

Project Update: December 2022

During the late summer and autumn (phase one) we have performed a series of field expeditions of bird counts in major parts of the study sites, which includes the suburbs of Asmara city and the eastern escarpment. Our research team has investigated a variety of habitats like wetlands and reservoirs, Asmara city sewage system, flat plains with irrigated and seasonal farms. The Debubawi Bahri National Reserve in the eastern escarpments and adjacent riverine, was also surveyed. During the survey, a total of 90 bird species were identified and recorded, many of which are confirmed as residents and breeding. Relative to habitat type and quality, and level of species richness, their distribution and relative abundance varies between sampling units, with unique microhabitats, from very common and widespread to rare and localised. Moreover, the expedition helped us to identify and map some more important habitats and bird sites, especially for waterbirds. Some potential threats to the birds and their habitats were also identified, a crucial step for further investigation, conservation and monitoring activities. More data will be collected during the top migration and dry seasons to see the seasonal variation in species richness and relative abundance of birds, expecting more species turnover between the seasons.



Figure 1: Team member, while counting birds in the field



Figure 2: Flocks of mixed bird species



Figure 3: Sewage system increases site productivity