

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Your name | Edward Mongin |
| Project title | Breeding populations of the Great Snipe in Belarus: Trends, Current Threats and Pilot Restoration of Habitats |
| RSG reference | 13043-2 |
| Reporting period | Mid-May - November 2014 |
| Amount of grant | £5983 |
| Your email address | edward.m@list.ru |
| Date of this report | 27 November 2014 |

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 |
|---|--------------|--------------------|----------------|---|
| To estimate conditions of key breeding habitats of the Great Snipe and to determine current threats | | | Yes | High floods were in southern part of Belarus until mid-June 2013 therefore many leks moved in other places. We were forced to repeat the counts in 2014. |
| To compare numbers of males in key breeding sites with data of previous censuses | | | Yes | Since census data of some years contained missing values, we used the TRIM programme to obtain better estimates of the indices and to determine the overall species trend |
| To conduct a training workshop with the Sporovo Reserve staff on ecology of the great snipe and possible measures to maintain the breeding population | | | Yes | We had to change date of the workshop several times because director of the reserve went on a special trip. |
| To perform a pilot restoration of the breeding habitats in the Sporovo Reserve using special combine (ratrak) for mowing and cutting bush. | | | Yes | It was impossible to deliver the ratrak exactly on the known lekking arena because dimensions of the ratrak and local roads impeded this. |
| To increase a public awareness and attract attention to the problems of the species conservation | | | Yes | |

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

It was impossible to deliver the ratrak exactly on the known lekking arena because dimensions of ratrak and local roads impeded this. We studied the locality and chose a new site for ratrak mowing which was placed not far from the lek. It was known there was a small lek near the new site. This spring we found feeding great snipe on the mowed fen.

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

The overall species trend and current threats were determined in key breeding habitats that allowed to preserve the conservation status of the great snipe in the new edition of the Red Data Book of Belarus.

The training workshop with the Sporovo Reserve staff was carried out on ecology and possible measures to maintain the breeding population of the great snipe. The staff will probably continue the work on management of breeding habitats.

The restoration of breeding habitats were conducted in the Sporovo Reserve and feeding great snipe were observed on mowed patches of the fen.

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

Staff of the Sporovski Reserve took part in restoration of the of great snipe breeding habitats. This work promoted the conservation of Sporovo fen that is the main task of staff. Restoration of habitats and conservation of the great snipe lek will encourage an ecological tourism which is one of income items of the reserve.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I plan to study distribution of females during breeding season in order to develop proper management of habitats, and also to check the effects of mowing for the breeding great snipe in the Sporovski Reserve.

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

I plan to prepare several additional materials for the journal of APB-Birdlife. I have written the brief article on the great snipe with contemporary map of distribution for the new edition of the Red Data Book of Belarus (2014).

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

The Rufford Foundation grant was used from mid-May 2013 till mid-November 2014. This is the same term as the anticipated length of the project.

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 |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---|
| Accommodation and subsistence | 3225 | 3330 | +105 | It took 7 additional days to organise and check the ratrack work. |
| Travel Expenses | 540 | 623 | +83 | Fuel was spent rather more and its cost was on the advance. |
| Payment of Internet | 90 | 90 | 0 | |
| Costs of operating the ratrak | 520 | 520 | 0 | |
| Diesel fuel for the ratrak | 1320 | 1320 | 0 | |
| Diesel delivery | 100 | 100 | 0 | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|------|-------------|------|---|
| Movement of ratrack | 188 | 0 | -188 | It was not necessary to move the ratrack to remote part of the Sporovo fen. |
| Total | 5983 | 5983 | 0 | |

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

It is important to continue works on restorations of the great snipe habitats. It need also to define the breeding sites of females and to study their ecological needs in order to carry out proper management.

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 Rufford Foundation logo is used on the APB-Birdlife site (<http://www.ptushki.org/whatwedo/tips/species/dupel.html>). Data of the project are published in two articles:

Mongin E., Davidyonok E. New studies of the Great Snipe population in Belarus. Wetlands International – Woodcock and Snipe Specialist Group. Newsletter 39, December 2013: 6-7.

Mongin E., Davidyonok E. Trends of numbers and current threats for the breeding population of the Great Snipe in Belarus. Wetlands International – Woodcock and Snipe Specialist Group. Newsletter 40, December 2014. - In press.

The Rufford Foundation logo and data received during implementation of the 1st and 2nd projects were used in Power Point presentation and presented on the join workshop in the Sporovski Reserve in September 2013.