

Clare Fearnley the New Zealand Ambassador to China

Recently Clare Fearnley, the New Zealand Ambassador to China, hosted an event 'Friends of the Flyway' in Beijing. See the tweet below from Terry Townsend of Birding Beijing, another champion of birds throughout the EAAF.

[Birding Beijing 北京观鸟](#)

[@BirdingBeijing](#)

Thank you to Ambassador Clare Fearnley and her team at NZ Emb for hosting the inaugural "Friends of the Flyway" with ambassadors from flyway countries, senior Chinese officials and 'friends'. Wonderful to celebrate shared natural heritage and elevate biodiversity as a foreign policy issue.



Some ideas that were voiced at the meeting, including a potential ambassadors' trip to the Hebei coast next spring to witness the migration, a new initiative to voluntarily nominate embassy grounds as "ecological spaces" with commitments to monitor migratory birds and implement measures to make the spaces more friendly for wildlife (Beijing's embassy district is an important green space for migratory birds - not waterbirds of course). There was also talk of the 'Friends of the Flyway' being the first in a series, with other ambassadors potentially hosting on a rotational basis.

We here at GFN are mightily impressed to see someone of Clare's stature using her position to deliver a positive message on shorebirds and their conservation. The shorebird folk of New Zealand led by Pūkorokoro Miranda Naturalists' Trust seem to have the ear of their politicians more so than we do here in Australia. That could be the individual politicians involved! Or some other reason. They do a fantastic job not only in NZ but throughout the flyway having been at the forefront with Chinese colleagues of shorebird work at Yalu Jiang National Nature Reserve and indeed getting in to North Korea in 2018 and 2019 due to their contacts within the government and subsequent lobbying from The NZ foreign minister while on a trip to North Korea.

And so, hanging on to their coat tails we would like to take a tiny bit of credit for fostering Ambassador Fearnley's appreciation of shorebirds and the issues facing them. We hosted Clare on the Bohai Seawall in 2019 and but for a certain virus we had hoped to do so again in 2020.

I reminded myself of the entertaining day we had by reading the update from the visit.

<http://globalflywaynetwork.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Bohai-2019-Update-3.pdf>

Thank you Clare for this initiative and we hope to see you on the seawall again.