

Project Update: May 2015

During March and April 2015 we have performed a series of field expeditions to count snipe on spring passage in Western Polissia region of Ukraine. Later in May 2015, we checked all known breeding localities of common and great snipe and searched for new sites. Spring 2015 in Polissia region was very dry and therefore unsuitable for waders because of lack of snow in winter of 2014/2015 and low precipitation in spring of 2015 in west Ukraine. Nevertheless, we have found three new breeding locations of great snipe, and five new locations of common snipe. During visits to breeding grounds in May 2015 we counted snipe and calculated their breeding densities. This allows us to extrapolate densities on whole study area and to estimate population size of both species in West Polissia. Unfortunately, now it is much lower than it was in past and lower than we expected. For common Snipe it is 100-150 pairs, for great snipe – ~50 pairs (5 leks). The restoration of habitats is urgently needed, because (taking into account dynamics of population numbers of both species) snipe can be extinct from the region in few decades.



Top Left: Typical habitat for great snipe in W. Polissia. Top Middle: Conversation with hunter about snipe. Top Right: Searching for snipe on the Prypiat floodplain. Bottom Left: Ringing of great snipe. Bottom Right: Counting great snipe in the evening on the other side of the Prypiat River.