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[\[Wildlife Conservation\] Unique Wildlife Park Set to Open in Chiayi](#)

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Taipei Times (2012/11/21) The Aogu Forest Recreation Area (鰲鼓濕地森林園區) in Chiayi County's Dongshih Township (東石) — a 14.7km<sup>2</sup> wildlife park, which houses the Aogu wetland that has been recognized as a globally important habitat for birds — will be opened to the public this weekend.

After three years of planning and preparation, the forest area will be opened for public visiting, the Forestry Bureau said November 20, adding that the wildlife park features a variety of landforms, including forests, paddy fields, dry farmlands, mangroves, windbreaks, grassy marshes, fresh and salt water swamps, mudflats and intertidal zones.

The bureau said the area attracts large flocks of birds every year, and data showed that 245 species of birds (including 39 protected species and 18 species of raptors) visited or inhabited the area, accounting for about 43 percent of the total species of birds in Taiwan.

The Aogu wetland has also been recognized as an important wetland globally, based on the criteria set by the "Convention on Wetlands of International Importance" signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. These criteria include frequently having more than 20,000 water birds and the maintenance of biodiversity, the bureau added.

"[The park was] among the best water initiatives we saw. It's interesting that they took the approach that a previously reclaimed shoreline should go back to the natural [arrangements] — what a radical move. The scale was amazing, instead of just looking at the landscape, they looked at global flyways. A really clear presentation that resonates," the bureau said, citing the remarks by the 2011 Professional Awards Jury.

The bureau said three free bus routes connecting the area are scheduled to be opened this weekend: the first running between the high speed rail's Chiayi Station and the Dongshih Natural Environment Center; the second running between Gangkou Temple (港口宮) and the tip of the artificial wetland; and the third route is a circulation route connecting several bird watching locations in the recreation area.

Further Information:

[Taipei Times 2012/11/21](#)

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[National Science Council International Cooperation Sci-Tech Newsbrief](#)  
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