest failure, we will not install i-buttons in Nordmann's Greenshank nests but may install cameras at safe distances to detect predators.

Activity 1.3: Study the habitat selection of both species by measuring nest-site features, assessing habitat changes throughout the breeding season, and characterizing brood rearing habitats.

Measuring nest site features: Habitat measurements at Nordmann's Greenshank nests will be conducted after the nesting period has concluded to avoid disturbance or attracting avian nest predators such as Large-billed Crows (Fig. 6). We will take habitat measurements at three spatial scales: home-range, nest-patch, and nest-site. At the nest-site scale, measurements will include variables such as diameter at breast height (DBH) of the nest-supporting tree (cm), circumference of the supporting branch (cm), height of the nest relative to the ground (m) aspect of the nest, etc. Habitat measurements on the nest-patch scale will include the density, DBH, distance from forest edge (m), and percent canopy cover. Habitat measurements on the home-range scale will include the size of the nest-containing forest patch. We will measure Common Redshank nest-site features on two spatial scales (nest-site, and nest-patch) as well as at the same spatial scales for random points where no nests are present. Variables we will measure at the nest-site scale will include the height of the vegetation (cm) around the nest, nest concealment (%), distance to the nearest body of water such as a pond (m); and distance to the mudflat (m). On the nest-patch scale we will measure variables such as vegetation height (cm); number, density, depth (cm), and area (m^2) of small bodies of water, micro-relief i.e. slope of the landscape, and the occurrence and density of other nesting Common Redshanks. We will also record the presence or absence of a potential shorebird predator, the Steller Sea-Eagle (*Haliaeetus pelagicus)* (Hipfner et al. 2012), and any potential nest predators such as corvids (Sugden and Beyersbergen 1986, Restani et al. 2001).

Assessing habitat changes throughout the breeding season: Using a quadcopter, we will attain detailed photographs of our study site throughout the summer field season. Using remote sensing technology these photographs will help us determine how the environmental conditions in Schaste Bay change over time, and help us more accurately measure habitat variables near species' nests, and subsequently their brood-rearing habitats. Quadcopter photos will help us assess changes in vegetation growth (% green), and hydrology (size, and density of ponds). To reduce disturbance to breeding shorebirds, we will not fly the drone low to the ground, in inclement weather, or if we observe shorebirds being actively disturbed.

Assessing brood rearing habitats: To characterize brood-rearing habitats for both species, we will opportunistically track adults visually confirmed to be with chicks or adults displaying brooding behaviors. To avoid disturbance, we will only observe brood-tending adults and chicks with binoculars and a spotting scope from a safe distance (30-50 m). To minimize disturbance, we will limit observations to 30-minute periods for each brood. When family groups are no longer present, we will record GPS points around the area they used and create maximum concave polygons (Jongbloed 2005). We will measure vegetation height (cm) in the polygon, and use remote sensing to categorize brood-rearing habitats in more detail on a larger scale.

Activity 1.4: Create a banded population of both species within the study site

Band and resight previously banded adults and juveniles: Common Redshanks are a ground-nesting species; thus, we will capture the majority of the species on nests using bow-nets over nests. Trapping will occur at least a week after incubation initiation to reduce nest abandonment. Additionally, during the brood-rearing phase, both Common Redshanks and Nordmann's Greenshanks mob observers when they are close to their chicks. These behaviors allow us to capture birds using mist-nets staked to the ground at a 30° angle, with chicks decoys and audio-speakers playing chick calls placed beneath. While attempting to incubate the chick decoys, the adult birds become entangled in the nets. Lastly we will use "elevated bow-net tables" to capture birds (Fig. 7). During the brood-rearing phase, both species perch on natural and man-made elevated structures (stakes, poles, and trees) that serve as look-out points for adults to watch for potential predators. To take advantage of these behaviors, we will attach bow-nets to circular platforms the general size and shape the bow-nets themselves, and attach them to poles approximately two meters high. These elevated bow-net tables will be staked throughout the study site. After several days birds become accustomed to these new structures, allowing us arm the nets and capture the birds as they return to their perches. Nordmann's Greenshanks will only be trapped using mist-nets and elevated bow-net tables, and not on the nest to avoid nest abandonment or attracting avian nest predators.

For each captured adult, we will collect morphological measurements (culmen, tarsus, etc.). We will take detailed photographs of incubation patches and molt, and collect feather and blood samples. For a separate study, we will use blood samples gathered from chicks and both adults to genetically-determine if either species exhibits extra-pair copulations, and determine individuals' sex. Analysis of all genetic material will be conducted by the All-Russian Research Institute of Environmental Protection, Moscow. We will only capture non-fledged chicks in the nest upon hatching, or muddy areas where visibility is high. We will band both species with unique color-bands, engraved flags, and Russian Academy of Sciences metal bands.

Resightings of banded individuals from this year and prior years will provide information on breeding ecology (e.g., adult site fidelity, mate fidelity, natal philopatry), and movement of individuals and groups within Schaste Bay and along migratory pathway and wintering areas outside of Russia. Resightings will also help assess site use by the species at different breeding stages, as well as the phenology of individuals arriving to and leaving from Schaste Bay.

3. Likely benefit to conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitat / or key research outputs:

In addressing this question, please also identify which EAAFP Key Result Areas the project will contribute to (see the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019 – 2028).

Winter surveys will help determine the diversity and quantity of nesting species in the area, and potentially make finding Nordmann's Greenshank nests during the breeding season more efficient. Information collected during the 2020 season will supplement data from 2009, and 2018-19 to ecologically, economically, and culturally justify the creation of a protected natural area known as "Schaste Bay Natural Park". The site will garner attention from the regional and national governments, as well as various conservation organizations (Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund). Several conservation measures will be implemented within the site to protect biodiversity whilst maintaining culturally valuable resources for local peoples. These points contribute to EAAFP Key Result Areas 1.1 (a comprehensive and coherent Flyway Network of Sites is developed for migratory waterbirds, including sites that are not currently Protected Areas), 1.2 (National and Site Partnerships have been developed to coordinate the implementation of the EAAFP at national and local levels), 1.4 (where appropriate, Flyway Network

Sites are being sustainably used to support subsistence livelihoods of the local community), and 3.3 (updated list of sites of international importance for migratory waterbirds for conservation management and prioritization).

The study of the endangered Nordmann's Greenshanks will help us learn about the species breeding ecology and habitat requirements for nesting and brood-rearing. We will establish the total number of breeding pairs in Schaste Bay, which can be compared to estimates made in 2009, 2018, and 2019 to better quantify their total population and population trajectory. We will learn critical information on the species breeding ecology that will help researchers create a conservation plan to protect Schaste Bay and endangered Nordmann's Greenshanks. Results from this project will support the need to establish an international Nordmann's Greenshank Task Force, and facilitate cooperation between conservation organizations. We will also learn information on the Common Redshank breeding ecology. Although thought to be less of a conservation issue, this species' breeding ecology is understudied and our results could highlight issues of concern. These points contribute to EAAFP Key Result Areas 3.1 (National monitoring systems to assess the status of migratory waterbirds and their habitats are established, maintained and further enhanced), and 3.2 (Conservation status reviews for waterbird populations are produced and updated to set and adapt priorities for action).

4. Alignment with EAAFP priorities:

This project supports two priorities within the 2019-2020 Shorebird Working Group's priority list. This includes priority 1 that states "Support the identification and monitoring of internationally important shorebird sites, and priority 2.2 that states "Develop a conservation plan, support the survey and monitoring of important sites, and work towards developing a task force for Nordmann's Greenshank along the flyway."

5. Explain the part of your project for which you are seeking funds in this application:

Funds from the EAAF Small Grant program are essential for providing salaries, field equipment (hip-waders, anti-encephalitis suits), satellite phone SIM card, and materials to construct a safe cabin for the research crew (Fig. 8). Additional logistical funds are provided by the Institute of Water and Ecological Problems, the Federal Scientific Center of the East Asia Terrestrial Biodiversity Far Eastern Branch, the Wildlife Conservation Society, World Wildlife Fund, BirdsRussia, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the University of Florida Gainesville.

6. Scientific References cited in the application:

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Part C. FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Experience Relevant to Project:

Dr. Vladimir Pronkevich has been monitoring Nordmann's Greenshank and other shorebirds in the Sea of Okhotsk in Eastern Russia since the early 1990's, and began this breeding ecology study of Nordmann's Greenshank at Schaste Bay in 2018. His first expedition to Schaste Bay was in 1993, and he returned once again in 2008. The objectives of these two expeditions were to survey the diversity of shorebirds using the area, and conduct detailed behavioral observations on Nordmann's Greenshanks (Pronkevich and Voronov 2013). This preliminary work allowed him to develop specific survey and capture methods during an expedition to Schaste Bay in 2018, and ultimately allowed us to capture adults and confirm the site as a breeding area for the species in 2019.

Mr. Konstantin Maslovskii was a key member during the 2019 expedition to Schaste Bay. He has extensive expertise in conducting ornithological research expeditions in remote regions of the Russian Far-East.

Mr. Philipp Maleko was also a key member of the 2019 field expedition to Schaste Bay. He has participated in a variety of ornithological studies throughout North America before starting his M.S. degree studying Nordmann's Greenshanks.

Please **also** attach a maximum 2-page CV or list non-academic research experience and experience with migratory waterbirds/conservation e.g. work experience, volunteer experience, bird banding, birdwatching.

PROJECT BUDGET (please outline your entire project, not just the component for which funds are being sought)

	Item (Please list)	**$ Budget** (in USD)	**Current support / Requested Support** (source and amount)	**Requested support from EAAFP** (source and amount)
Equipment: (details)	1. Batteries ($162) 2. Field clothing ($485) 3. Sat phone SIM ($500) 4. Butane gas ($114)	$1,261	$114, WCS (pending)	$1147
Consumable items (details)	1. Food for winter and summer field seasons ($6300) 2. Materials for cabin construction ($930)	$7,230	$6300, WCS (pending)	$930
Travel and accommodation	1. International airfare ($2300) 2. Domestic airfare ($1500) 3. Local fuel ($1455) 4. Vehicle repairs ($2104) 5. Housing ($1530)	$8,889	$8,889, WCS (pending)	$0
Computing & clerical (details)	n/a	$0	$0	$0
Other	1. Salaries, winter season, PI + 3 assistants ($2000) 2. Salaries, summer season, PI + 3 assistants ($5700) 3. Salaries, summer season, two local guides ($2703) 4. Salaries, summer season, driver and guard ($1000)	$11,403	$5000, WWF (secured) $3480, WCS (pending)	$2923
		Total amount requested from Small Grants Fund: (All amounts in USD)		$5000

Budget justification: Please provide brief description and justification of all major budgetary items requested, indicating any that are essential to the project and/or conference for which you are applying (250 word maximum):

Travel to, and working in, a place as remote as the Bay of Schastye is expensive. We will need to bring all of our food with us, for a total of $6300 to feed four people in both seasons. We will work in two teams of two people to cover more ground (salary of $7700 for both seasons for four people). In addition, given the high number of bears in the area, which pose a legitimate safety threat, each team will have a local guide as a safety measure ($2703 total). We will also be expanding our field camp ($930 in supplies) to accommodate the larger field crew. From EAAFP we only ask for partial support for salary, equipment, and consumable items.

We have secured partial funding from WWF ($5000), and a larger grant from WCS ($18,783) is pending. We expect to hear back from WCS by mid-February.

Figures:

Figure 1: Distribution of Nordmann's Greenshank in Eastern Russia.

Figure 2: Surveyed areas within Schaste Bay during the 2019 field season, and areas where we will survey again in 2020. Red lines indicate the extent of area surveyed by boat and on foot, while numbers indicate specific sites where Nordmann's Greenshank pairs were seen.

Figure 3: Location of the Nordmann's Greenshank nest (NOGR01) found in 2019.

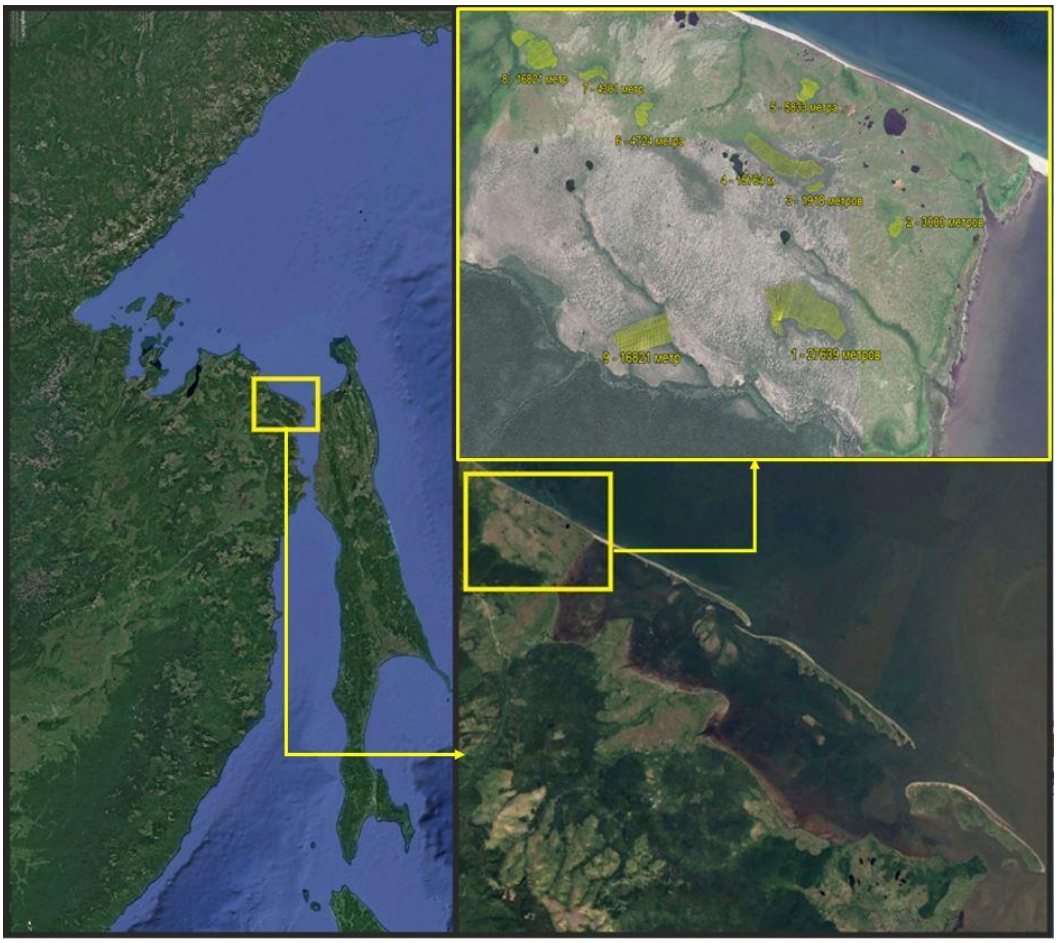

Figure 4: Area targeted for winter surveys in 2020, with forest patches of particular interest highlighted in yellow on the top right.

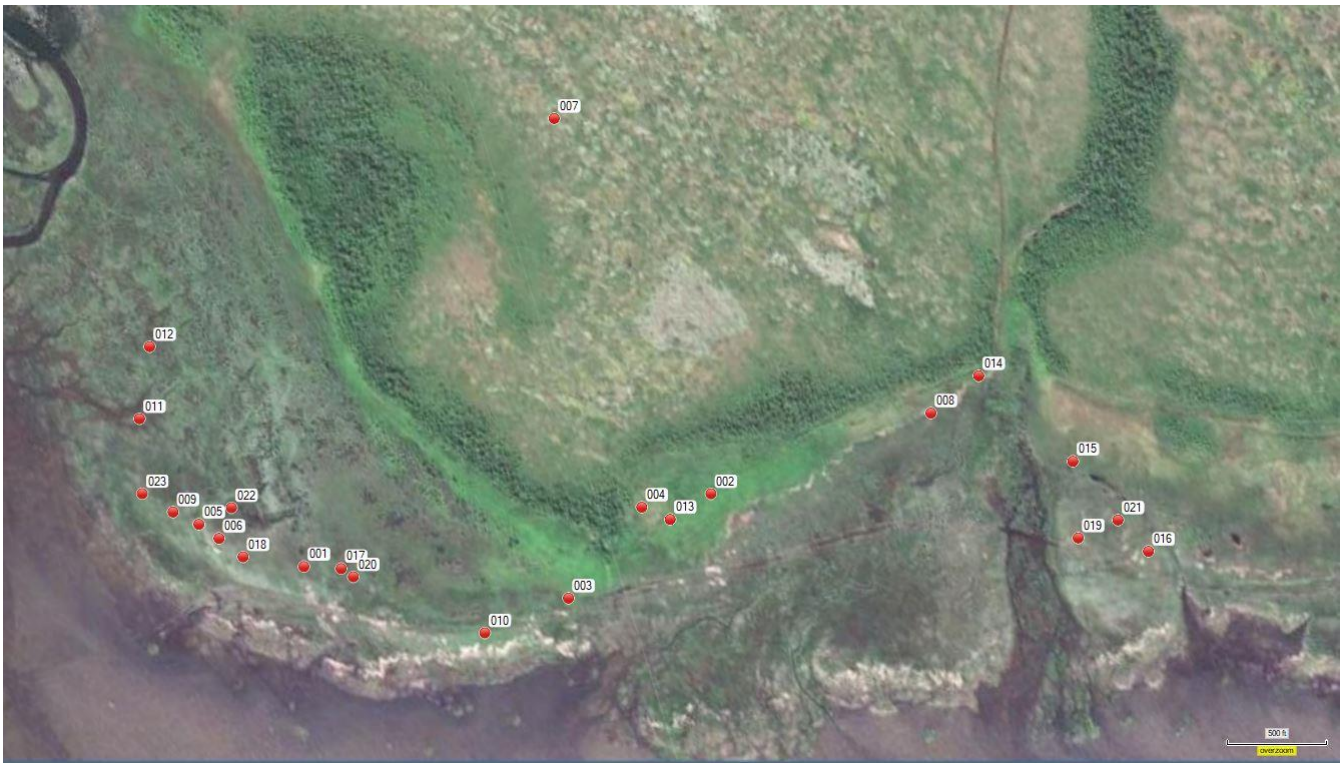

Figure 5: Locations of Common Redshank nests found in 2019.

Figure 6: Camera-trap image of a Large-billed Crow taking eggs from a Nordmann's Greenshank nest highlights the need to be extra vigilant around nests to avoid attracting avian nest predators.

Figure 7: Nordmann's Greenshank perched on an elevated bow-net table.

Figure 8: The research team at the Schaste Bay study site cabin, 2019. From left to right: Philipp Maleko, Vladimir Pronkevich, and Konstantin Maslovsky. A new facility must be built to safely house additional research members.

DECLARATION

I have discussed the contents of this application with the relevant Chair/s and Coordinator/s of relevant Working Group and/or Task Forces and I certify that to the best of my knowledge all documentation and information submitted or made available by me is true, accurate and complete.

By ticking the following box you are agreeing to the above statement:

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

All relevant sections of this application have been completed.	Yes √	No
Full payment details have been provided on the final page.	Yes √	No
Application is being submitted electronically as one single document.	Yes √	No
Application is being submitted in MS Word format.	Yes √	No
Application has been discussed with the relevant Chair/s and Coordinator/s of relevant working Group and/or Task Forces and these have been carbon copied (cc) to this application submission as evidence they have seen and approved this application.	Yes √	No

Applications that do not comply with these guidelines will be returned to the applicant.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Please email your application as a single document to:
secretariat@eaaflyway.net

EAAFP will acknowledge the receipt of your application.

Applications close at 5pm (Seoul Time) on 3 February 2020
Results will be announced on 3 March 2020

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Decision: _____

Authorised: __ / __ / __ _____

Entered: __ / __ / __ _____

Comments: _____

Lead Investigator Advised: __ / __ / __ _____

PLEASE COMPLETE PAYMENT DETAILS ON FINAL PAGE

PAYMENT DETAILS

To ensure prompt payment of successful applications please complete the following details and submit with your application.

PREFERRED PAYMENT METHOD

Electronic funds transfer (EFT)

GRANT CONDITIONS

In accordance with the application criteria, the following conditions must be met:

- Funds are to be strictly exempt from organisational administration charges.
- You are required to submit one copy by email of the final report within 3 months of the completion of the project.
- You are required to acknowledge the EAAFP and the Small Grant Fund in any presentations, publications, reports or promotional material arising from this work. Please email secretariat@eaaflyway.net in order to obtain an electronic copy of EAAFP logo for use on any display material you will be preparing.
- You may be requested to write a brief article for the EAAFP newsletter.
- You are required to provide EAAFP with an electronic copy of your final report at the completion of your project, as well as a copy of any publications that result from your grant.

NOTES FOR APPLICANTS

1. Applications should be targeted towards EAAFP key species or habitats, regions, or emerging threats or other specified Partnership objectives. All applications should demonstrate how the project will contribute to the implementation of the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028.
2. The maximum amount annually provided by the Small Grants Fund to an applicant or for a specific project is $5,000 (USD). If the project budget exceeds this amount, then the supporting funds and funders need to be identified in the Application.
3. Funds are limited and not all applications may be funded.
4. Applications with in-kind contributions and other matching financial are preferred.
5. Grants are awarded on the strict understanding that funds will be exempt from institutional administration charges, unless Partner government law so requires.
6. Conference attendance will be supported to a maximum of $1,000 (USD) and is only for Task Force or Working Group members delivering their own work as a presentation, paper or poster.
7. Applications must be reviewed by the relevant EAAFP Working Group or Task Force Chair or Coordinator, who will provide a statement of the relative merit of the application against the assessment criteria, prior to submission.
8. EAAFP Working Groups and Task Forces are eligible for funding to go towards meetings, research, monitoring, site management, training and CEPA events and materials.
9. Students, with the support of the relevant Working Group or Task Force, are only eligible for funding toward studies being undertaken at a research institution or travel to a conference to present original research.
10. Lead investigators are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits from government authorities, indigenous communities, ethics committees etc., to undertake approved research or monitoring studies.
11. Project completion is required within 18 months of the close of the Application period.
12. Successful applicants will be required to provide a short write up of their project outcomes for the EAAFP newsletter and website and to report to the relevant Working Group or Task Force. They are also strongly encouraged to publish their results in peer-reviewed journals.

Call for proposal opens on 3 January. Applications close at 5pm (Seoul Time) on 3 February annually. Announcements of funding will be made by 3 March.

A follow-up application process may be available 6 months later should funds remain.

Guidance to Applicants

1. Eligibility of Projects

1.1	The focus of the project is migratory waterbirds and their habitats.	**Yes** √	No
1.2	The project will improve the understanding of factors important for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the EAAF.	**Yes** √	No
1.3	The applicant agrees to provide a final report within 3 months of the completion of the project.	**Yes** √	No
1.4	The applicant agrees to submit 1-2-page article and photographs for inclusion on EAAFP's website and/or write a brief article for the EAAFP's newsletter. Photographers will be acknowledged.	**Yes** √	No
1.5	The applicant will acknowledge the support of the EAAFP in any publications, presentations and reports arising from this work.	**Yes** √	No

2. Project Assessment Criteria

2.1 The contribution the project is anticipated to make to the Key Result Areas listed in the EAAFP Strategic Plan 2019-2028.

2.2 The alignment of the project with priority Single Species Action Plans or overall Working Group and Task Force objectives. Applications are encouraged to contact the relevant Working Group and Task Force Chair or Coordinator to brief them on the Project Proposal. Please contact the EAAFP Programme Officer if additional information is needed (programme@eaaflyway.net).

2.3 The justification for the grant funds requested relative to the overall budget of the project.

2.4 Leveraging of in-kind contributions and other matching financial.

2.5 The track record of the lead investigator and the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives.

3. Project Assessment Process (for information)

3.1 Following initial Secretariat and WG/TF screening and review, the Technical Sub-Committee (TsC) will select at least 1 reviewer per 5 applications (e.g. 4 reviewers for 20 applications). Reviewers should be TsC members or other persons with appropriate expertise and a flyway-wide perspective. Considerations for reviewer selection will include geographic and technical expertise diversity. A lead reviewer will be identified to coordinate the process for each application.

3.2 Reviews should ensure calibration on the ranking definitions and scoring criteria prior to beginning reviews.

3.3 Ensure that each application is reviewed by a minimum of 2 reviewers, with an offset system so pairs of reviewers are rotated in different combinations (for example, with 20 applications, Reviewer A gets applications 1-10, B gets 6-15, C gets 11-20, D gets 16-5). Reviews are encouraged to review as many additional projects as possible.

3.4 Reviewers are to recuse themselves from reviewing any application where there is a conflict of interest. These applications will be assigned to another reviewer.

3.5 Conduct independent reviews, including reading the application, scoring, ranking, and notes. Submit reviews to lead reviewer for compilation in a table. Note that all applications should be read prior to scoring to increase perspective. Submit to the lead reviewer, who will share tallied results back with the other reviewers.

3.6 Discuss the merits of all applications as a group.

3.7 Provide for an opportunity to reach out to applicants with questions, recommendation, or requests for more information. Communicate with the WG/TF Chairs/Coordinators if necessary.

3.8 Strive for consensus on overall applications ranking and recommendations on funding.

3.9 If there are numerous projects that are scored/ranked closely near the “funding line”, then all reviewers should review those projects prior to a final recommendation.

3.10 The lead reviewer will compile and deliver the final recommendations for funding to the Secretariat.

3.11 Review Team and the Secretariat should examine the process and recommend changes for the next cycle.