

TAKE ACTION

Write to the State /V. Ķerus/, pp. 2–3

The most effective way to express your opinion to state and its institutions is to write letters. In this article author teaches how and whom to write official letters about your opinion.

RESEARCH

Nocturnal bird monitoring in Latvia**2006–2012 /O. KeiĶis/, pp. 4–7**

Nocturnal bird monitoring in Latvia was started in 1989, when only one species – Corncrake *Crex crex* – was surveyed. New state monitoring programme in Latvia was initiated in 2006, that also include other nocturnal birds in agricultural landscape. Table 1 shows about 100 or more “positive” sample plots (where species has been recorded) for six species: Corncrake *Crex crex* (222 or ~32 plots per year); Common Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia* (117 or ~17 per year); Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris* (112 or 16 per year); Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia* (112 or 16 per year); Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* (106 or ~15 per year) and River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis* (96 or ~14 per year). No species showed significant population changes during seven years of research (2006–2013), but for some species data collected at night could represent population changes more objectively.

FROM FIELD NOTES

Battle of Towers 2013 in the view of “The Freshmen” /I. Grīnerte/, pp. 8–9

The winners of birdwatching competition “Battle of Towers 2013” was team “The Freshmen” (“Zaļknābji”; Gaidis Grandāns, Andris Avotiņš jun., Mārtiņš Platacis and Ieva Grīnerte), which competed at Kaltene tower. They observed 85 bird species during 24h and that was one species more than previous record (maximum observed at that tower) and 16 species more than average of previous years at this tower. Winners of “The most interesting observation” was team “M-ērgļi” (Jānis Ķuze, Māris Strazds and Normunds Zeidakš), which observed new species for Latvia – Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* from Zvidze channel at W coas of Lake Lubāns. The most friendly team was “Himantopus farmclub” (Ilze Bojāre, Ivars Brediks, Vilnis Gremze and Edijs Haberkorns) at Kaņieris tower. This time there was also possibility to take part in hobby class and the winners was team “APLA” (Andris Dekants, Laura Romanovska, Guna Roze and Elīze Spridzāne) at Daugavgrīva tower. The new option was to become as Godparent of tower and this time they were – “3 cooks’ restaurant” (“3 pavāru restorāns”) for Kuivižu tower, “Map Publisher Jana Seta” for Lubāns S dam tower, Motacilla Ltd. for Kaņieris tower and social network Draugiem.lv (Frype.com) for Ķengarags tower. More informa-

tion (in Latvian): <http://putnidaba.lv/tornu-cinas/>

THE MOST INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* – new bird species for Latvia**/J. Ķuze/, pp. 10–11**

On morning of May 19, 2013 during birdwatching competition Battle of Towers new bird species for Latvia was recorded – Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*. Bird was observed from tower of Zvidze channel at W coas of Lake Lubāns by team “M-ērgļi” – Jānis Ķuze, Māris Strazds and Normunds Zeidakš assisted by Inese Zeidaka.

Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* – new bird species for Latvia /I. Deņisovs/, pp. 11–12

On May 27–29, 2013 a new bird species for Latvia – Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* – passed over the SE Latvia equipped with satellite transmitter. This was second time, when a new species was recorded using satellite transmitter and nobody observed bird in the field (first was Saker Falcon *Falco cherrug* on May 14, 2010).

JOURNEY

Rich coast Costa Rica /M. Puķītis/, pp. 13–17

Latin America's most successful democracy is one of the wealthiest in the region and rich in its exotic nature. For bird watchers and nature photographers it is a paradise. More than 820 bird species is a significant reason for measuring the way across the Atlantic. These are only some of observed bird species – Anhinga or American Snakebird *Anhinga anhinga*, Laughing Falcon *Herpetotheres cachinnans*, Keel-billed Toucan *Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Slaty-tailed Trogon *Trogon Massena*, Great Curassow *Crax rubra*, Violet Sabrewing *Campylopterus hemileucurus*, Northern Jacana *Jacana spinosa*.

CHONICLE

We are BirdLife! /V. Ķerus/, pp. 18–20

Article about CEO of Latvian Ornithological Society trip to *BirdLife International* World Congress in Ottawa, Canada.

INTERVIEW

30 seasons at Pape on 70th anniversary. Conversation with Donāts Spalis**/A. Bušs/, pp. 21–23**

Donāts Spalis is of the Head of Household and scientific assistant at Laboratory of Ornithology (BIOL) in the Institute of Biology of the University of Latvia. On 2012 Donāts celebrated 70-year anniversary, as well as he had been working at Pape Ornithological Centre for 30 seasons, so this time the conversation will be more about Pape.

FROM FIELD NOTES

Trip to the Kalnāji Ornitobase at Rauda**/A. Bušs/, pp. 24–27**

To Rauda Ornitobase I wanted to go long time before. For me it was associated as an orphan site, where once there have been great things, or – more precisely – research. If you are told that there is “5P” or “First World Bird Research Planetarium” (“Pirmais Putnu Pētniecības Planetārijs Pasaulē”), then it already has association of Latvian pride. During Soviet times there was performed research work on bird sense of orientation. Unfortunately no research work has been conducted there for 20 years and it seems that won't be anymore. This story is about the situation nowadays at this base.

NEWS

News of School programme and Young ornithologist's school /I. Freiberga/, pp. 28–29

School or local group is the easiest way for interested students to improve their knowledge of the birds and spend time in nature. If in school group there is a feeling that you want something more, you can join the LOB Young Ornithologists School and improve knowledge leading by professional ornithologists, for example, to learn bird ringing at Pape Ornithological Station of Institute of Biology of University of Latvia. When knowledge is large enough and experience to live in field has been gained, it is possible to participate in various studies and expeditions. This year Māris Bazulis and Reinis Priedols led by Oskars KeiĶis went to Belarus to take part in the rarest European songbird – Aquatic Warbler – monitoring counts. At this article there are published short stories from participants of LOB Schools Program and Young Ornithologists School.

The Three – Star Order for LOB honorary member Jānis Vīksne /A. Bušs/, p. 30

On October 10, 2013 Dr. biol. Jānis Vīksne was awarded with the first civilian order of the Republic of Latvia – The Order of Three Stars. He has been the leading researcher and head of Ornithological laboratory of the Institute of Biology of the University of Latvia for many years, as well as professor and academician at the Latvian Academy of Sciences. Jānis Vīksne is a LOB member since its foundation in 1985, and has also been a long-time president of LOB (1985–2008). As LOB honorary member he has been elected in 2008. Jānis Vīksne has made a significant investment in research and protection of birds, as well as public education.

Birds of Egypt from photo lens**/R. Matrozis/, p. 30****Participate with your photo story, p. 31****Runde – bird island in Norway****/I. Grīnerte/, p. 31**