

# CALL FOR APPLICATION PO DELTA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON BIRDWATCHING AND ECOTOURISM

7 - 11 OCTOBER 2019

PO DELTA BIOSPHERE RESERVE

“Birding plays a significant and growing part in the tourism industry, and creates direct and indirect economic benefits for many countries and communities, also amongst developing countries,”

*Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS),  
Elizabeth Maruma Mrema*



With the support of



Comune di Comacchio



Comune di Codigoro



Comune di Ostellato

Partner



SWAROVSKI  
OPTIK

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON BIRDWATCHING AND ECOTOURISM IN BRIEF

Emilia-Romagna Po Delta Regional Park (ERPDRP), as part of the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve, promotes the 1<sup>st</sup> **International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism**. With this initiative, the ERPDRP aims at enhancing its experience in birdwatching and ecotourism, sharing it with the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and operators in natural areas.

This proposal starts from the belief that, ecotourism and birdwatching can be important drivers for sustainable development and ways to make natural and cultural values becoming a common heritage to local community and tourists.

The International School is part of the traditional "Eel festival" organized by of Comacchio (FE) and held in one of the main periods in which Po Delta hosts the largest number of bird species.

### Dates and places

**Date:** the MAB International School lasts 5 days, from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

**Place:** it will take place in Po Delta Biosphere Reserve, located in the north-east of Italy in the Emilia-Romagna Po Delta Regional Park.

### Official language

All the lessons will be held in **english**.

### Application

To successful apply to the International School, **two actions are requested:**

- Fulfil the application form, you can find on this link <https://bit.ly/2XiZp2b>
- Send the payment receipt to [info@biosferadeltapo.org](mailto:info@biosferadeltapo.org)

Candidacy will be accepted only when both documents have been submitted.

The final date to submit applications is Friday, **September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019**.

The maximum participant number for the International School is 30 people, following the order of complete subscription of the application.

### Target

The International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism is addressed to:

- Administrators and officers of Public Administrations in territories and natural areas where birdwatching and ecotourism can be developed;
- Directors or employees in tourist destination management organization (DMO) interested in developing birdwatching and ecotourism;
- Tourist operators already operating in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism who wish to improve.
- Tourist operators who wish to diversify their activities in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism.
- People aspiring to work on birdwatching and ecotourism.
- Young people (>18) students and researchers interested in birdwatching and ecotourism for their studies

## INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ON BIRDWATCHING AND ECOTOURISM

The International School aims to encourage and promote birdwatching and ecotourism as tools for sustainable tourism development within the Biosphere Reserves and, in general, in natural areas. In fact, they can be elements able to support the economic development of local communities, while ensuring the preservation and enjoyment of natural values of a territory. The experience gained over the years by the operators of Po Delta Biosphere Reserve represents a good practice for sustainable development in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism, representing valid areas in which this territory can offer knowledge and know-how.



The International School will include both frontal lessons, as well as visits on the territory. These activities are organized to understand what birdwatching and ecotourism mean for Po Delta Biosphere Reserve. Participants will discover how Po Delta is leading its transformation and development to sectors - birdwatching and ecotourism - steadily growing. These two sectors can contribute to the economic and social development of the territory, but above all, they can contribute to dissemination of the Po Delta values. Those values are not just nature-related, but they have also a strong connection with cultural ones as Po Delta (in Emilia-Romagna Region area) is also part of the UNESCO World Heritage List, as cultural landscape with the city of Ferrara. Participants will get in touch with experts and entrepreneurs in the fields of ecotourism and birdwatching, who will share their expertise.





## Po Delta International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism

### Specific objectives of the courses

The International School aims, through a multidisciplinary approach, at increasing the knowledge and the awareness of those who deal with planning and territorial development in Biosphere Reserves, and in general in natural areas, on the opportunities offered by ecotourism and birdwatching. At the same time, it aims to offer tourist operators the opportunity to understand the potential of these sectors and how to structure a coherent tourism offer.

In particular, the International Schools aims at:

- Equipping participants with new skills, knowledge and approaches in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism, where Po Delta area is among top destinations;
- Sharing and upgrade the successful experience and expertise of Po Delta and its operators in birdwatching and ecotourism for a mutual growth;
- Creating and strengthening relationships among Biosphere Reserves and natural areas where birdwatching and ecotourism can play an important development role.

### Target participants

The International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism is addressed to:

- Administrators and officers of Public Administration in territories and natural areas where birdwatching and ecotourism can be developed;
- Directors or employees in tourist destination management organization (DMO) interested in developing birdwatching and ecotourism;
- Tourist operators already working in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism who wish to improve their skills and offer.
- Tourist operators who wish to diversify their activities, enlarging their offer in the field of birdwatching and ecotourism
- People aspiring to work with birdwatching and ecotourism.
- Young people (>18) students and researchers interested in birdwatching and ecotourism for their studies

Participants are expected to be people actively working or involved within existing Biosphere Reserves and/or natural areas interested in developing birdwatching and ecotourism on their territory, learning and exploiting the experience that Po Delta can offers.

## PO DELTA: A PERFECT PLACE FOR ECOTOURISM AND BIRDWATCHING

The Po Delta Biosphere Reserve, located in the north-east of Italy and designated in 2015, comprises an important variety of habitats: forests, freshwater swamps and saltwater lagoons, rivers, salt flats and paddy fields, sandy coastlines, dunes and it's very rich in biodiversity. In fact, here you can find 3 species of reptiles, 2 species of amphibians, 10 species of fish, 1 species of mammals and 1 species of plant (included in Annex II of the Habitats Directive). Moreover it hosts over than 360 species of birds, (90 of which are in Annex I Dir. Birds), over 150 are nesting birds and over 180 are wintering birds.

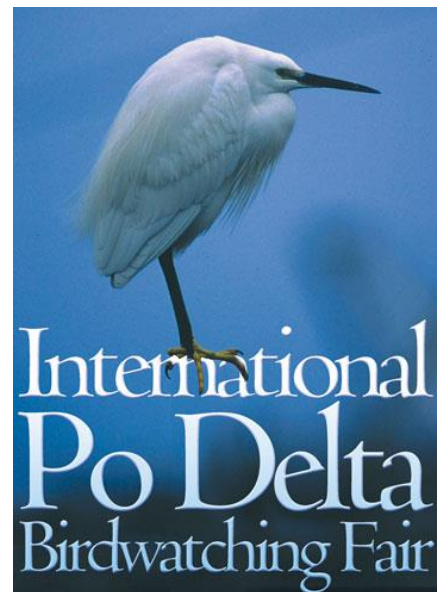
The Po Delta area represents the **most important ornithological site in Italy** and one of the most significant in Europe. Its rich mosaic of eco-systems and its specific geographical location along a vital north-south and east-west migratory route, between the west of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, enable the observer to experience numerous water bird species which find here an ideal habitat to feed, find shelter, and nest.



### Birdwatching and ecotourism in Po Delta

All these characteristic features, make Po Delta an ideal area for those who want to practice birdwatching and ecotourism. In the last years, these sectors have grown a lot. Starting as activities self-organised, today it represents a growing industry as shown by the [International Birdwatching Fair](#), a biennial meeting held in the Po Delta which calls specialised organisation, firms and enthusiastic all over Europe with also important sponsors such as Swarovski. The last fair was in 2018, in its 9th edition and it hosted more than 20.000 visitors.

The importance of birdwatching and ecotourism as touristic sector is confirmed by the many firms born and raised, also collaborating together in order to organize a structured offer. In this framework, "[Primavera Slow](#)", represents one of the main results, matching excursions by bike, on foot, by boat, on horseback and itineraries dedicated to food and wine, birdwatching and photography lessons, educational workshops designed for children and much more.







## LOCATION

The International School will be held in Emilia-Romagna Po Delta Regional Park as part of the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve.



Geographically located in the North-East of Italy, at the mouth of Po river, during the week participant will discover the mosaic of landscapes constituting the Po Delta.

Headquarter of the week is the City of Comacchio (FE), the most original and fascinating historic town in the Po Delta. Heir to ancient Spina, fought over by Ferrara and Ravenna, Popes and Emperors for centuries, its origins go far back: it rose up on 13 islets at the dawn of the Middle Ages and founded its urban and economic development exclusively on the water. Fishing, fish-breeding in the lagoon and producing salt were the source of its prosperity and also of its setbacks as they brought it into conflict with Venice. Today, Comacchio still boasts unique, intact architectural features; a town of canals, palaces and monumental bridges, inhabited by people with a strong sense of identity who are proud of their origins.



Po Delta International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism

During week, lessons will held also in other sites of the Po Delta Regional Park of high value for birdwatching and ecotourism, discovering in this way also the territory and how these activities are made.

First will be the "*Oasi di Canneviè*". It is generally quite shallow, and the prevalent vegetation includes underwater plants and bed of rushes. A small number of purple herons, little bittern and great reed warblers nest here. The migratory birds are much more numerous, counting mainly ducks. The fish include grey mullets and eels. Particularly characteristic of the area are the fishing house of Porticino and the old fishing station at Canneviè, recently restored and currently being used as accommodation and restaurant.



*Oasi di Canneviè*

The "*Valli di Comacchio*", marshes which are still one of the largest lagoon systems in Italy. They cover an area of more than 11,000 hectares between Comacchio and the river Reno and are connected to the sea via canals. They form an environment of rare beauty within the Po Delta Park: in some places the stretches of brackish water are interrupted by rises in the land or divided by embankments and ancient sandbars, in others they extend freely like mirrors reflecting the ever-changing light of the sky. Here participants will be at the Bettolino di Foce, a restaurant set within an ancient 'fishing hut' in the Comacchio Lagoons.



*Valli di Comacchio*

Then, there will be the "*Bosco della Mesola*" where, one part of the wood is a Full Nature Reserve, an area fully protected and left to its natural evolution, while the rest of the area is a Nature Reserve. The terrain is of alluvial origin and is irregular, a symptom of ancient dunes which in parts form pools of water with marsh vegetation. At one time, the wood, being surrounded by marshes, was frequented by numerous bird species typical of the wetlands; the drastic reduction in fauna, caused by the drainage works, has been halted by the creation of a wetland area inside the wood, called Elciola, generally closed to the public, where duck species and herons find sanctuary. The mammals present in the Mesola Woods Nature Reserve are mainly fallow deer and a large nucleus (about 300) of "Mesola deer", the last nucleus of the ancient deer of the Po Valley.



*Bosco della Mesola*



## AGENDA

### International MAB UNESCO School on Birdwatching and ecotourism

International School will be held from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October until Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019 with the following programme. Please, consider this as a first draft. In the following weeks, we will share the finale one.

#### Monday 7<sup>th</sup>

##### Afternoon

International School opening

- Institutional greetings  
*Marco Fabbri, President of Ente di Gestione per i Parchi e la Biodiversità – Delta del Po (Emilia-Romagna Po Delta Regional Park)*
- Introduction to the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve  
*Director of Ente di Gestione per i Parchi e la Biodiversità – Delta del Po (Emilia-Romagna Po Delta Regional Park)*
- Presentation of the International School programme and its name  
*Filippo Lenzerini, Punto 3 srl*
- Strategies and interventions in the Po Delta for birdwatching and ecotourism  
*Angela Nazzaruolo, Director of Delta 2000 Local Action Group*

Guided Visit: historic centre of Comacchio.

Dinner in an affiliated restaurant

#### Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup>

##### Morning

Lecture: The evolution of ecotourism and sustainable tourism

Lunch in the Manifattura dei Marinati

##### Afternoon

Lecture: How to develop tourism connected to naturalistic photography – *Municipality of Argenta, local municipality working on the connection between photography and tourism.*

Lecture: The opportunities related to the use of optical media in the development of ecotourism – *Swarovski Optik*

Guided visit: the archaeological museum "[Delta Antico](#)"

Dinner in an affiliated restaurant

## Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>

### Morning

Lecture: Evolution of birdwatching in Europe and birdwatchers profile

Best practice experience: *Po Delta Tourism, local enterprise consortium specialised in ecotourism and birdwatching*

Lunch to Oasi di Cannevié

### Afternoon

Guided birdwatching excursion in the Oasi di Cannevié

Best practice experience: *Oasi di Cannevié local accomodation facility specialised in ecotourism and birdwatching*

Dinner in an affiliated restaurant

## Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>

### Morning

Guided boat excursion from Porto Garibaldi (FE) to Bettolino di Foce, Comacchio (FE)

Best Practice experience: *ANTEA, local enterprise specialised ecotourism and boat excursion*

Best practice experience: *Bettolino di Foce, traditional restaurant of Po Delta*

Lunch at Bettolino di Foce

### Afternoon

Guided bike excursion in the Boscone della Mesola

Best Practice experience ; *AQUA, local enterprise specialised in ecotourist excursion*

Dinner in an affiliated restaurant

## Friday 11<sup>th</sup>

### Morning

Lecture: Scientific research, monitoring activity and birds conservation as attractive and valuable elements for birdwatching in Isole di Toscana Biosphere Reserve (Italy)

Lecture: ecotourism and birdwatching in Terre del Ebro Biosphere Reserve (Spain)

Lunch in an affiliated restaurant

## Application process

To attend the International School, participants must:

- Fulfil the application form <https://bit.ly/2XiZp2b>
- Send the payment receipt to [info@biosferadeltapo.org](mailto:info@biosferadeltapo.org)

Candidacy will be accepted only when both documents have been submitted

## Participation Fees

		FULL RATE	BASIC RATE
What the fee includes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation and breakfast (7-11 October)</li> <li>• 4 lunches (8, 9, 10, 11 October)</li> <li>• 4 dinners (7, 8, 9, 10, October)</li> <li>• All activities planned</li> <li>• Tuition and materials</li> <li>• VAT</li> <li>• Travel insurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 lunches (8, 9, 10, 11 October)</li> <li>• 4 dinners (7, 8, 9, 10, October)</li> <li>• All activities planned</li> <li>• Tuition and materials</li> <li>• VAT</li> <li>• Travel insurance</li> </ul>
Cost and mode of cancellations	BEFORE 31/07/2019	487,00€	225,00€
		for cancellations received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• up to 30 days before the date of arrival free of charge;</li> <li>• up to 15 days before the date of arrival a penalty of 30 % will be required;</li> <li>• up to 7 days a penalty of 60 % will be required;</li> <li>• after this period the full amount due will be required</li> </ul>	
	FROM 01/08/2019	564,00€	250,00€
		for cancellations received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• up to 30 days before the date of arrival a penalty of 20% will be required;</li> <li>• up to 15 days before the date of arrival a penalty of 50% will be required;</li> <li>• up to 7 days a penalty of 80% will be required;</li> <li>• after this period the full amount due will be required</li> </ul>	

International school rate will **not include**:

- Arrival costs to get to Bologna or Ferrara
- Transfer to/from Comacchio
- Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October lunch

## Information payment

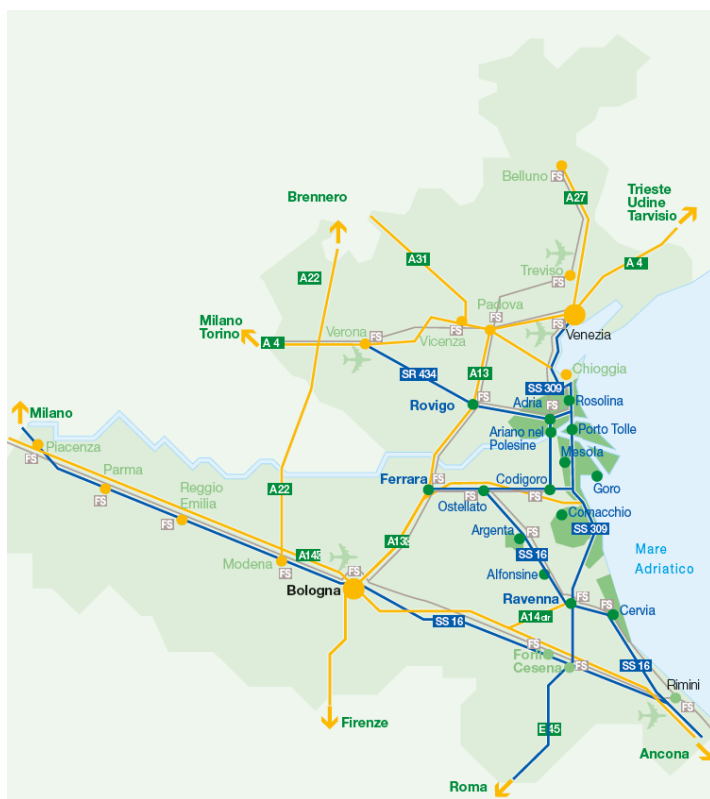
Account holder: Po Delta Tourism s.r.l.

IBAN: IT61L0850923501019009417851

Causal: International School – Surname of participant Name of participant – Basic/Full rate



## Logistic information



Here you can find some information to get to Comacchio (FE).

### BY PLANE

Nearest airports:  
BOLOGNA 98 km Guglielmo Marconi Airport  
TREVISO 130 km Treviso Airport  
VENICE 110 km Marco Polo Airport  
VERONA 170 km Valerio Catullo Airport

### BY CAR

A13 Ferrara Sud exit  
motorway interchange Ferrara - Porto  
Garibaldi  
at 47th km take exit for Comacchio

### BY TRAIN

The nearest stations are Ferrara (approx.  
52 km away)  
Ostellato (approx. 21 km away)  
Codigoro (approx. 19 km away)  
Ravenna (approx 36 km away)

There are bus connections from all of these to Comacchio [www.tper.it](http://www.tper.it)

### BY BUS

Bus service  
FERRARA / COMACCHIO BEACHES  
RAVENNA / COMACCHIO BEACHES  
Timetables and Info: Tel 0532 599411 - [www.tper.it](http://www.tper.it)

### TRANSFER

From the application form, we will try to aggregate the transfer needs, so as to share the trip and further lower the cost.

Special rates have been arranged for International School participants with a transfer company. For more information contact Po Delta Tourism.

## International School travel agency

PO DELTA TOURISM is the travel agency of the school. Contact Po Delta Tourism if you need to arrange your travel services, or if you have special needs (e.g. staying a longer period, being accompanied, etc.).

Po Delta Tourism srl - <https://www.podeltatourism.it/en/index.html>

Patrizia Guidi - [patrizia@podeltatourism.it](mailto:patrizia@podeltatourism.it)

Marcella Bonazza - [marcella@podeltatourism.it](mailto:marcella@podeltatourism.it)

## Contact

### Secretariat

Ente di Gestione per i Parchi e la Biodiversità - Delta del Po

C.so G.Mazzini, 200 - 44022 Comacchio, Ferrara – Italia

Tel. + 39 0533 314003

Mail: [info@biosferadeltapo.org](mailto:info@biosferadeltapo.org)

#### Reference person:

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Filippo Lenzerini - [filippo@punto3.it](mailto:filippo@punto3.it) +39 347.1620064

Mattia Mascanzoni - [mattia@punto3.it](mailto:mattia@punto3.it) +39 393.8297518

### Logistic aspects

Po Delta Tourism srl

Patrizia Guidi - [patrizia@podeltatourism.it](mailto:patrizia@podeltatourism.it)

Marcella Bonazza - [marcella@podeltatourism.it](mailto:marcella@podeltatourism.it)

## Thanks to

**Organization:** Managing body for Parks and Biodiversity – Po Delta

**Economic contribution:** Managing body for Parks and Biodiversity – Po Delta, Municipality of Comacchio and Municipality of Codigoro.

**Partner:** Swarovski supports the participation to the Po Delta International School on Birdwatching and Ecotourism of a member of the MAB UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

