

## Project Update: September 2021

We are extremely glad to have an opportunity, thanks to the support of the Rufford Foundation, to bring to life our environmental protection project “**Study of rare plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park (Ukraine, Sumy Oblast)**”. Our field work and data collection have been being successfully undertaken despite restrictive measures related to the pandemic.

Pursuant to our plan, we conducted two excursions within the territory of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park. One of them was for younger schoolchildren, and another one for university students. Following the national guidelines on preventing the COVID-19 spread, we managed to organise small, guided groups of people. Therefore, the transport expenses for excursions were less than originally planned. Due to this situation, we would like to ask you for the permission to carry out additional excursions using the funds allocated exactly for the purpose of conducting excursions.

Having conducted a survey in some inhabited locations of the park and in nearby areas, we found out that the local population does not have an idea about the purpose of the park and has no knowledge about the protected sites and species. This case showed us a large space for action to address the lack of knowledge on the park. We have become aware of the issues causing misunderstanding of environmental protection among the local population and currently we are elaborating guidelines aimed at solving the situation.

Furthermore, we have prepared several tour plans and routes for various population groups depending on their age.

As for publishing photos of the participants in the excursions online, we have obtained all the relevant permissions from parents of the minor participants and from the adult ones.

### Works performed at this stage of project implementation

	Kind of activity	What is done
1	Field work	<p>Expeditions to the vicinity of the villages: Dukhanivka, Hutu, Kamin, Khyzhky, Kuzky, Lysohubivka, Lytvynovychi, Lyubytove, Melnya, Mutyn, Nechaivka, Novomutyn, Ozarychi, Peresyvky, Sarnavshchyna, Selyshche, Shcherbynivka, Spadshchyna, Spaske, Taranske, Volokytyne, Vorhol, Vyrvka, Zaliznychne, Zarichne, Zholdaky.</p> <p>During the field work, the following was done:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Discovery of new localities of rare plant species of Seymskiy RLP and a general analysis of their populations.</li><li>2) Examination of habitats of rare plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park.</li><li>3) Detection of the most floristically precious sites of Seymskiy RLP and its nearby areas: locations of rare plant propagation.</li></ol>

		<p>4) Identification of territories that were anthropogenically impacted the most: large, deforested areas, illegally ploughed up lands, dump sites, and ruderalised habitats.</p> <p>5) Correction of the plan of expeditions because of the particularities of the park's functional zoning, commercial activity of the local population, and due to accessibility of some areas.</p>
2	Publication of posts in the local social media communities in order to promote knowledge on the park	<p>Facebook posts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2143495075788098&amp;id=100003828793629">https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2143495075788098&amp;id=100003828793629</a></li> <li>2. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2148620298608909&amp;id=100003828793629">https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2148620298608909&amp;id=100003828793629</a></li> <li>3. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2162345027236436&amp;id=100003828793629">https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2162345027236436&amp;id=100003828793629</a></li> <li>4. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2172625506208388&amp;id=100003828793629">https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2172625506208388&amp;id=100003828793629</a></li> <li>5. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2195422297262042&amp;id=100003828793629">https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=2195422297262042&amp;id=100003828793629</a></li> <li>6. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/litvinovichi/posts/3218697178357647/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/litvinovichi/posts/3218697178357647/</a></li> <li>7. <a href="https://www.facebook.com/UkrainianNatureConservationGroup/posts/785724568782374">https://www.facebook.com/UkrainianNatureConservationGroup/posts/785724568782374</a></li> </ol>
3	Events within the territory of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park	<p>Participation in events in the territory of the park: birdwatching competition "Big Day" and performance as a speaker in the discussion "How to lose a historic chance":</p> <p><a href="https://www.facebook.com/rlp.seimskiy/posts/6256332674406839">https://www.facebook.com/rlp.seimskiy/posts/6256332674406839</a></p>
4	Events for the local schoolchildren and students	<p>Organised two excursions «Rare meadow plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park»:</p> <p>1) Excursion for schoolchildren</p> <p>We have prepared an excursion plan for children that includes a walking route of 3 km through the park's meadows. The optimal time for such an event is between June 10 and June 20, which corresponds to the blossoming period of the meadow plants.</p> <p>This excursion was conducted for a group of schoolchildren from the city of Putyvl.</p> <p>Before starting the events, we have revealed that none of the minor participants was aware of the existence of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park and its functions. Moreover, the children could not name any species that are protected in the park's territory.</p>

		<p>According to our plan, the following information was provided to the participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the park.</li> <li>• Environmental protection in the park's territory.</li> <li>• Particularities of the biology and ontogeny of rare plants.</li> <li>• Connection between plants and habitats.</li> <li>• Types of habitats.</li> <li>• Anthropogenic impact on natural habitats.</li> <li>• Rules of conduct with rare plants.</li> </ul> <p>Outcome of our work: The participants proved their capability to apply information on rare plants by having successfully completed several practical tasks in the field. In response, we received positive feedback from the schoolchildren and teachers on our event.</p> <p>2) Excursion for students The excursion plan for students was elaborated with the purpose to provide advanced knowledge on the nature of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park and its protection. We have covered the distance of 7 km through different types of habitats.</p>
5	Processing herbarium data	We found data on rare species of Seimskiy RLP in Herbarium of M.M. Gryshko National Botanical Gardens of NAS of Ukraine (KWHA) and National Herbarium of Ukraine (KW).
6	Publication of the main results of the research activities	Some data obtained during the expeditions entered to the base Global Biodiversity Information System <a href="https://www.gbif.org/uk/dataset/330ead6c-1af1-44ea-ba70-dc778a6c167b">https://www.gbif.org/uk/dataset/330ead6c-1af1-44ea-ba70-dc778a6c167b</a>



Fig. A. Plant species of the Red Book of Ukraine: 1 - *Epipactis helleborine* (L.) Crantz; 2 - *Platanthera chlorantha* (Cust.) Rchb.; 3 - *Neottia nidusavis* (L.) Rich; 4 - *Lilium martagon* L.



Fig. B. Habitats of rare plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park: 1- C1: Surface standing waters; 2 - G1: Broadleaved deciduous woodland; 3 - G3: Coniferous woodland; 4 - E2: Mesic grasslands.

**Excursion for schoolchildren «Rare meadow plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park**







**Excursion for students «Rare plants of Seymskiy Regional Landscape Park**













