

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details	
Full Name	Edward Mongin
Project Title	Monitoring and Conservation of the Great Snipe in Belarus
Application ID	27729-D
Grant Amount	£10,000
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Date of this Report	20/03/2021

1. 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
to check results of restoration of habitats in the Sporovo Reserve and to expand restoration of key breeding sites in the reserve which were determined during the last project				We checked results and staff of the reserve and expanded restoration of key breeding sites (more than 100 ha in 2019).
to gather data on a restoration of habitats in frameworks of other projects, which may contribute to conservation of the Great Snipe				Data on a restoration of habitats in framework of other projects was collected in southern and eastern parts of Belarus including some regions of Vitebsk district.
to find new key breeding habitats in Gomel, Vitebsk and Mogilev regions				We found new key breeding sites in Vitebsk region and Mogilev region.
to create of internet-site including an online broadcast of a Great Snipe lek in the Sporovo Reserve for increasing public awareness about conservation problem of the species and its habitats				It was impossible to carry out an online broadcast of a great snipe lek in the Sporovo Reserve since the GSM signal was very weak or absent in the lekking area. We used camera-traps to record a video which will be placed on the internet site of the reserve.
to help organization of the manual mowing championship in the fen mire of Sporovo Reserve in order to increase public awareness about conservation problem of rare species and their habitats				The manual mowing championship was conducted in the reserve and 30 teams from different regions took part in the event. Information was published in different mass media.
to analyze collected data, develop conservation guidelines for the Great Snipe and publish theirs in mass media				Data were analysed and published in two scientific articles; also conservation guidelines were provided through an international action plan.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

It was impossible to carry out an online broadcast of a great snipe lek in the Sporovo Reserve since the GSM signal was very weak or absent in the lekking area. We used camera traps and GoPro to record videos of great snipe lekking and to create a video of full time of lekking activity that will be placed on the internet site of the Sporovo Reserve.

COVID problems limited movement in districts. Therefore, it was agreed with the city administration that the duration of field trips could be 5 days per week.

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

New key breeding habitats were found in Mogilev and Vitebsk regions. We discovered three big leks with the total numbers of males estimated between 70 and 95.

We received new important data on population trends and actual threats to the species and its habitats. These data were included in the new International Action Plan for the Great Snipe.

Close cooperation has been established with the reserve staff. Due to this, possible measures for the preservation of the great snipe were determined in the Sporovo Reserve, as well as public awareness raised about the conservation problems of rare species. At present, the reserve staff expanded works on habitat restoration (to more than 100 ha) and took into account the recommendations developed during the RF projects to preserve the great snipe.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

Staff of the Sporovski Reserve took part in the restoration of the great snipe breeding habitats. This work promoted the conservation of Sporovo fen that is the main task of staff. About 30 teams from different regions took part in the event as well as 40 local people from different regions of Belarus took part in manual mowing championship 2019. Hundreds of local people visited the county fair with different folk crafts, that was organised during this event. Such events support local communities and craftsmen economically.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

There is a need to revise the National Action Plan for the Great Snipe.

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

Scientific results were published in the proceedings of XV International Ornithological Conference of Northern Eurasia (2020). One article will be published the journal *Subbuteo* of APB-Birdlife in April 2021. I plan also to prepare some additional

materials for international conference proceedings. I shared the results of the work with colleagues and take part in development of new International Action Plan for the species.

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

The Rufford Foundation grant was used from 6 June 2019 to the end of December 2020. This period was slightly shorter than the anticipated length of the project due to time spent for preparation of the agreement (between APB and the Rufford Foundation) and registration of the project in the Special State Department of Belarus.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Organization of the manual mowing championship	120		-120	
Postage expenses, stationery, consumables	33		-33	
SDHC 32GB cards - 3 items	36	36		
Accumulators AA - 40 items	68	104	+36	
Bushnell Trophy Cam HD -3 items	960	951	-9	
Habitat management	1760	1306	-454	
Accumulator 12 V - 1 item	22	89	+67	
Bank fees	190	100	-90	
micro SDXC card	20	20		
IP camera - 1 item	200	110	-90	
Travel Expenses (including fuel and transport costs)	816	3314	+2498	
Accommodation and subsistence	5775	5280	-495	
TOTAL	10000	11310	+1310	

This is the budget agreed between APB-Birdlife and the Rufford Foundation

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

It is important to continue work on restoration of the great snipe habitats and to test management practices. We found new threats for the species and its population is decreasing up to now. It is important to revise the National Action Plan for the Great Snipe.

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

The Rufford Foundation logo was used on a poster in the Sporovo Reserve when the manual mowing championship was conducted in 2019 (also on the programme of championship). RF also received publicity in many press agencies, TV and Internet recourses:

TV:

<https://ont.by/news/ekologicheskij-festival-sporovskie-senokosi-proshyol-v-berozovskom-rajone>

https://www.tvr.by/news/obshchestvo/v_berezovskom_rayone_v_samom_razgare_s_porovskie_senokosy/

<http://sporava.by/index.php/en/news/item/36-sporovskie-senokosy-2019-video-anons-festivalya-10-avgusta-2019-g>

<https://wildlife.by/recreation-and-tourism/news/pyat-prichin-priekhat-na-sporovskie-senokosy-2019/>

Other materials and previous published articles:

<https://ont.by/news/ekologicheskij-festival-sporovskie-senokosi-proshyol-v-berozovskom-rajone>

<https://brestcity.com/blog/sporovskie-senokosy-2016-programma-festivalya>

We also presented the project results at XV International Ornithological Conference of Northern Eurasia in Minsk, 2020. Data was published in the conference proceedings.

Logo was also used in the materials on the APB-Birdlife site:

<https://ptushki.org/proj/monitoring-i-ohrana-dupelya-v-belarusi>

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Elena Davidyonok, APB: search of leks and monitoring counts

Alexander Kashtalian, APB: search of leks and monitoring counts

Oleg Ostrovski, Staff Scientist, Institute of Zoology NAB: search of leks and monitoring counts, data collection on a restoration of habitats in frameworks of other projects

Nicolay Cherkas, APB: search of leks, monitoring counts, data collection on a restoration of habitats in frameworks of other projects

Yuri Bogutski, Staff Scientist, Berezenski Reserve: search of leks and monitoring counts

Vadim Protasevich, Director of the Sporovo Reserve: organization of the manual mowing championship and management of Great Snipe breeding habitats in the Reserve.

12. Any other comments?