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**Bird-Watching Based on Citizen Science for Raising Awareness of Wild Bird Conservation in South Korea**

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**Abstract**

These days, wide natural exploration activities based on citizen science in Korea have been actively conducted in various fields of plants and animals under the name of 'Nature Deokhu (Nature Maniac)'. The Republic of Korea has an amazing diversity of bird species. This is a result of the diverse natural habitats of the Korean Peninsula such as mountains, forests, rivers, tideland marsh, inland wetlands, and the open sea. There are about 582 species of bird recorded in South Korea. However, more than 90% of the ROK’s bird species are migratory birds that migrate between breeding grounds and wintering areas depending on the season. Therefore, South Korea is a good country to watch birds according to the season. Recently, these birdwatching activities based on citizen science, in which citizens directly participated, have been actively conducted in various fields. This increase in birdwatching population is attributed to the maturity of civil consciousness for wildlife conservation and the desire to communicate with nature.

In order to conserve the endangered wild birds and to inform citizens of the environmental issues facing the earth, education for proper birdwatching based on citizen science is becoming increasingly important at the zoo.

As a result, Our Seoul zoo also is operating an environmental education program called ‘citizen science-based bird watching’ from 2013 which suggests the right direction for the coexistence between mankind and wildlife. Bird watching activities were designed to promote greater awareness for nature and wildlife conservation by giving more citizens the opportunity to interact with wildlife, such as wild birds.

**Keywords:** citizen science, bird-watching, wild bird conservation, coexistence, Seoul zoo, wildlife conservation. birdwatching population