



FARNOUSH FARHADI



AVAYEBOOM BIRD CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Annual Report 2025

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Last year was a different year for AvayeBoom and for me as well. It was my first year as the Executive Director of the Society, a year that brought new responsibilities, many lessons, and above all, a deep sense of gratitude.

It was also a difficult year. War and ongoing social challenges made working for nature more demanding than before. Even so, we did our best to continue the path that AvayeBoom began years ago, guided by the same passion for Iran's birds and the habitats they depend on. Over the past year, our work continued in many different ways from Dasht-e Arjan and wetlands across the country to environmental education workshops, birdwatching events, field observations, and contributions to national conservation guidelines. Alongside these activities, one of the most meaningful developments was seeing our community grow.

More members, colleagues, volunteers, and supporters from both inside and outside Iran became part of AvayeBoom's journey. Their support reminded us that caring for birds and their habitats can connect people, even when they live far apart. Perhaps the most important lesson of this year was a simple one: AvayeBoom has never been the work of one person. Every project, every report, every field record, and every small step forward has been made possible by members, volunteers, colleagues, friends, and supporters who have continued to stand beside nature despite many challenges.

I am sincerely grateful to every one of them. I hope the year ahead gives us the opportunity to keep moving forward calmly, consistently, and together continuing to protect the birds and habitats that inspire everything we do.

Fateme kazemi

TABLE OF CONTENTS



- Workshops 1-4
- News 5-12
- Bird Rehabilitation and Release 13
- Birdwatching Events 14-15

A detailed image of a bird of prey, possibly a hawk or falcon, in full flight against a clear blue sky. The bird's wings are spread wide, showing intricate feather patterns with brown and white mottling. Its head is turned slightly to the right, revealing a sharp beak and a yellow eye. In the upper right quadrant, a dark green circle is superimposed on the sky, containing the word "WORKSHOPS" in a bold, green, serif font.

WORKSHOPS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH THROUGH THE RUDDY SHELDUCK FLAGSHIP SPECIES

The Arjan Flagship Species Project was implemented as part of the participatory management program for the Arjan International Wetland ecosystem, in collaboration with the Small Grants Programme (SGP/UNDP), Parishan Heritage Association, and with support from Divar. The Ruddy Shelduck was selected as the flagship species for the region, and a series of educational and awareness raising activities were carried out to promote its conservation.



As part of the educational program, members of Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society visited Salman Farsi Primary School in Dashte Arzhan, where they held sessions on bird conservation, Arjan Wetland, and the natural history of the Ruddy Shelduck. Brochures, posters, and badges were distributed among students, and participatory activities such as bird-themed coloring were organized. The project team also met with local residents and shopkeepers throughout Dashte Arzhan to discuss the importance of protecting the wetland and the Ruddy Shelduck, while distributing educational materials. On the second day of the program, a winter waterbird census recorded more than 580 Ruddy Shelducks at the wetland. The project aimed to strengthen local participation in the conservation of Arjan Wetland and its wildlife.



BIRDWATCHING WORKSHOP HELD FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF LAFT, QESHM ISLAND



A birdwatching workshop for members of the local community of Laft was held on 28 December 2025 at the Laft Historical District Ecomuseum on Qeshm Island.

The workshop aimed to introduce participants to the fundamentals of birdwatching, the ecological importance of birds in Qeshm's diverse ecosystems, and the role of local communities in biodiversity conservation. Topics covered included the identification of common bird species in the region, the proper use of binoculars and field guides, birdwatching ethics, and the value of bird records for biodiversity monitoring.

The event was attended by Mohammad Atashin Mah, Mayor of Laft, along with local participants interested in nature and birdwatching. The workshop was led by Farnoush Farhadi of Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society.

Empowering local communities through environmental education is an important step toward the conservation of birds and their habitats. Workshops such as this help strengthen public awareness and encourage greater community participation in protecting the natural heritage of Qeshm Island.

BIRD CONSERVATION TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR RANGERS IN KHAF CITY



In December 2025, a specialized Bird Conservation Training Workshop was held for environmental rangers from Razavi Khorasan Province, hosted by the Khaf Department of Environment.

Iman Ebrahimi of Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society delivered training on threats to birds, field monitoring and data recording, field safety, bird behavior, and the role of rangers in habitat conservation.

The field component included a visit to Sirkhun Wetland, where participants assessed the condition of the wetland, observed migratory bird species, and discussed the area's conservation potential. The workshop aimed to strengthen the capacity of environmental rangers and support the conservation of sensitive habitats in the region.

WORKSHOP ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION PROPOSAL WRITING HELD IN CHAHARMAHAL AND BAKHTIARI PROVINCE



A workshop on environmental conservation proposal writing was held at the Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Provincial Department of Environment and was led by Iman Ebrahimi.

The workshop focused on the principles of proposal writing for conservation projects, including project design, objective setting, methodology, budgeting, and project evaluation. Participants were also introduced to international funding opportunities supporting environmental conservation.

During the practical session, participants worked in groups to develop real project ideas into conservation proposals. The workshop brought together environmental experts, representatives of Environmental Houses, and local conservation practitioners in an interactive learning environment.

NEWS



IMAN EBRAHIMI RECEIVES THE RAMSAR YOUNG WETLAND CHAMPIONS AWARD



During the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention (COP15) in Zimbabwe, Iman Ebrahimi, founder and former director of Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society, received the international Young Wetland Champions Award.

The award recognized more than a decade of work in wetland and waterbird conservation. Ebrahimi's efforts have included conservation projects in key wetlands across Iran, bird monitoring programs, protection of threatened species, and initiatives aimed at reducing human-induced pressures on wetland ecosystems. His work in promoting community participation and connecting local communities with conservation efforts has also received international recognition.

Presented in the presence of representatives from more than 100 countries, the award is among the most prestigious international distinctions in wetland conservation and is granted every three years to outstanding young conservation leaders.

FIRST RECORD OF BLACK-NAPED ORIOLE ON HENGAM ISLAND



In January 2025, Farnoush Farhadi, a field officer with Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society, recorded two Black-naped Orioles on Hengam Island.

The Black-naped Oriole is primarily distributed across East and Southeast Asia, making this the first documented record of the species on Hengam Island. Previous records in Iran have been limited to a small number of observations from Bandar Abbas and Qeshm Island. The sighting highlights the importance of the region for documenting rare bird species and improving our understanding of the western limits of their distribution in Iran

FIRST RECORD OF MASKED BOOBY ON QESHM ISLAND



On 3 September 2025, Farnoush Farhadi, a field officer with Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society, recorded a Masked Booby along the coast of Gamberon Village on Qeshm Island. This observation represents the first documented record of the species on the island.

Masked Boobies are large tropical seabirds that typically breed on remote oceanic islands and are only rarely encountered along mainland coastlines. Known for their relatively tame behavior around humans, they are most commonly found across the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Records from the Persian Gulf remain exceptionally rare, making this observation of particular ornithological interest.

SURVEY OF RUDDY SHELDUCK NESTING SITES IN ARJAN INTERNATIONAL WETLAND



In April 2025, Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society conducted a field survey to identify and assess the breeding sites of the Ruddy Shelduck in Arjan International Wetland.

The survey was carried out as part of the feasibility assessment for the third phase of the Arjan Flagship Species Project and involved the use of drones, binoculars, and spotting scopes.

The primary objective was to locate nesting areas and evaluate potential measures to improve the security of breeding habitats in future phases of the project. The flagship species initiative aims to support the conservation of the Ruddy Shelduck while contributing to the long term protection of the internationally important Arjan Wetland.

COMMUNITY MURALS PROMOTE CONSERVATION OF THE RUDDY SHELDUCK IN DASHT E ARJAN VILLAGE



As part of the project Protecting Arjan International Wetland Birds Through a Flagship Species Approach, murals featuring the Ruddy Shelduck (the flagship species of Arjan International Wetland) were painted on prominent walls across Dashte Arjan village, including the village entrance, local market, and school.

The murals aimed to raise awareness of wetland conservation and strengthen local support for protecting the species. Eleven volunteers from across Iran, together with local residents and schoolchildren, participated in the activity, which also received positive local media coverage.

AVAYEBOOM PARTICIPATES IN THE FIRST MUSEUM NIGHTS GATHERING



The first gathering of bird conservation practitioners under the title “Museum Nights” was held in March 2025 at the Darabad Wildlife Museum. The event brought together more than 30 conservationists and wildlife enthusiasts and provided a platform for presenting current projects and conservation initiatives.

Amin Seifi, Public Relations Manager of AvayeBoom, introduced the Bee-eater and Beekeeper Conflict Control Project as well as the on-going Flagship Species Project in Arjan International wetland. The event was organized to encourage knowledge exchange, showcase conservation efforts, and strengthen collaboration among bird conservation practitioners.

NATIONAL GUIDELINE FOR THE CAPTURE, TRANSPORT, AND RELEASE OF REHABILITATED BIRDS ISSUED NATIONWIDE

As part of the cooperation between Avayeboom and Iran's Department of Environment, the National Guideline for the Capture, Transport, and Release of Rehabilitated Birds in Natural Habitats was formally issued to provincial environmental authorities across the country.

Developed by Avayeboom, the guideline aims to standardize bird transport and release procedures, improve post-release survival, and reduce mortality associated with inappropriate release practices. The document is based on scientific evidence and international best practices in wildlife rehabilitation and release.

The issuance of this guideline marks Avayeboom's first officially adopted national policy document and represents an important milestone in advancing bird rehabilitation and conservation standards in Iran.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED BETWEEN AVAYEBOOM AND THE DOE

In February 2025, under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Wildlife Conservation and Management Office of Iran's Department of Environment (DoE) and Avayeboom Bird Conservation Society, responsibility for developing three national guidelines was entrusted to Avayeboom. These guidelines cover "Birdwatching in Protected Areas and International Wetlands in Iran," "Drone Based Filming of Birds," and "Release of Rehabilitated Wild Birds."

The objective of these guidelines is to promote responsible birdwatching practices, minimize disturbances and impacts associated with aerial filming, and improve the process of returning rehabilitated birds to their natural habitats. The documents are being developed based on international best practices and scientific evidence. Following consultation with relevant stakeholders and final approval by the Department of Environment, the guidelines will be formally communicated to provincial environmental authorities nationwide.

POLICY ENGAGEMENT FOR UPDATING BIRD CONSERVATION AND HUNTING REGULATIONS

In 2025, AvayeBoom Bird Conservation Society strengthened its policy engagement with Iran's Department of Environment by formally raising three priority areas requiring urgent technical and regulatory attention: the revision of bird hunting and trapping regulations, the development of updated standards for keeping birds in wildlife centres, and the improved management of birdwatching centres across the country.

These formal communications were part of AvayeBoom's broader effort to ensure that bird-related policies are informed by current ecological data, international conservation standards, and the practical experience gained through years of fieldwork, monitoring, rehabilitation, education, and collaboration with local communities.

One of the most important outcomes of this process was the acceptance of AvayeBoom's proposed guideline on hunting and trapping. Following continued technical collaboration between AvayeBoom and the Department of Environment, the related regulations were updated after more than four decades.

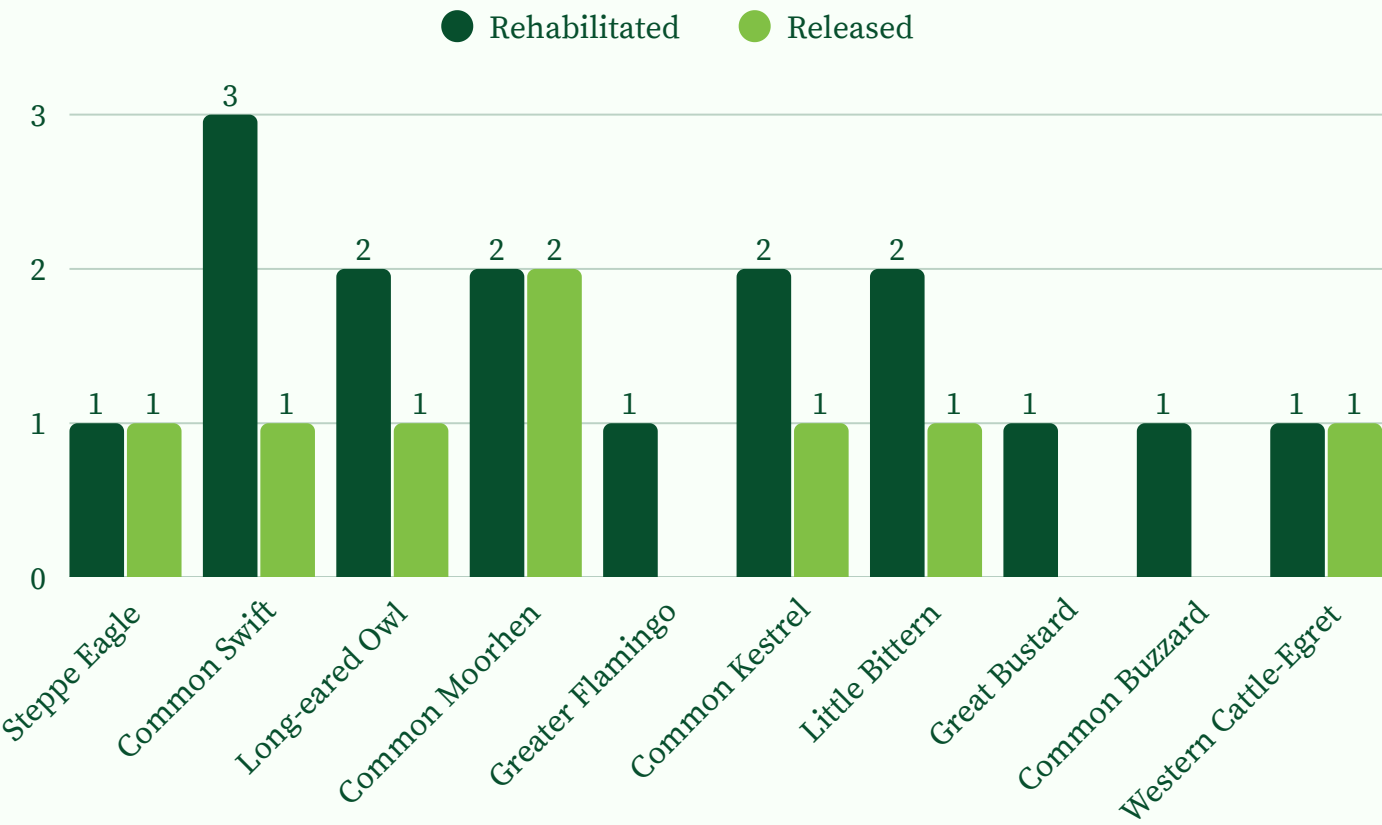
AvayeBoom also contributed technical perspectives on the need to modernize rules concerning the keeping and care of birds in wildlife and rehabilitation centres. The Society emphasized that such centres should operate under clear, species-sensitive, and welfare-oriented standards, especially for injured, confiscated, or rehabilitated birds.

A third area of engagement focused on the management of birdwatching centres. AvayeBoom highlighted the importance of developing national guidelines that can support responsible birdwatching, reduce disturbance to birds and habitats, and help ensure that birdwatching infrastructure contributes positively to conservation, education, and local participation.

**BIRD
REHABILITATION
AND
RELEASE**



IN 2025, AVAYEBOOM CONTINUED TO CARE FOR INJURED AND DISTRESSED BIRDS, PROVIDING TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION. OF THE BIRDS TREATED, 50% WERE SUCCESSFULLY RELEASED BACK INTO THEIR HABITAT.



BIRDWATCHING EVENTS



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Birdwatching has been a core part of AvayeBoom's mission since the very beginning. For ten years, we have regularly organized birdwatching walks to connect people with nature and foster appreciation for Iran's rich birdlife. These walks are open to everyone, from experienced birdwatchers looking to connect with the community to curious newcomers discovering birds for the first time.

We provide binoculars and field guides to participants, making the experience accessible and educational for people with different levels of experience. More than recreational outings, these walks offer an introduction to birds, their habitats, and the importance of their conservation, while creating opportunities for people to become more involved with AvayeBoom's activities.

In 2025, birdwatching programs were held across a variety of natural and urban landscapes, including Moreh Wetland, Gandoman International Wetland, Parvar Protected Area, Mount Soffe Park in Isfahan, and City Park in Tehran. A dedicated birdwatching program was also organized for preschool children along the Zayandeh-Rud River, introducing young children to birds and nature through direct observation and outdoor learning.

Through these programs, AvayeBoom continues to create opportunities for people of different ages and backgrounds to experience birds in the field and to strengthen a growing community connected by an interest in birds and their conservation.



BIRDWATCHING EVENTS

