

Project Update: November 2008

Igor reports "Field season is over in our region, the winter is coming. I have done the main part of the work concerning my project on the pearl mussels around Saint-Petersburg.

The most remarkable news from my project are the following:

In 2008 a remarkable pearl mussel colony was described. It exists in a small river (Peipia) flowing into the Gulf of Finland of the Baltic Sea. There are several thousands of mollusks there. The mussel density is very high in some parts of the river. The colony is represented not only by very old individuals, but by the young ones as well. It is a great surprise that such a colony still exists.

Unfortunately, the pearl mussels are absent in the main part of the salmon and trout rivers of the Saint-Petersburg region. However some mussel populations exist.

During the searches for the pearl mussel another rare mollusk was noted, that is *Unio crassus*. It is considered as a protected species in Europe (unlike Russia). It exists at least in two river systems of the Saint-Petersburg region."

