



# NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL

(2012-2025)

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

2025



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## Foreword



The Nepal Owl Festival started in 2012 with a simple idea, bring people together to learn and care for owls. Since then, it has grown into a unique event in Nepal, combining culture, conservation, and entertainment. Inspired by the International Festival of Owls in the USA, our festival is now one of its kind in Asia and is celebrated every year in the first week of February.



**Raju Acharya**  
**Founder and Executive Director**  
Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal  
**Concept Creator and Organizer**  
Nepal Owl Festival

This festival travels to different parts of Nepal each year and has reached thousands of people. We use music, art, games, and education to teach communities, especially children, about the importance of owls in nature. It is also helping to change the negative beliefs and superstitions that still exist around these birds.

This report shares what the festival has achieved so far. It shows how a local effort can make a big difference for both people and Owl. I hope it will inspire others to support and continue this journey.

Thank you to everyone who has been a part of the festival, your help and belief make this work possible.



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NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2012





NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2013



## Echoes of the Festival (I)

The Owl Festival in Nepal is a unique and powerful event that promotes owl conservation through strong community involvement. Held every year, it focuses on educating rural communities, many of whom are illiterate, about the importance of protecting owls and nature. The festival especially engages young people, encouraging teamwork, cultural pride, and environmental responsibility through fun, hands-on learning. It also helps to correct harmful myths, raise awareness about illegal wildlife trade, and share fascinating facts about owls.

With creative displays, revived traditional games, and vibrant cultural performances led by dedicated young volunteers, the festival offers an inspiring, authentic learning experience that celebrates Nepal's rich ecological and cultural heritage.



**Prof. Karan Bahadur Shah**  
**Veteran Wildlife Biologist**  
**Nepal**



**Mrs. Carol Inskipp**  
**Ornithologist and Writer**  
**UK**

I found the festival inspiring, engaging, and educational. I especially appreciated how the organizers recognized many dedicated conservationists, including those who have worked for years with communities, often without much acknowledgment. It was great to see so many Nepalese NGOs, including smaller ones, taking part with their own stalls. The local singing and dancing were colorful and entertaining, and the specially composed conservation song was both popular and meaningful. The Owl Museum impressed with its creative displays that clearly conveyed important messages about owls. The volunteers were fantastic, friendly, helpful, and tireless. I'm already looking forward to attending again for my third visit.

It is truly inspiring to see a dedicated annual event in Nepal focused on raising awareness about owls and their conservation. The positive feedback speaks volumes, especially about the festival's unique focus and its ability to connect with many different kinds of people. The educational elements, particularly those that highlight the vital ecological role of owls and the threats they face, leave a lasting impact and make the festival a powerful force for conservation awareness.



**Laxman Prasad Paudyal**  
**ED, Nepalese Ornithological**  
**Union**



## **Fusion of culture, conservation and entertainment**

The Nepal Owl Festival (NOF) is a unique and important event started by Friends of Nature (FON) Nepal in 2012 as a sister festival of International Festival of Owls. This unique festival is celebrated in four nations across the globe, including Italy, USA, and India. It is held in a different district of Nepal every year to educate people about owls, their role in nature, and why they should be protected. The festival also works to break common myths and superstitions about owls. It brings together education, fun, and culture to help people better understand and care for biodiversity.

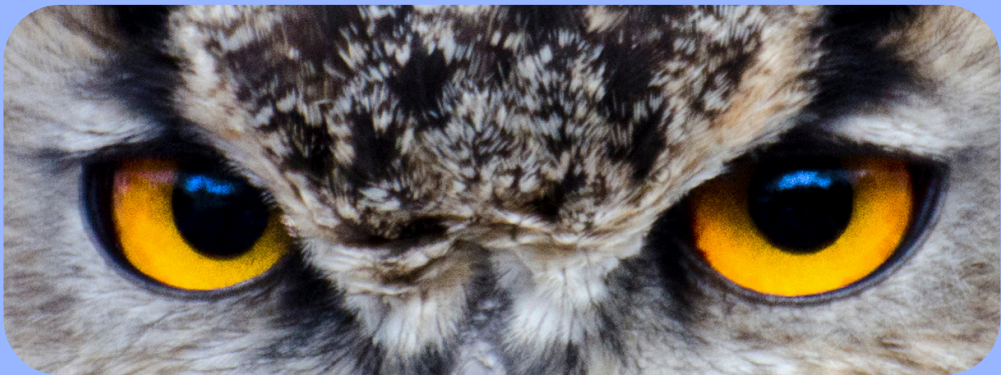
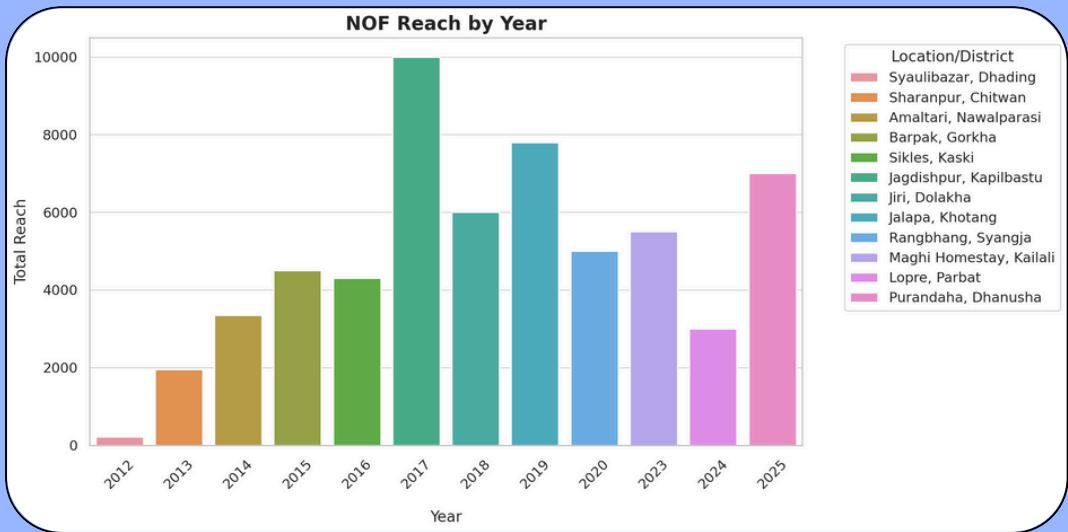
The Nepal Owl Festival, held annually from 2012 to 2025 (with a break during 2021–2022), has significantly expanded its reach and visibility in Nepal. Over the years, the festival engaged over 60,000 participants, with peak public attendance in 2017 (10,000 people). Majority of participants were public visitors (72%), followed by students (23%), and public camp participants (5%). The post-hiatus period (2023–2025) saw renewed momentum, particularly among students, although public camp activities have not resumed.

Media coverage has increased steadily, from 11 mentions in 2012 to a peak of 80 in 2023, demonstrating growing public and press interest. International visitor presence was modest overall, with a notable spike in 2016 (15 visitors).

The awards program honored 45 individuals/organizations through Nature Conservation Award and 24 individuals/organizations through Local Conservation Award. 10 local and national organizations have been felicitated for their conservation works. Kathmandu and Chitwan led in national recognitions, while Kaski and Gorkha dominated local awards.

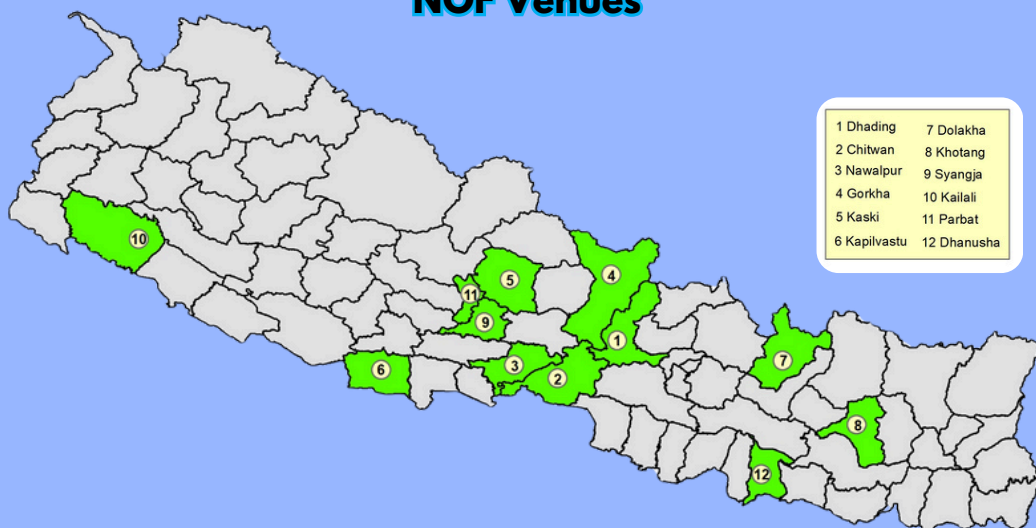






*The Owl Festival is one of the favorite destinations for local people, where they learn about and share conservation, culture, and entertainment*

## NOF Venues



*Cultural components are one of the most attractive segments of the festival*



## Beyond the national boundaries

NOF has had growing international visibility and influence, particularly within the global bird conservation community. Inspired by the International Festival of Owls held in the United States, NOF stands out as one of the few large-scale, community-based owl festivals in Asia. Over the years, it has attracted attention from international researchers, NGOs, and conservation networks. Educational content and impact stories from NOF have been shared in international forums, and festival methods, such as integrating local culture with conservation education, are now viewed as a model for grassroots outreach in other biodiversity-rich countries. Through cross-border knowledge exchange and online media reach, the festival has helped place Nepal's community-led conservation efforts on the global map, highlighting how local action can contribute to global biodiversity goals.



*Raju Acharya is taking part in an international forum to share Nepal's initiatives*

## National and international media

NOF has been reaching stakeholders at all levels through various types of media across country. The data includes all forms of media mentions, such as national and local newspapers, FM radio, TV broadcasts, YouTube and TikTok videos, blogs, and online news portals. The coverage/mention by international media is also included in the data. Over the years, media outreach has grown steadily, reflecting the festival's expanding influence, increasing public engagement, and broader outreach.

Year	Venue (Specific Area, District)	Total Media Mentions
2012	Syaulibazar, Dhading	11
2013	Sharanpur, Chitwan	27
2014	Amaltari, Nawalparasi	32
2015	Barpak, Gorkha	42
2016	Sikles, Kaski	52
2017	Jagdishpur, Kapilbastu	26
2018	Jiri, Dolakha	50
2019	Jalapa, Khotang	59
2020	Rangbhang, Syangja	70
2023	Maghi Homestay, Kailali	80
2024	Lopre, Parbat	71
2025	Purandaha, Dhanusha	58

The data reflects steady growth in media coverage over time, highlighting the festival's increasing visibility and public engagement both locally and nationally.

From modest beginnings in 2012 with only 11 mentions at Syaulibazar, Dhading, media attention has progressively expanded, peaking in 2023 at Maghi Homestay, Kailali, with 80 mentions. This upward trend suggests improved outreach, broader media partnerships, and growing interest in the festival's conservation message.

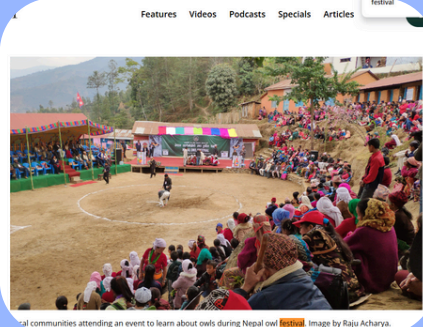
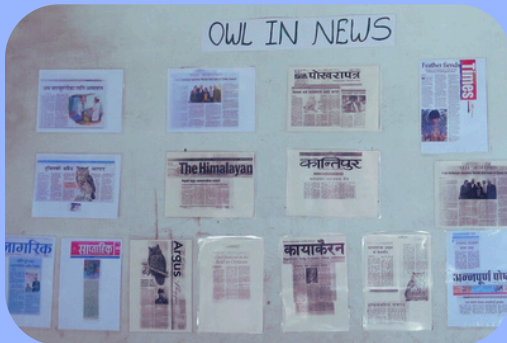
The dip in 2017 (26 mentions) and the slight decline post-2023 may reflect event-specific variables such as location remoteness or competing national interests, but the overall trajectory remains strong. Notably, venues in later years like Rangbhang (2020), Lopre (2024), and Purandaha (2025) also recorded high visibility, with 70+, showing the sustained momentum of NOF's outreach efforts.

Acharya explains that the biggest challenge to his work is that international and national organisations often focus on globally threatened species rather than Nepal owls.

"Our main objective is owl conservation," he says, "Initially, I took on the responsibility when I found no organizations in Nepal focusing on owl research and conservation."

Raju also set up the "Nepal Owl Festival" 11 years ago, which focuses on discouraging the hunting and trade of owls in Nepal and promote ecotourism potential to the area through hosting many visitors and showcasing the local wildlife and traditional culture.

Forbes



Local communities attending an event to learn about owls during Nepal owl festival. Image by Raju Acharya.



The Owl Festival and other initiatives have always been highlighted in national and international media





## Echoes of the Festival (II)

The Nepal Owl Festival is a remarkable initiative led by the team at Friends of Nature. What inspires me the most is active involvement of young scholars, who demonstrate deep commitment and dedication to the conservation of owls and biodiversity as a whole. The future of nature conservation in Nepal rests on the shoulders of these young giants. May this vital initiative continue for generations to come!



**Hem Sagar Baral PhD**  
**Senior Ornithologist, Nepal**



**Jonathan Haw**  
**South Africa**  
**OWLPROJECT.ORG**

I wanted to take a moment to express how fantastic the Nepal Owl Festival is. It is truly one of the highlights of the owl conservation calendar internationally. The involvement of children is especially inspiring and highlights the remarkable conservation efforts taking place in Nepal. The festival has rightfully gained recognition from people around the globe. I definitely plan to attend again—it is one of the most memorable and impactful festivals I have ever experienced. Well done, and may it continue to thrive for many years to come.

The Nepal Owl Festival, held across various districts for the past 12 years, has made a significant impact on wildlife and biodiversity conservation. It goes beyond owls, raising awareness about broader ecological issues and promoting community engagement. Such long-term efforts are a powerful example of dedicated conservation in Nepal. With wider support, these initiatives can help curb illegal wildlife trade and strengthen conservation nationwide. Kudos to Friends of Nature for leading this inspiring work!



**Krishna Mani Baral**  
**Environment Journalist**  
**Nepal**





**NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2014**





**Nepal's first owl conservation team initiated their efforts in the Manang District (2008)**







## Evidence-Based Impact

### ***Simple Poles, Big role***

After the completion of third Owl Festival in Amaltari Nawalparasi, local residents voluntarily installed six bamboo poles in the middle of their farmland. Interestingly, the organizing team only learned about this initiative a year later.

The local people explained that these poles might provide owls with a vantage point and open space to scan the fields, helping them hunt more effectively and control the rodent population. Reports from the community confirmed that owls have been regularly using the poles, indicating the success of this simple yet thoughtful intervention.



*A representative image*



## ***Owls Find Safe Haven in Community Forests***

Forest land in both Syangja and Dhading districts has been officially designated as Owl Conservation Areas, thanks to a collaborative effort between local communities and the respective Divisional Forest Offices.

In Dhading, approximately 4 hectares of forest land have been set aside, while Syangja boasts a significantly larger area of around 57.86 hectares. These conservation zones are dedicated specifically to the protection and preservation of owl habitats.

Both areas are known to support at least seven species of owls, contributing significantly to local biodiversity and highlighting the value of community-led wildlife conservation. Activities such as felling old trees and removing eggs from nests are strictly prohibited within these conservation areas, ensuring a safe and undisturbed environment for owls to thrive.



*An owl conservation area is located in Syangja*

## ***Harm to Harmony: Catapult Ban Enforced***

The harmful impact of catapults, often causing injury and sometimes death to birds, was brought to the attention of local communities. As a result, residents became aware of the issue and took action by banning the use of catapults for hunting birds, including owls.

This ban has been implemented in several areas, including Sikles (Kaski), Barpak (Gorkha), Jalapa (Khotang), and parts of Syangja. Research indicates that 25 percentage of students were directly involved in using catapults, highlighting the need for awareness and preventive measures, especially among youth.

While the use of catapults for harming wildlife has been prohibited, they may still be used responsibly for deterring pest animals that threaten human settlements or farmland.



*Students are conducting a signature campaign to ban catapults in their locality*

## ***Wings of Freedom: Community-led Rescue and Release***

Community members and local students successfully rescued and released a total of 30 owls into their natural habitat from the site of the Owl Festival. The majority of rescues and releases were carried out independently by the participants following online guidance. In some cases, technical assistance was provided by our team to support the release process.

### **School students actively involved in the conservation of owls in Khotang**

Nepal Owl Festival organised in Jalapa has had a good impact on children and locals over the importance of owls.



*The national media has highlighted the efforts behind the owl rescue and release event*



## ***Owl Statue Sparks Awareness***

The community of Jalapa in Khotang, eastern Nepal, has established a small garden featuring a concrete owl statue at its center, designed as a selfie spot for visitors. People often take photographs here and share them on social media, helping raise awareness about owls in a creative and engaging way.

The installation was created in memory of the Owl Festival celebrated in the area.



*The inauguration of a small park*

### ***Owl declared as ward bird***

The community of Jalapa in Khotang, eastern Nepal, has also highlighted the Rock Eagle Owl as their "ward bird," much like how the Himalayan Monal (Danphe) is recognized as the national bird of Nepal.

This initiative beautifully blends conservation awareness with local pride and tourism, celebrating owls as symbols of ecological importance and cultural identity.





## ***Celebrating Owls, Inspiring Minds***

Since 2019, the local community and school in Jalapa, Khotang have been celebrating their own Owl Festival annually. The festival is primarily aimed at enhancing the knowledge and awareness of students and local residents about owls and broader conservation issues.

As part of the celebration, participants engage in a variety of activities such as painting, quiz competitions, dances, theatrical performances, and hands-on conservation work. This community-led initiative not only fosters environmental stewardship but also strengthens local pride and participation in wildlife protection.



*Children are being awarded for their best owl-themed drawings*

## ***Owls in Focus: A National Owl Action Plan***

The Owl Festival has played a significant role in spreading conservation messages, both through social media outreach and direct community engagement. Recognizing the threats faced by owls and the need for long-term conservation efforts, the government authorities have prepared and officially endorsed a 10-year Owl Conservation Action Plan.

This action plan outlines targeted activities, identifies key threats, and estimates the required funding for research and conservation of owls in Nepal. It serves as a strategic roadmap to guide national efforts, foster collaboration, and ensure the sustained protection of owl species and their habitats.





## ***Global Recognition for Local Action***

The Whitley Fund for Nature Conservation Award 2024 (UK), Special Achievement Awards in 2011 and 2020 (USA), and the National Wildlife Conservation Award 2018, along with dozens of local felicitations, highlight the growing recognition and impact of owl research and conservation efforts in Nepal.

These accolades are not just acknowledgments, they demonstrate that conservation activities are expanding and making a tangible difference. Media coverage by international platforms such as BBC World, Forbes, National Geographic, Mongabay, and the BBC Nepali Service, as well as various national outlets, further amplifies the reach of this work. These stories serve as honors in themselves, helping to spread vital conservation messages and raise awareness among broader audiences.



*Mr. Raju Acharya has been honored with a global award for his commitment to owl conservation efforts in Nepal*

## ***Reduction in the number of hunting and trade***

The preliminary investigation shows that approximately 2000 owls are either hunted and traded from Nepal which was found to decrease 1.6% annually and reached to 1500 in 2023 (DNPWC 2000, Acharya et al. in prep.). As the direct link is difficult to establish with the impact of Nepal Owl Festival , however it the largest conservation event in the country which has directly sensitized 58620 students, enforcement agencies, and local people. It has to be the strong reason behind the reduction in the trade. Though active enforcement agencies, international boarder regulation and policy has equal responsibility for the purpose.



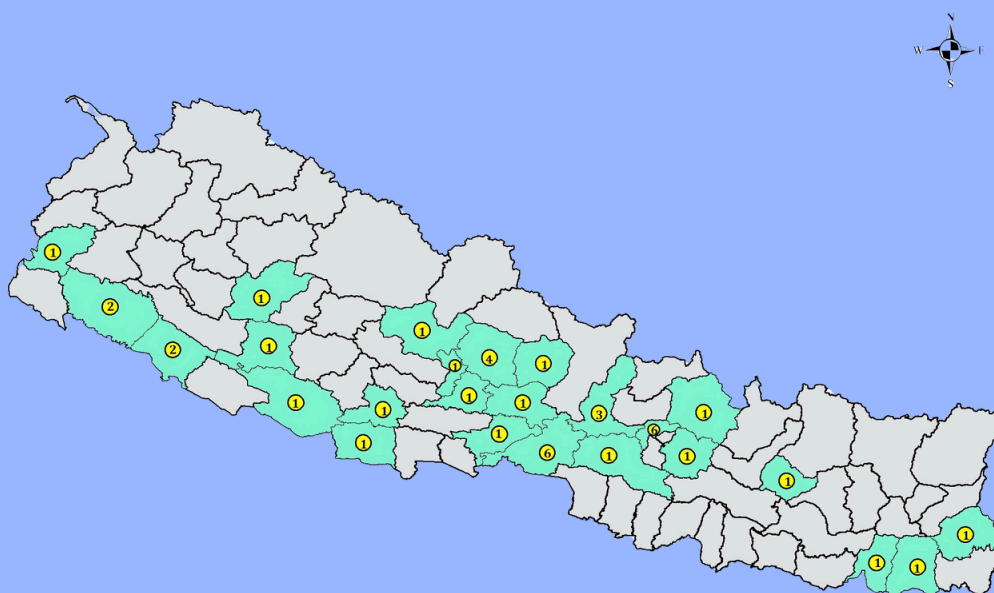
*Images of owls were recorded during the preliminary investigation into the hunting and trade of owls in Nepal*



## ***Honoring Conservation Champions (2012–2025)***

From 2012 to 2025, a total of 45 Nature Conservation Awards (NCA) and 24 Local Conservation Awards (LCA) were presented to individuals and groups for their contributions to wildlife conservation, especially focusing on owls. These recognitions were highlighted during the Nepal Owl Festival, reflecting over a decade of dedication to conservation efforts. Awardees came from more than 30 districts, with the highest representation from Chitwan, Kaski, and Kathmandu, demonstrating active participation from both rural and urban areas.

The recipients include professionals and community members, ranging from scientists and educators to grassroots activists, each playing a role in protecting wildlife. Additionally, 10 conservation organizations were felicitated for their long-term impact.



*Nature Conservation Award winners  
excluding three international awardees from the UK and India*



## Nature Conservation Award Winners



1. Dr. Hari Prasad Sharma (Myagdi)	2. Abhaya Raj Joshi (Kathmandu)	3. Bhumiraman Nepal (Dhading)
4. Hemanta Dhakal (Kaski)	5. Rajendra Narsingh Suwal (Kathmandu)	6. Hirulal Dangaura (Kailali)
7. Yam Kumar Rawat (Salyan)	8. Kumar Poudel (Sindhupalchowk)	9. Govinda Bahadur Singh (Jajarkot)
10. Hem Bahadur Katuwal (Kathmandu)	11. Ramesh Kumar Poudel (Chitwan)	12. Satish A. Pande (Pune, India)
13. Manashanta Ghimire (Lamjung)	14. Avinash Chaudhary (Kailali)	15. Bishwanath Rijal (Kathmandu)
16. Laxman Prasad Poudyal (Kavrepalanchowk)	17. Dr. Ramji Gautam (Kaski)	18. Yadav Prasad Acharya (Bardiya)
19. Bird Conservation Nepal (Kathmandu)	20. Krishna Prasad Bhusal (Arghakhanchi)	21. Shova Manandhar (Kathmandu)
22. Bed Bahadur Khadka (Okhaldhunga)	23. Bharat Raj Subba (Ilam)	24. Tim & Carol Inskipp (England, UK)
25. Dr. Hem Sagar Baral (Sunsari)	26. Krishna Mani Baral (Kaski)	27. Ramesh Kumar Thapa (Syangja)
28. Manoj Paudel (Kapilvastu)	29. Hathan Chaudhary (Chitwan)	30. Ram Bahadur Shahi (Bardiya)
31. Dr. Abrar Ahmed (India)	32. Prof. Karan B. Shah (Dadeldhura)	33. Dhan B. Chaudhary (Nawalpur)
34. Ishwor Kumar Joshi (Chitwan)	35. Som Bahadur GC (Chitwan)	36. Bhim Prasad Ghimire (Morang)
37. Madhav Prasad Baral (Kaski)	38. Bird Education Society (Chitwan)	39. Krishna P. Acharya (Parbat)
40. Manoj Gautam (Dang)	41. Shiva Sharma (Tanahun)	42. Chandani Hamal (Makwanpur)
43. Basanta Parajuli (Chitwan)	44. Hariyali Bhajan Samuha (Dhading)	45. Ghumaunedanda Bhangeruthan CFUG (Dhading)



## Local Conservation Award Winners

1. Dr. SK Singh (Dhanusha)	2. Vijay Kumar Sah (Dhanusha)	3. Ranjan Bhadari Mali (Mahottari)
4. RK Adipta Giri (Parbat)	5. Samir Regmi (Parbat)	6. Division Forest Office (Syangja)
7. Basudev Poudel (Kaski)	8. Red Panda Conservation Network Committee (Kaski)	9. Rawa Khola, Tap Khola and Lidung Khola Conservation Forum (Khotang)
10. Uddav Prasad Ghimirey (Dolakha)	11. Laxman Khadka (Dolakha)	12. Manoj Paudel (Kapilvastu)
13. Jaya Prakash Pandeya (Kapilvastu)	14. Krishna Pokharel (Kathmandu)	15. Man Bahadur Gurung (Kaski)
16. Dambar Bahadur Gurung (Kaski)	17. Dilkumari Gurung (Kaski)	18. Late Chij Kumari Ghale (Gorkha)
19. Late Ash Bahadur Ghale (Gorkha)	20. Suk Bahadur Bishwokarma (Gorkha)	21. Shankha Bahadur Ghale (Gorkha)
22. Dhan Bahadur Chaudhary (Nawalpur)	23. Rabi Kanta Acharya (Kaski)	24. Bishnu Adhikary (Nawalpur)



## Organizational Felicitation

1. Jaubari Restoration Committee (Ilam)	2. Bird Conservation Network (Kailali)	3. Creative Academy (Kathmandu)
4. Shree Deep Jyoti Yuva Club (Panchthar)	5. Bardiya Nature Conservation Club (Bardiya)	6. Himalayan Nature (Kathmandu)
7. Mithila Wildlife Trust (Dhanusha)	8. Resources Himalaya (Kathmandu)	9. Small Mammals Conservation and Research Foundation (Kathmandu)
10. Global Primate Network (Kathmandu)		



## Overall impact (2012-2020) - Key Informant Interview



A structured questionnaire was administered to 1–3 members of organizing committee of festival (n=18) from each site where the festival had been hosted between 2012 and 2020. These individuals had actively organized the festivals and were continuously observing changes in and around their respective locations.

The survey included Likert-scale questions assessing perceptions on owl conservation, cultural revival, tourism, and youth engagement. Each response was quantified and converted into a composite score (out of 5) by assigning weighted values (Very Much = 5 to Not At All = 1). Open-ended responses were qualitatively analyzed to contextualize the numeric data.

The assessment revealed a strong perceived reduction in harmful practices such as owl pet-keeping and trade, accompanied by improved student attitudes and community-level conservation actions. Representatives from Nawalpur, Gorkha, and Dhading shared specific actions taken post-festival. Notably, all three locations reported a complete ban on slingshots (catapults). In Gorkha, penalties were imposed on shopkeepers found selling them, showcasing firm local enforcement and community commitment to conservation.

Focus Area	Indicator	Response Distribution	Composite Score (5/5)	Interpretation
Owl Conservation	Decrease in pet-keeping	Very Much (61%), Much (17%), Moderate (22%), Less (0%), Not At All (0%)	4.39	Strong reduction in the practice of keeping owls as pets.
	Decrease in trade	Very Much (83%), Much (11%), Moderate (6%), Less (0%), Not At All (0%)	4.78	Near-universal consensus that owl trade has significantly declined.
	Follow-up activities	Very Much (11%), Much (6%), Moderate (6%), Less (11%), Not At All (67%)	2.22	Few spontaneous community-led owl conservation actions post-festival.
Cultural Revival	Traditional games revival	Very Much (11%), Much (6%), Moderate (22%), Less (28%), Not At All (33%)	2.39	Minimal revival of traditional games.
	Songs revival	Very Much (17%), Much (28%), Moderate (17%), Less (28%), Not At All (11%)	3.11	Moderate engagement in traditional folk songs post-festival.
	Dance revival	Very Much (17%), Much (28%), Moderate (17%), Less (28%), Not At All (11%)	3.11	Similar moderate resurgence in traditional dances.
Tourism Impact	Local tourism increase	Very Much (22%), Much (28%), Moderate (33%), Less (11%), Not At All (6%)	3.50	Reasonable growth in local tourism during or after the festival.
	External tourism increase	Very Much (0%), Much (0%), Moderate (17%), Less (28%), Not At All (56%)	2.11	Limited impact on external/international tourism, partly due to COVID-19.
Community Memory	Festival remembrance	Very Much (72%), Much (17%), Moderate (11%), Less (0%), Not At All (0%)	4.61	The event remains highly memorable among local residents.
	Willingness to rehost	Very Much (100%), Much (0%), Moderate (0%), Less (0%), Not At All (0%)	5.00	All respondents strongly support organizing the festival again.
	Overall impact	Very Good (94%), Good (6%), Moderate (0%), Poor (0%), Bad (0%)	4.94	Almost unanimously considered very positive by respondents.
Youth Engagement	Student attitude improvement	Very Good (78%), Good (17%), Moderate (6%), Poor (0%), Bad (0%)	4.72	Very strong improvement in student attitudes toward owl conservation.
	Slingshot use decrease	Very Much (44%), Much (28%), Moderate (22%), Less (6%), Not At All (0%)	4.11	Clear reduction in harmful slingshot usage among children.





## Echoes of the Festival (III)

During the Nepal Owl Festival, I closely observed how locals, students, and stakeholders responded to the event. Many locals expressed regret over past misconceptions about owls and recognized the need for their conservation. Students found owls fascinating and gained valuable knowledge through the festival.

This festival is a powerful platform that blends conservation with culture and community engagement. It raises vital awareness and should be expanded nationwide to involve diverse communities in protecting owls. With government support, its impact can grow even stronger across Nepal.



**Kesab Raj Sapkota**  
**Owl Conservation Envoy**  
**Kaski, Nepal**



**Deepa Gurung**  
**Owl Conservation Envoy**  
**Syangja, Nepal**

The Nepal Owl Festival, organized annually by Friends of Nature, is a fun and impactful way to promote owl conservation. As a volunteer, I developed teamwork and organizational skills while working with like-minded people.

Meeting national and international conservationists was a great learning and networking experience. Engaging with local communities gave me valuable, real-world insights into their connection with nature, far beyond what books can offer.

One of my favorite moments was seeing the excitement of students and locals during the owl face painting, it truly reflected their enthusiasm for conservation.



The Nepal Owl Festival is a nationally celebrated event that raises awareness about owl conservation in Nepal, where owls face significant threats despite being globally categorized as least concern. Its unique approach of rotating host districts each year allows for deep community engagement and broader outreach.

The festival stands out for its inclusive participation of government agencies, conservationists, and local communities. Cultural programs tailored to each location and the temporary Owl Museum are major attractions, combining education with local tradition. Broad media coverage has amplified its recognition and impact across Nepal and beyond.

A permanent owl museum could serve as a national hub for research, education, and outreach, anchored by the annual festival



**Krishna Bhusal**  
**Researcher and Conservationist**  
**Nepal**



**Karla Bloem**  
**Executive Director**  
**International Owl Centre**  
**USA**

Although I have not personally attended the Nepal Owl Festival, I have read detailed annual reports about it and am impressed by its reach and impact. The festival successfully engages people across Nepal, both in person and through the media, using education as a powerful tool for conservation. Its rotating locations and integration of local cultural elements allow it to connect with diverse communities, and its efforts have led to meaningful results, such as the creation of catapult-free zones. Recognizing individuals who promote conservation through awards is an excellent way to encourage positive action. Based on the strength of its mission and outcomes, the International Owl Center has chosen to provide financial support for the festival, as we believe in the important work it is doing.





NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2016





NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2017









NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2019

## Overall Impact (2025)

A pre- and post-event structured questionnaire survey was used to assess how the 2025 festival influenced visitors' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about conservation. The survey reached a diverse cross-section of the festival's estimated 7,000 attendees, with 245 individuals completing both pre and post surveys. Participants varied in gender, age, education, residence, and conservation experience, enabling a well-rounded understanding of the festival's impact across different social groups.

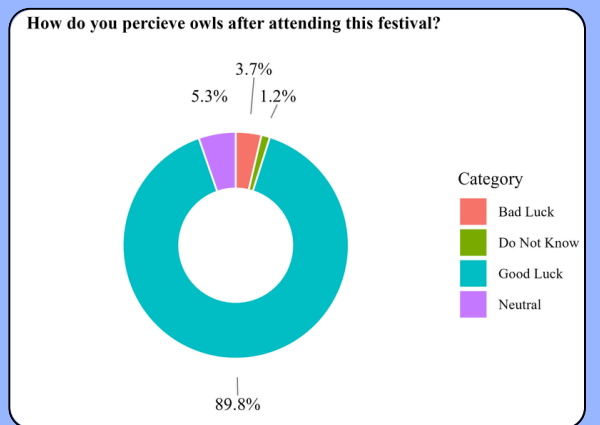
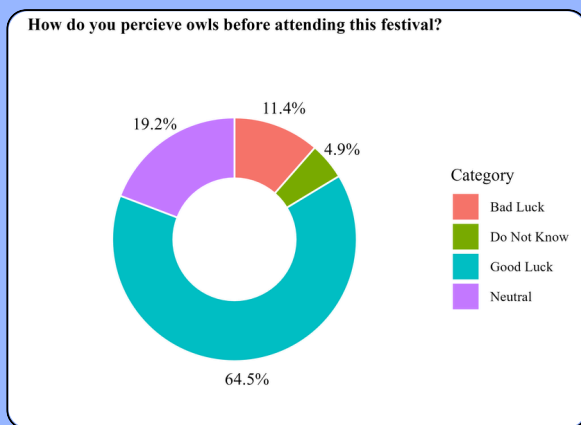
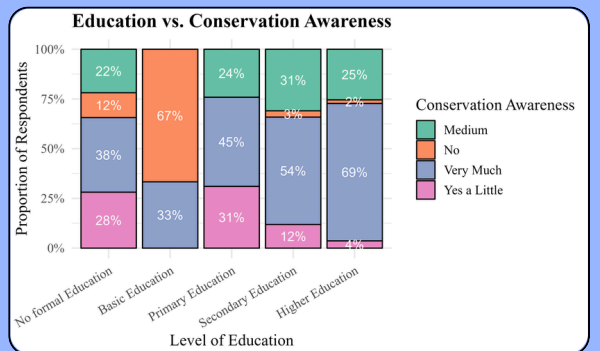
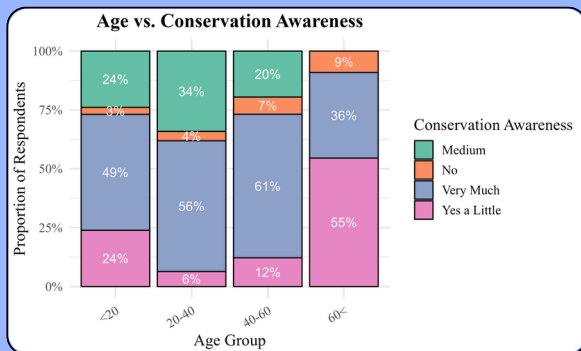
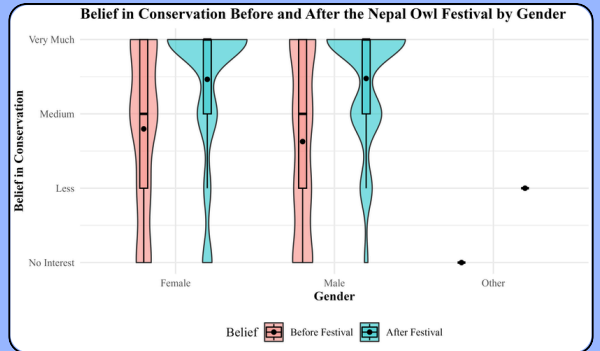
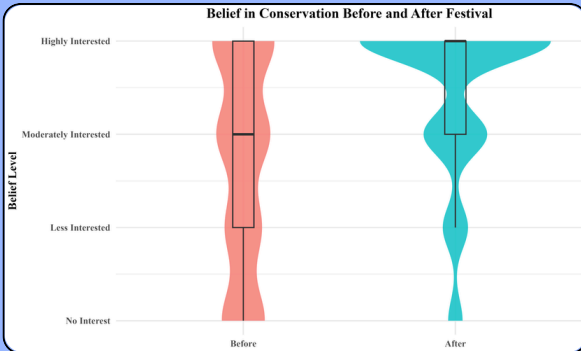
Attending the Nepal Owl Festival had a clear and positive impact on participants' conservation beliefs. A statistical comparison of survey responses before and after the festival showed that the average belief score significantly increased from 2.69 to 3.47. This improvement of 0.78 points was confirmed by a highly significant t-test result ( $t = -11.53$ ,  $p < 0.00001$ ). With a strong sample size of 245 people, the results show that the festival successfully strengthened conservation attitudes among attendees. Additionally, the reduction in score variation suggests that participants not only became more supportive of conservation but also more consistent in their views after the festival.

After attending the Nepal Owl Festival, participants showed a clear improvement in how they viewed conservation. On average, their perception scores increased from 3.37 before the festival to 3.81 after, showing a positive change of 0.44 points. A statistical test ( $t = -7.36$ ,  $p = 2.82 \times 10^{-12}$ ) confirmed this change was highly significant and not due to chance.

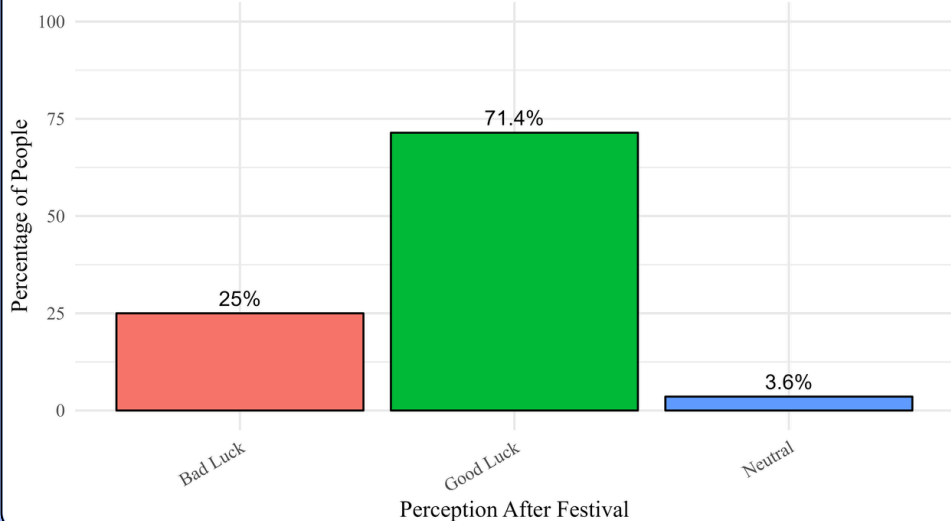
To assess changes in perception among participants who initially viewed owls as symbols of bad luck, a Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted to evaluate the shift in attitudes following festival attendance. The analysis revealed a dramatic and significant positive shift in perception after attending the festival. The test yielded a statistic of  $V = 0$  with a p-value of  $7.775 \times 10^{-6}$ , indicating an extremely significant positive change in how these participants perceived owls. This highly significant result demonstrates that the festival was particularly effective in transforming negative cultural perceptions about owls, successfully converting participants who initially held superstitious beliefs about owls being harbingers of bad luck into individuals with more positive attitudes toward these birds.



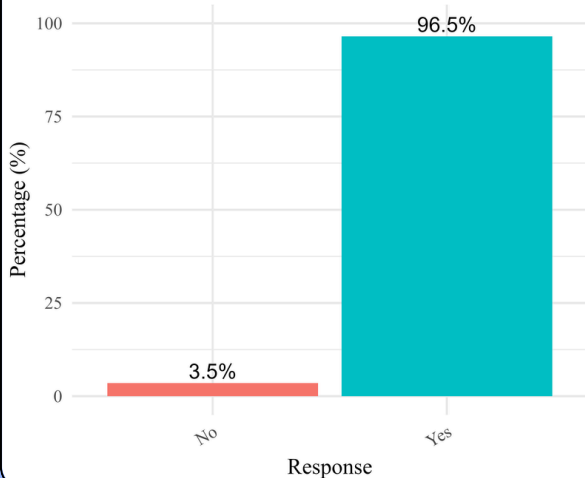
During the Nepal Owl Festival, visitors spent a total of NPR 4.69 million (USD 34,494). The largest share went to food (51.71%), followed by transportation (21.29%), local art (10.65%), and conservation materials (7.60%). On average, each person spent NPR 669.39 (USD 4.93), with food being the biggest expense. These figures show the festival's strong economic impact and public support for both culture and conservation.



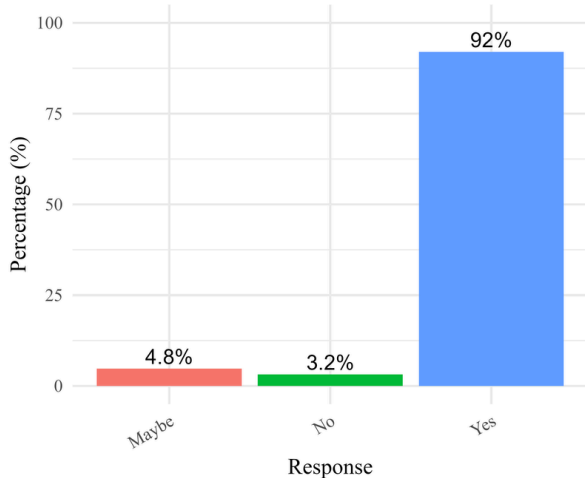
**Perception After Festival: People Who Initially Said Owls Bring 'Bad Luck'**



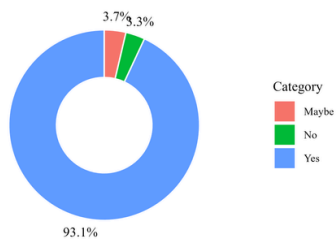
**Interest in Owl Conservation Education (Previously Involved in Conservation)**



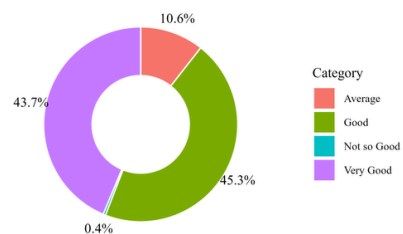
**Interest in Owl Conservation Education (Not Previously Involved in Conservation)**



**Are you interested to educate others about the conservation of owls after attending this festival?**

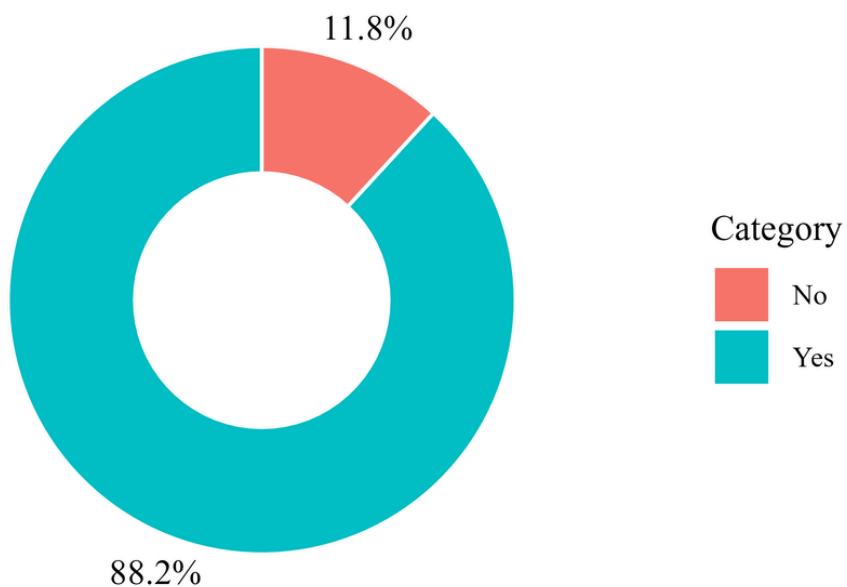


**How do you evaluate the Nepal Owl Festival as a whole?**

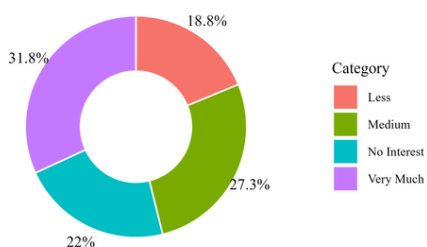




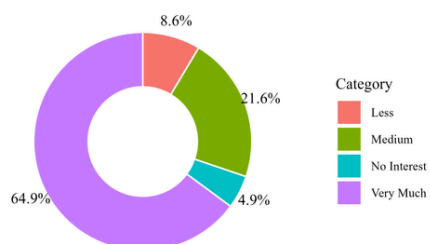
## Have you observed the Museum at Nepal Owl Festival?



### How was your belief in conservation, before coming to this festival?



### Is there any increase in your belief towards conservation after attending this festival?





NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2020









NEPAL OWL FESTIVAL 2024







## Conservation Partners

### Financial Partners

Accordeos Foudation, Switzerland	Houston Nature Center, USA	International Owl Center, USA
Rufford Small Grant	Eric Hosking Trust, UK	Banham Zoo
Berndthies Foundation, Switzerland	Diktel Rupakot Majhuwagadhi Municipality	Hariyo Ban Program
The Alongside Wildlife Foundation, USA	ZSL Nepal	Nepal Tourism Board
TAAN-Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal	Waling Municipality, Syangja	Division Forest Office, Syangja
Suklagandaki Municipality, Tanahun	Bhirkot Municipality, Syangja	Biruwa Rural Municipality, Syangja
Putalibazar Municipality, Syangja	Rolbaraha Community Forest, Syangja	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment, Gandaki Province
International Owl Society, UK	Pokhara Bird Society, Pokhara	WWF Nepal
Bird Conservation Nepal	Ghodaghodi Municipality, Kailali	Bhajani Municipality, Kailali
Bardagoriya Rural Municipality, Kailali	Division Forest Office, Pahalmanpur, Kailali	Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment, Sudurpaschim province
Owl Research Institute, USA	Nepal Astronomical Society, Kathmandu	Birds on the Brink, UK
Teka Samuha Nepal	Pipal Tree, UK	National Trust for Nature Conservation, Kathmandu

### Technical Supporters

Idea Wild, USA	Natural History Museum, Kathmandu	Discover Owls
Cultural Village, Dhanusha	Incredible Mithila, Dhanusha	Climate Change Pioneer Madhesh, Dhanusha
Madhesh Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal		



#### Festival Partners

World Owl Trust, UK	Nepalese Ornithological Union, Nepal	Bird Conservation Nepal, Kathmandu
Sikles Mother Group, Sikles, Kaski	Annapurna Higher Secondary School, Sikles, Kaski	Sikles Hydro, Kaski
Sikles-Parche Tamu Samaj, Pokhara	NFA, Nepal	LITS college, Butwal
Divisional Forest Office, Kapilvastu	Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu	Gautam Buddha Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu
Araniko Secondary School, Syangja	Global Owl Project, USA	District Forest Office, Chitwan
Annapurna Conservation Area Project, Sikles, Nepal	Sikles Electricity Management Sub Committee, Sikles, Kaski	Pokhara Sub-Metropolitan City, Kaski
Upper Madi Hydro, Kaski	Sikles Youth Club, Sikles	Apple Youth Club, Sikles
Apple International Pharmaceutical PVT LTD	Revo Science, Kathmandu	Niglihawa Village Development Committee, Kapilvastu
Gautama Buddha Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu	Fair Away Eco tours, Germany	Houston Nature Center, USA
International Festival Owls, USA	Parche VDC, Kaski	Sikles Tourism Management Sub Committee, Sikles, Kaski
Pokhara City Bus Management Committee, Kaski	Chamber of Commerce, Kaski	DNPWC, Nepal
National Path Lab, Butwal	Nepal Forum for Science Journalists, Kathmandu	District Development Committee, Kapilvastu
Maya Devi Collaborative Forest Management Committee, Kapilvastu	Re-Wild, Austria	Whitley Fund for Nature, UK

#### Organizers

Setidevi CF, Chitwan	Ghumaune Danda Bhangruthan CF, Dhading	Forest and Environment Protection Society, Dhading
Amaltari Bufferzone Homestay, Nawalparasi	Jagadishpur jalashaya byabasthapan bahusarokar manch	Youth Network, Jiri, Dolakha
Rangbhang Club, Syangja	Millennium Trek Management Committee, Syangja	Bird Conservation Network, Kailali
Natural Resource Conservation Organization, Parbat	Mithila Wildlife Trust, Dhanusha	

#### Co-organizers

Jiri Municipality, Dolakha	Gaurishanka Conservation Area Project, Dolakha	Jiri Technical Institute, Jiri, Dolakha
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#### Nepal Owl Festival Organizing committees from each location

#### Media Partners (2020)

Syangja TV	Mardi News	Radio Syangja
Mandala IT Solutions		



#### Photo

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Rohit Giri	WFN UK
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[https://fonnaepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/NOF-Impact-Report\\_2012-2025.pdf](https://fonnaepal.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/NOF-Impact-Report_2012-2025.pdf).



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