



“Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favorable conservation status of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania” (LIFE MagniDucatusAcrola, project reference no. LIFE15 NAT/LT/001024)

Project area:

20 509 ha in Lithuania and Belarus

Duration: 2016-2023

Website: www.meldine.lt/en

Supported by:

EU LIFE Programme, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania and project partners.



Partners:



Let's share ideas and experience

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Aquatic Warbler:
a bird which needs our help

Project “Stepping stones towards ensuring long-term favorable conservation status of Aquatic warbler in Lithuania”

Aquatic warbler – Europe's rarest songbird

- The aquatic warbler was formerly found in more than 20 European countries. During the 20th century, the global population declined by 95 %.
- The current breeding range is in Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Germany and covers 375 km². In the first 3 countries, 95 % of the global population are found.
- Despite an international legal obligation to protect this bird, and the special conservation status it has in many countries, the aquatic warbler is still decreasing and it faces a real threat of global extinction.
- The main reason for decline is that aquatic warblers are losing their homes. Places suitable for aquatic warbler to live (habitats) are disappearing due to intensive farming, changes of land use, drainage of wetlands and land abandonment. As those territories vanish, the once continuous network of wetlands is increasingly fragmented, and local populations become isolated. Once this happens, when an isolated population suffers a local set-back it may become extinct, and in some sites there are too few birds nearby to recolonise naturally.

The overall objective of the project

To start creating an international network of good quality habitats, which would reduce fragmentation and isolation of individual aquatic warbler breeding territories, increase viability of populations and ensure long-term favorable conservation status of the bird. To create a sustainable aquatic warbler conservation network will be the long-term task.

Major conservation measures of the project:

- Habitat restoration using traditional measures (bush cutting, reed mowing, water level management) and testing innovative method – sedge seeding – in a big exploited peatland (500 ha) in Dokudovskoe.
- Setting up a biomass processing facility as a long-term habitat maintenance mechanism in the biggest aquatic warbler habitat in Lithuania – Tyrai.
- Aquatic warbler conservation translocation from a big viable population in Zvanets to a small decreasing population in Zuvintas for the first time in history;
- Develop a long-term strategy to further formation of the habitat network. Form a basis for future conservation work.
- For more detailed description of the project activities, visit our website: www.meldine.lt/en

Where we operate



Every day aquatic warbler faces new challenges of survival. Its conservation integrates different sectors and involves different stakeholders – birders, farmers, businessmen, scientists and politicians. It needs the help of us all!

- If you are a **birder**, your passion can help! Every aquatic warbler observation is important to understand species' migration and potential breeding sites better. We especially lack information on its wintering sites in West Africa. Notifications about ringed birds are also very important. Any information is welcomed.
- If you are a **scientist or nature conservationist**, your knowledge or network can help! We are seeking for experience sharing from similar conservation measures dealing with mire restoration, conservation translocation, farmers involvements, processing of late-cut biomass. If you know best practice examples in this context - share information with us. Notify us about conservation conferences & workshops.
- We are looking for a market opportunities of late-cut biomass products – grass pellets for animal bedding and heating as biofuel. If you are in **business** and know who might be interested to use such products or you have new ideas for the use of grass biomass, let us know. You can contribute to aquatic warbler conservation.
- If you are **someone concerned** or passionate about aquatic warblers, your enthusiasm can help! Join our mailing list to find out more, keep up to date or show your friends what an aquatic warbler looks like – donate to the conservation of aquatic warbler and get real-sized felted model of the bird. Share our news!
- Sign up and check for more information at www.meldine.lt/get-involved.



Please help. Europe's rarest songbird needs us.

Contact me now:

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#aquaticwarbler