

TAKE ACTION

On logging in spring /V. Ķerus/, pp. 2–4

For at least five years LOB has tried to achieve a ban on logging of forests during the main breeding season of birds: April–June. Due to logging at least 50.6 thousand birds' nests are destroyed every spring, which is a violation of national and international regulations of nature conservation and not accepted by the majority of society. The request of LOB is opposed by the logging industry, but this year the Ministry of Agriculture has been given the task of establishing a working group to discuss the possibilities of introducing the ban.

RESEARCH

The weekend effect on the results of registration of arriving migratory birds /M. Tīrums/, pp. 5–9

In this article I examine the bias towards weekend recording (the weekend effect) in volunteer phenology and birdwatchers' observations, using the phenological observations of 15 common migratory species in Latvia during 1996–2011. To analyze the weekend bias for rare species, data from 118 bird species were used. Data were obtained from the database of Latvian Ornithology Society and from the web page www.dabasdati.lv. For analysis of weekend effect, Easter holidays, May 1 and Independence Day (May 4) holidays were taken in to account.

In the 16 year period most frequently correlation between weekends and holidays, and arrival data were found for White wagtail and Cuckoo – 10 from 16 years or 62.5 % respectively. Also similar correlation was found for Thrush Nightingale and Corncrake.

In 1996, 1998, 2002 and 2005 Easter holidays were a significant factor especially for Skylark, Starling, Chaffinch, Common Crane and White Wagtail. Easter holidays are important factor if these days are in the beginning of spring (end of March). Holidays in the beginning of May have influenced the mean observation date for Thrush Nightingale, Barn Swallow, Cuckoo and House Martin.

Results revealed that out of 15 analyzed common bird species for 7 species the highest number of observations was recorded in weekends (Saturday and Sunday). The weekend effect could be observed also for the group of less common species.

Some insights on the project "Artificial nests for the large eagles and Eagle Owl"

/J. Lipsbergs/, pp. 10–13

The project was initiated by the author by building artificial nests for White-tailed Eagle and Golden Eagle. Since 1992 the project was run by Latvian Fund for Nature. To extend the life of the artificial nests to at least 10 years the author developed a standard for a durable and stable artificial nest for setting up in spruce trees.

Until 2011 White-tailed Eagle was recorded breeding in 16% of 25 artificial nests built for this species, but in total 36% of artificial nests have been occupied by this species. Other species have also been recorded breeding in these artificial nests: Eagle Owl (3 cases), Lesser Spotted Eagle (2), Mallard (2), Tawny Owl (1) and White Wagtail (1). For Eagle Owl these were the first recorded cases of nesting in trees in Latvia. Later (since 1998) the author developed a special design of an artificial nest of Eagle Owl. Altogether 30 artificial nests for Eagle Owl have been built. Ten of them have been used by Eagle Owl but the total number of breeding cases in artificial nests is twice as big. These are still the only recorded cases of Eagle Owl nesting in trees.

INTERVIEW

Ģirts Kasparsons – the guide into the world of birds /V. Ķerus/, pp. 14–16

Ģirts Kasparsons celebrates his 80th birthday this year. Being a city boy Ģirts had little birds in his childhood, but he grew up to be a well-known ornithologist and lecturer. All his adult life Ģirts Kasparsons has followed his mission to introduce people to the wonderful world of birds.

FROM FIELD NOTES

Getting to know birds in person

/V. Liepa/, pp. 17–20

Unusual behavior and/or emotions of three free living birds – a male starling, a swallow and a crow are described. Years of observation of common bird species living close to countryside house has indicated remarkable mental diversity of individuals of every species. Statements of author are in line with the findings of some recent experimental research that has revealed high intellect of birds, rejecting the ancient notion about birds as mainly reflex driven beings.

THE MOST INTERESTING BIRD OBSERVATIONS

Common Nightingale – new bird species in Latvia /G. Grandāns/, p. 21

On April 29, 2013 new bird species for Latvia – Common Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* – was caught at Kolka cape in bird nets for ringing. Bird was found by Ilze

Bojāre, taken out from net by Edijs Haberkorns, identified by Gaidis Grandāns and ringed by Ivars Bredikis with ring "Latvia Riga JA34966".

Pine Grosbeak *Pinicola enucleator* in Latvia /I. Priedniece/, 22–27

Pine Grosbeaks are famous for their tame behavior – they are not afraid of man, and can be easily caught. During 18th century they were hunted.

Pine Grosbeaks of Western Palearctic breed in northern regions of Fennoscandia and Russia. They feed on various berries, seeds and buds, during the breeding season – invertebrates. Global population is decreasing as it suffers from forest fragmentation.

Pine Grosbeak is an irruptive species. In Latvia irruptions are registered in years 1790, 1793, 1798, 1803, 1897, 1902/03 and 1976/77, many individuals are observed also in winters of 1978/79, 2008/09 and 2012/2013.

All historical records of the species (from 18th century till nowadays) in Latvia are included in a table, records from the winter 2012/2013 also shown on a map.

Some remarks on the observation of Slender-billed Curlew in Latvia in 1926

/R. Matrozis/, pp. 28–29

This article describes all published information and some other remarks about the observation of Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris* in Latvia, when one bird was reported as shot in autumn of 1926. By author's opinion there is not enough evidence to accept this observation, because of absence of detailed description and fact that the bird was not checked by experts.

NEWS, pp. 30–31

News from Putnidaba.lv:

- A new species in Latvia recorded during "Battle of Towers 2013" – Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*;
- Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* visited Latvia unnoticed – new bird species for Latvia;
- Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina* from Latvia breeding in Lithuania.

LOB news:

- CEMEX Bird Days;
 - New album of Latvian Bird Voices – available at <http://putnidaba.lv/audio>
- News from Dabasdati.lv:**
- Oldest White-tailed Eagle recorded in Latvia;
 - Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica cyaneacula* at Skanstes Street in Riga.