

What is the 'Rwanda Waterbird Counts'?

The Rwanda Waterbird Counts is a 'citizen science' initiative where volunteers collect information about water bird species and numbers in the important wetlands in the country. It is part of the worldwide International Waterbird Census coordinated by Wetlands International. The collected data are published on an open website, as well as the Rwanda Biodiversity Information System <https://rbis.ur.ac.rw/> so that scientists and policy makers all over the world can use them to monitor the state of vulnerable lakes and wetlands and make informed decisions about how to manage these in a sustainable way.

The country coordinator in Rwanda is [Claudien Nsabagasani](#) from [Birding Educational Tours Rwanda](#) and the project is coordinated through a partnership between the Center of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resource Management at University of Rwanda and Birding Education Tours Rwanda.



Practical information

- ✓ Participating at a Count takes one or two days
- ✓ Counting will be done at the sites (lakes, wetlands) using direct counting methods from lake shores, boats and local canoes.
- ✓ At each site, counting will be conducted once a day during the morning (8:00-12:00pm) or late afternoon (3-5pm).
- ✓ Counting will follow internationally agreed 'protocols' including the International Waterbird Census forms that include date, time of counting, weather status, location/GPS coordinates, each bird observed (a checklist will be made available), estimate of population numbers, as well as other information where possible (e.g. threats).
- ✓ Counters can subscribe to a technical training ahead of the counts. This training is recommended, but not obligatory. Counters who did not attend the training will get basic instructions on the day of the counts themselves.
- ✓ Counters are encouraged to bring: binoculars, a bird guide if available, waterproof clothes and boots, water and snacks. Depending on the number of counters staying overnight and the budget available, accommodation/camping and food will be provided but donations or self-funding is very welcome.
- ✓ If volunteers can help with the transport of fellow-counters, that will be extremely helpful. If you stay overnight, please bring your own tent if you have one.

We plan to visit the following sites on the following dates in 2022:

Saturday 5 Feb – Umusambi & Nyandungu wetlands

Sunday 6 Feb – Gikondo & Gatsata wetlands

Monday 7 Feb – Lake Mugesera and Lake Ihema, Akagera NP

Wednesday 9 Feb – Lake Ruhondo

Thursday 10 Feb – Lake Burera

Friday 11 Feb – Rugezi wetland

More information and subscription:

Are you interested to join as a waterbird counter in one or more of the planned trips? Please contact Claudien Nsabagasani at 0788754615 or email to rwandabirding@gmail.com.

The Rwanda Waterbird Counts are supported by: