

Dr Luc Hoffmann ornithologist, conservationist, philanthropist (1923 – 2016)

In 1947, Dr Luc Hoffmann bought an estate in the Camargue in the south of France and in 1954 he established the Tour du Valat biological research station on it. The continued presence of the Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) in France has been attributed to conservation work conducted at Tour du Valat. Hoffmann also supported the breeding of Przewalski's Horse (*Equus ferus przewalskii*) nearby and their reintroduction to their native Mongolia in 2004. Generations of ecologists have trained at Tour du Valat. More than 60 Ph.Ds. have been awarded for research conducted at Tour du Valat by students enrolled at universities in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Canada and the United Kingdom. From 1953 to 1996, Hoffmann was on the board of Hoffmann-la Roche (now Roche Pharmaceuticals).

With Peter Scott, Julian Huxley, Max Nicholson and others, Hoffmann became a founder member of WWF in 1961. He was appointed as its vice-president at the inaugural meeting and served in that role until 1988. He was made vice-president emeritus in 1998. Hoffmann helped establish the Doñana National Park in Andalusia, Spain in 1963.

In 1994, Hoffmann established the MAVA Foundation, which distributes grants for nature conservation in the Mediterranean, the west coast of Africa and the Alps. In 2012, The MAVA Foundation and WWF International established the Luc Hoffmann Institute to honour the conservation legacy of Luc Hoffmann. The Institute focuses on catalysing new scientific ideas to solve this century's increasingly complex and interconnected conservation challenges. His son, André Hoffmann, sits on the Institute's Advisory Board.

In 2003, a major endowment in honour of Hoffmann's eightieth birthday led to the establishment of the Luc Hoffmann Chair in Field Ornithology at Oxford University's Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology.

Luc Hoffmann is probably best known as the 'founding father' of the Ramsar Convention
