



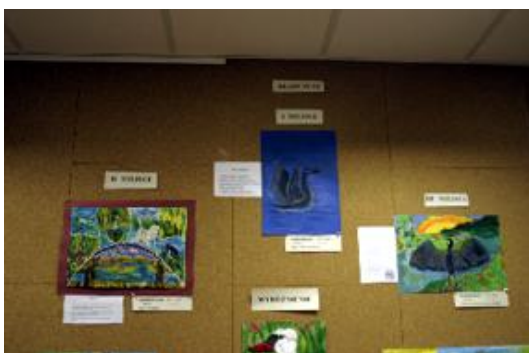
**World Wetland Day Celebration at Warta Mouth National Park,
POLAND
3rd February 2008**

As every year, since 2001, we were celebrating World Wetland Day at our headquarters on 3rd February 2008. We have prepared some activities and contests for local people, especially for kids, conducted both at the celebration day and after it, until the end of February.

We have started our activities in December 2007, when we announced an art contest titled: "Postcard from the Wetlands" for the youngest kids from primary schools located around the Park. From only few small schools we obtained over 350 works made by kids with support of their teachers. Surprisingly, we saw that subject of the contest was not an uniform, simple task because each child saw wetlands in a different way: as a place for water birds, as a place with a lot of water or where are spectacular willows etc. That was quite an interesting thing to find out how children perceive wetlands. Just before the celebration of the World Wetland Day we have had to choose only several contest winners, the award presentation was held on February 3rd. Almost all prizewinning kids came to our headquarters to participate in the celebration and receive their prizes. All awards were founded by the Polish Ministry of the Environment.



1. *Handing in prizes for first places.*



2. *"Postcard from the Wetland" - winners*

The celebration was opened by Park's Director Mr. Konrad Wypychowski who made a short introductory speech about wetlands and Ramsar convention importance. After that we started activities prepared by us specially for this occasion.

First Mr. Marian Jasicki opened the beautiful and amazing stamps exhibition titled: "Lords of the sky – day birds of prey". Mr. Jasicki collected those stamps during many years, they come from all around the World and present numerous species of birds of prey.



3. Stamps exhibition

The second in the schedule was lecture concerning water birds and their importance for Warta river biodiversity, titled: "The Wildlife of Warta River valley – birds as its value bioindicators" led by Prof. Aleksander Winiecki from Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań. On his lecture he was focused on different habitats along Warta river and their importance for birds, also for internationally threatened species like: black stork, corncrace or aquatic warbler etc. He was also explaining how Warta river and its valley was created and how we can protect the unique, diversificated habitats which can be found all along this incredible river.



4. *Prof. Aleksander Winiecki*



5. *... and his lecture*

After this interesting and fascinating lecture we have invited all our guests for a guided excursion to the nearest place where we could watch birds and their behaviour. Each participant got binoculars, both guides took also couple of telescopes. The excursion lasted approximately two hours and was enthusiastically received. People were really excited to watch many rare as well as the well known/common birds species living in this area.



5. *Birdwatching in Warta Mouth National Park*

We noticed that many people who spent almost the whole life near the Park do not know how beautiful and extraordinary terrain is all around them. So, again it became visible that people do not realise that wetlands are one of the most important ecosystems, both for humans and for the wildlife. This convinced us to prepare again free wetlands workshops for kids from neighbouring schools. We will be conducting it until the end of February and (what is a good sign) we already have some schools interested in participating in our workshops. In the future we would like to encourage adults to be more involved in this kind of activities. This is our goal for the next year.