

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	Maxim Tarantovich
Project title	Restoration of habitats of European Roller is a way to conserve biodiversity in Belarus
RSG reference	24604-D
Reporting period	May 2018 – October 2019
Amount of grant	£9,996
Your email address	tarantovich@gmail.com
Date of this report	11.10.2019

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
Maintenance of the Roller habitats through restoration of floodplain oak forests				According to the project 100 oak seedlings were planted in the floodplain with protection of the seedlings from eating by grazing cattle using plastic mesh. Unfortunately, the abnormally dry autumn of the first year led to the death of 40% of plants planted this year.
Reducing lack of hollows and create nesting sites for Roller by installing nest-boxes				The installation of 50 nesting boxes for the roller in the territory of the floodplain oak forest was made in cooperation with the local forestry.
Revealing of post-breeding dispersion, migration and biological features of the species via individual colour ringing of the Roller nestlings.				We already ringed 36 chicks of the roller from start of the Rufford project. We have the first recovery of the roller with colour ring in Belarus. This bird was ringed as a chick 1 year ago. The ringed roller was found 2 km from the place of ringing and stimulated to feed chicks in the nests of other pair.
Eliminate the death of Rollers chicks due to malnutrition during periods of unfavourable weather conditions by providing forage points on nesting territory				After providing forage points in the rollers' nesting territory we had no cases of the death of roller chicks due to malnutrition.
Excluding the deaths of chicks due to predation of Marten by placing of protecting plastic rings				We had no cases of marten predation.
Decrease of ectoparasites impact for Rollers chicks by cleaning				We didn't see any impact of ectoparasites on the survival of the chicks during cleaning the nests of the rollers.

of the nest holes				
To assess the effectiveness of biotechnical measures to improve the fodder base of Roller.				Surveys of sawdust piles, which were placed next to the roller nesting place 3 years ago, at this stage, did not reveal a significant number of xylophage beetle larvae. The probability was that their settlement would take longer period and needed the decomposition of fresh sawdust. We will continue monitoring.
Improving the environmental activity of local communities by involving them in restoration of floodplain oak forests.				Meetings with employees of the Miloshevichy forestry and forest nursery were held. Forestry workers took part in the preparation and planting of oak seedlings in the floodplain oak forest.
Improving public awareness to the importance of Roller protection and maintenance of the Roller habitats				<p>The television story about the roller was filmed jointly with the Belarus-4 TV channel. https://www.tvrmogilev.by/ru/news/region/gde-iskat-sinyuyu-pticu-belarusi-video.html</p> <p>The Roller in Belarus website http://www.sizovorodka.by created within the framework of this project won the competition for non-profit websites in Belarus</p> <p>https://www.belta.by/tech/view/belorusy-vybrali-samyj-dobryj-sajt-346180-2019/ . The competition was attended by 400 sites. The Roller in Belarus website got 8600 votes, 47.2% of the total. The event was widely covered in the media:https://minsknews.by/pochemu-ischezaet-populyatsiya-sizovoronki-uchenyie-sozdali-sajt-dlya-spaseniya-redkogo-vida-pernatyih/;</p> <p>http://greenbelarus.info/articles/18-03-2019/sajt-pro-belarusskuyu-sinyuyu-pticu-v-tope-poleznyh-proektov-bayneta;</p> <p>http://www.24d.by/istorii-saytov/http_sizovorodka_by/ ;</p> <p>https://naviny.by/article/20190430/1556650561-u-nas-internet-v-krovi-kak-kislород-baynetu-ispolnyaetsya-25-let;</p> <p>https://ont.by/news/belorusy-vybrali-samyj-dobryj-sajt-i-eto-internet-resurs-o-malenkoj-tropicheskoj-ptichke;</p> <p>https://itkvariat.by/news/758-v-konkurse-</p>

				<p>dbaj-internet-ljudej-belarusy-vybrali-samyj-dobryj-sajt.html and others.</p> <p>We also share information in our group on Facebook. «Сизоворонка в Беларусии» https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Community/Сизоворонка-в-Беларуси-1650977801863586/</p>
Preparation of security obligations when detecting previously unknown new sites of Roller nesting				Two new conservation obligations for the nesting sites of the roller revealed in 2018 were prepared and transferred to the Cherikov Inspection of Natural Resources.

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

The abnormally dry autumn of the first year led to the death of 40% of plants, planted this year. We carried over the planting time for seedlings 2 weeks later in current year.

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

1. Maintenance of the roller habitats through restoration of floodplain oak forests

The old floodplain oak forests are one of the last habitats of the roller in Belarus but do not have natural growth of young trees. This type of biotope can disappear when old oaks die. Planting oak seedlings, with their protection of them from cattle and wild animals, helps save this biotope for hundreds of years ahead.

2. Reducing lack of hollows and create nesting sites for Roller by installing nest-boxes

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

3. Improving public awareness to the importance of Roller protection and maintenance of the Roller habitats

Through the creation of a website about Roller in Belarus and dissemination of information on television and Internet resources we improved public awareness to the importance of roller protection and maintenance of the roller habitats.

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

We collaborated with Miloshevichi forestry for planting of oak seedlings and placed nest-boxes for roller. Also, we collaborated with Cherikov Inspection of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection for Preparation of security obligations

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 of Belarus. We plan the continue restorative planting of oak seedlings with protection of them from eating by grazing cattle.

We will continue to monitor the Belarusian population of roller, colour 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 were shared in our website <https://www.sizovorodka.by> and group on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Community/Сизоворонка-в-Беларуси-1650977801863586/> and we will continue to update it.

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 2018. Finish of the project – October 2019. 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
Materials	3576	3576		
Accommodation and subsistence	3360	3360		
Travel Expenses	1760	1760		
Overhead expenses	1300	1300		
Total	9996	9996		

Exchange rate: 1 £ = 2.53 BYN

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

The genetic isolation of local roller populations is the problem in north-east Europe now. Translocation of roller eggs or chicks between different regions could solve this problem.

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

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in website www.sizovoronka.by

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

Russkikh Ivan – relations with public and local authorities, fieldwork

Ostrovsky Oleg - fieldwork