

World Wetlands Day

February, 27th Feb. 2013

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

In 1977, Jordanian Government joined the RAMSAR convention of wetlands, and declared Azraq wetland as the first Jordanian RAMSAR site with an area of 7,372 hectares, mainly because of the wetland's significant and global importance of migrant birds. Part of the site was declared soon in 1978 as a protected area named as Azraq Wetland Reserve and managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature.

Since then, the wetland was challenged by the over-pumping of the Azraq aquifer groundwater, that is the only permanent water source fed into the wetland, water level has steadily dropped, resulting in extreme depletion and erosion of the wetland area. By 1993, the wetland was virtually destroyed. In 1994, RSCN began a restoration and rehabilitation (GEF/UNDP funded) efforts and managed to restore a significant portion of the site resembling minor percentage of the original wetland.

In celebration of World Wetlands Day, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) in cooperation with Arab Bank organized 2 events:

The first event was a lecture held at Wild Jordan on the 4th of February entitled "Azraq reserve: Between past and present". This saw around 30 members and friends of RSCN

The second event was a festival on Wednesday 27th February in the Azraq Wetland Reserve. The festival was based on the theme that was declared for this year by RAMSAR "Take Care of Water". Over 100 local community members stakeholders and school students attended the festival. The participants was engaged in touristic activities that give them the experience of wetlands tourism including hiking, bird watching, eco games, short interactive workshop about Wetlands.

The events were designed to raise awareness of the global importance of the wetlands, and attract interest in Azraq Wetland, as well as to bring decision-makers' attention to such importance and interest in hopes that strong actions could be taken to save the area.





(Enclosed some photos)





The Wetlands lecture at Wild Jordan Center given by Mr.Nashat Homaidan- Conservation specialist at RSCN





Welcoming and speeches





Distribution souvenirs for the stakeholders





March Trail round in Azraq Wetland Reserve





Bird Watching at Azraq Wetland bird hide