

International Lesser Kestrel Expert Workshop

Project: Greater chance for Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) in Bulgaria - Lesser Kestrel Recovery, LIFE11 NAT/BG/360



with the contribution of the LIFE financial instrument of the European Union

Report to the International Lesser Kestrel Expert Workshop

Date: 4-8 October 2016

Location: Plovdiv, Bulgaria



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Summary

In the framework of the LIFE project “Greater chance for Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) in Bulgaria” (LIFE11 NAT/BG/360) the project team jointly organized an International Lesser Kestrel Expert Workshop, which took place from 4-8 October 2016 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

The intention of the workshop was to exchange experiences among people involved in studying and managing Lesser Kestrel populations across Europe (for more details see the call for contributions in Annex 1). Our aim was to share information about the species conservation status in the European range countries (with emphasis on the Balkans) and to build practical know-how about effective conservation measures that can be included in national and international species action plans. A special emphasis was put on understanding the effects of land-use, and especially pesticide use, on Lesser Kestrel prey and the birds themselves. Furthermore, hands-on experiences on technical issue, like breeding, hacking and tracking techniques have been exchanged.

Overall 54 participants from 11 European countries have attended the meeting (for details see the list of participants in Annex 2). In summary, 31 contributions have been made, 26 of these in the form of oral presentations and 5 in the form of posters. On Wednesday, 5 October, a session on the Balkan range countries was held, which included talks about the Lesser Kestrel population status and trends in the respective countries, as well as a set of technical talks (for more details see the book of abstracts in Annex 3). On Thursday, 6 October, a session was dedicated to the non-Balkan range countries of the species, which included talks from participants from Italy, France and Spain. Additionally, models of different types of nest boxes for Lesser Kestrels have been exhibited, amongst these a prototype of a new model developed by DEMA. On Friday, 7 October, a full-day field trip to the project area was conducted, which included a visit to the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Center of Green Balkans in Stara Zagora and a visit to the Lesser Kestrel Adaptation and Release Module in Levka.

After the workshop, the book of abstracts, the list of participants and all the presentations have been provided to all workshop participants and to some additional Lesser Kestrel experts, who had initially registered for the workshop, but could finally not attend. All materials are also freely accessible to the interested public and can be downloaded under the following link:

http://greenbalkans.org/birdsofprey/lesserkestrellife/en/International_Expert_Workshop_-_c150



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A news item about the workshop has been placed at the Green Balkans homepage:

http://greenbalkans.org/birdsofprey/lesserkestrellife/en/Over_50_experts_of_11_countries_and_28_different_organizations_took_part_in_the_international_Lesser_Kestrel_protection_meeting_that_was_held_in_Plovdiv-p704

And a similar news item has also been placed at the EuroNatur homepage:

https://www.euronatur.org/english/news/meeting-of-experts-for-the-lesser-kestrel/?tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&cHash=2ab53f51246a6bd2943fba44efc0c8b7

Overall, the workshop was perceived as very useful by the participants. The participants' feedback regarding the organization and the content was very positive and most people highlighted the need for a more regular exchange of information amongst conservationists and scientists working on the Lesser Kestrel. A solid basis for such a regular exchange in the future and also for potential collaborations has been set with this expert meeting.

List of Annexes

Annex 1: Call for contributions

Annex 2: List of participants

Annex 3: Book of abstracts

