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Geographical range

Species of the Day: Spoon-billed Sandpiper

The **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**, *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It breeds in north-eastern Russia and winters in Bangladesh, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand and some other areas of Southeast Asia.

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper is currently experiencing an extremely rapid decline in numbers. The reason for this change in fortune is not well understood. Habitat changes and disturbance to its breeding grounds may be important, but the loss of staging posts on migration routes are perhaps the biggest difficulty, as South Korea and China have reclaimed huge areas of mudflats for food production. Meanwhile, in the winter in Myanmar, waders are hunted indiscriminately for food.

It is likely that all of these factors need to be addressed by conservationists, although the problem of land reclamation is almost insurmountable. At present, researchers are conducting as many surveys and studies as possible to get a clearer idea of the causes of the decline and what can be done to reverse it.

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