

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Maxim Tarantovich
Project title	Conservation of European Roller (Coracias garrulus) in Belarus.
RSG reference	19295-B
Reporting period	May 2016 – October 2017
Amount of grant	£9989
Your email address	tarantovich@gmail.com
Date of this report	16.10.2017

**1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.**

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Reducing lack of hollows and create nesting sites for Roller by installing nest-boxes.				25 nest boxes were placed in Zhitkovichi region and 15 nest boxes in territory of Cherikov region (55 nest boxes for last 4 years).
Improving the feeding base of Roller through the creation of conditions for attracting and breeding of large insects				Piles of manure and sawdust were placed on nesting territories of roller in Cherikov district. Estimation of effectiveness of these measures possible only after 3 years. This time is necessary for development of beetle's larvae.
Improving of the use of open territories of Roller feed areas by installing artificial perches.				We have installed 10 artificial perches in feeding area of roller and improved the use of this territory for rollers hunting.
Eliminate the death of Rollers chicks due to malnutrition during periods of unfavourable weather conditions by providing forage points on nesting territory				We have received the perfect results using the forage points on roller nesting territory. We have found out (by using camera trap) that the roller finds the forage point quickly and actively uses it. Thus, we can recommend to use the forage points with banana crickets as a food to eliminate food shortages during the rainy and cold weather.
Excluding the deaths of chicks due to predation of Marten by placing of protecting plastic rings				We hadn't any cases of marten predating.
Decrease of ectoparasites impact for Rollers chicks by cleaning of the nest holes				We didn't catch any impact of ectoparasites for survival of the chicks during cleaning of the nests of the Rollers.
Improving the environmental activity of local communities				Volunteers from the NGO "APB BirdLife Belarus" were involved in field work. Construction and installation of nest boxes for roller was carried out in

				cooperation with forestry enterprises. Residents of Cherikov and Gronovo village were involved in the carrying out of biotechnical measures at the "Gronovo."
To draw the attention of local communities to the importance of Roller protection through the publication and distribution of posters and installation of the information boards.				We have designed and printed 300 posters ( <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By7XAZfCrPO-U29LN0txSXRNemM/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By7XAZfCrPO-U29LN0txSXRNemM/view?usp=sharing</a> and manufactured four information boards ( <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By7XAZfCrPO-Qk43ODlqYTJuSWc/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/0By7XAZfCrPO-Qk43ODlqYTJuSWc/view?usp=sharing</a> with information about the roller, the main threats for the species and how everybody can help to save the roller.
Revealing of post-breeding dispersion, migration and biological features of the species via individual colour ringing of the Roller nestlings.				We already ringed 30 chicks of the roller from start of the Rufford project, but not recorded a single case of return yet. Perhaps death of the birds on migration routes is one from the most important reasons of decrease number of the species in Belarus.
Conservation in fauna of Belarus not only Roller, but also such rare birds as Scops Owl, Tengmalm's Owl, Little Owl, Stock Dove, as well as bats and dormouse				We have decreased the natural hole shortage and created the new possibilities for nesting of different birds species by placing of nest boxes. The biotechnical measures to increase the number of beetles are important for all insectivore animals.
Continuing the work started under 2nd Rufford Small Grant on transfer of nesting Roller site "Borovoye" under protection.				The prepared documents are already in the Lelchitsa Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Inspectorate. The decision to committal the territory under protection will be made in the near future, according to the assurance of the administration.
Preparation of security obligations when detecting previously unknown new sites of Roller nesting				We didn't find a new nesting place of roller suitable to create the protected area. Nevertheless, we have information about previously unknown habitat of roller on south of Belarus. This information we have received after breeding season.

**2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).**

The conducted biotechnical measures provide birds with successful nesting. But our observations confirm that after the birds leave for winter, they do not return to their former nesting sites. We associate this fact with cases of illegal shooting and catching of birds during migration on the territory of the Middle East region.

**3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

1. Improve feeding conditions for Roller in key area for this species in Belarus. We have created conditions for attracting and breeding large beetles (*Oryctes nasicornis*, *Cetonia aurata*, *Geotrupes stercorarius*) - the main source of forage for Roller in Belarus. We have hosted the artificial perches to improve the use of meadow lands and improve hunting success. This management can improve feeding conditions for Roller.

2. Reduce the deficit of natural hollows is needed for nesting of Roller and other hollow-nesting birds. We have placed nest-boxes and reduced the deficit of natural hollows needed for nesting of Roller and other hollow-nesting birds.

3. Increase public awareness to the importance of Roller protection. We have increased the public awareness about the importance of roller protection by publication and distribution of posters, installation of information boards, publication of information in mass-media and social networks.

**4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).**

We collaborate with Lelchicy Inspection of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in protection of Rollers nesting area "Borovoe". Cherikov and Lelchicy forestry workers also have already made nest-boxes for roller.

Participation of the forestry in project allows them to receive additional bonuses for FSC™ certificate.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

The conservation of the roller habitats is a priority in our future work. The absence of young trees is a very serious problem of the remaining floodplain oak forests in the south of Belarus. We plan the restorative planting of oak seedlings with protection of them from eating by grazing cattle.

The work will continue to assess the effectiveness of biotechnical measures to improve the fodder base of roller. These measures will be introduced into the list of activities carried out by the forestry enterprises, if they are found to be effective.

We will continue to monitor the Belarusian population of roller, color marking of young birds and an assessment of the success of breeding of the birds.

Using roller as a flagship species will draw the attention of the general public to the importance of wildlife conservation.

## 6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The results of our work was published already in ornithology journal "Berkut"  
<http://aetos.kiev.ua/berkut/contru.htm>  
and presented in international conference devoted to the development of the International Plan for the European Roller  
[http://rollerproject.eu/sites/default/files/allando\\_tartalmak/Letolteseek/2017\\_ISAP\\_konferencia\\_eloadasok/belarus\\_maxim\\_tarantovich\\_ivan\\_russkikh.pdf](http://rollerproject.eu/sites/default/files/allando_tartalmak/Letolteseek/2017_ISAP_konferencia_eloadasok/belarus_maxim_tarantovich_ivan_russkikh.pdf)

Information about the work was published in several web-sites.  
[https://wildlife.by/science/articles/est-li-budushchee-u-belorusskoy-siney-ptitsy-/?sphrase\\_id=893](https://wildlife.by/science/articles/est-li-budushchee-u-belorusskoy-siney-ptitsy-/?sphrase_id=893)  
<http://www.ptushki.org/info/press/item/16965.html>  
and social networks, for example Facebook [https://www.facebook.com/Сизоворонка-в-Беларуси-1650977801863586/?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](https://www.facebook.com/Сизоворонка-в-Беларуси-1650977801863586/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)

We will present some information about results of the project on Zoological International Scientific-practical Conference "Actual problems of zoological science in Belarus". We will continue publish information in the internet.

## 7. Timescale: Over what period was The Rufford Foundation grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

Start of the project - May 2016. Finish of the project – October 2017. The project was implemented in accordance with the schedule.

## 8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Travel Expenses	1680	1680	0	
Accommodation and subsistence	3360	3320	-40	Cost savings by more frequent stay in a tent
Materials	3650	3690	+40	40 £ - delivery of camera-traps and binocular
Overhead expenses	1299	1299	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>9989</b>	<b>9989</b>	<b>0</b>	

Exchange rate: 1 £ = 2.575 BYN

**9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?**

Protect and renewal flood-plain oak forest as very important habitat of roller is priority of our further work.

**10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?**

The logo was included in documents provided to local authorities during the discussions on the creation of reserve zone for roller in Belarus; also the logo was used for presentations made in the international conference devoted to the development of the International Plan for the European Roller (Hungary). The logo was used on posters and information boards.

**11. Any other comments?**

