

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

Call for registration & contributions

International Lesser Kestrel Expert Workshop

Date: 4-8 October 2016 **Location:** Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Working Language: English

Deadline for registration: **10 June 2016** (see the link for the online registration below!)

Deadline for contributions: **10 June 2016** (more information below!)



Photo: Emil Enchev

Target audience: This workshop is open to anybody with an interest in Lesser Kestrel conservation. It will be of relevance to staff from a variety of nature conservation organizations, scientific institutions, statutory agencies, NGOs, as well as volunteers and students, in particularly:

- Conservationists working on Lesser Kestrels;
- Ornithologists studying Lesser Kestrels;
- Site Managers working on Lesser Kestrel habitat restoration;
- Staff working in public relation functions – for example, awareness-raising for Lesser Kestrel conservation.

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Introduction

The workshop will provide a unique opportunity to exchange experiences among people involved in studying and managing Lesser Kestrel populations across Europe. Our aim is 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 will be put on understanding the effects of land-use, and especially pesticide use, on Lesser Kestrel prey and the birds themselves. Furthermore we plan to exchange hands-on experiences on technical issue, like breeding, hacking and tracking techniques. And of course we also reserve some slots for any other interesting topics that might come up!

Organising Committee

EuroNatur, Germany

Green Balkans, Bulgaria

DEMA, Spain



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Meeting schedule (**preliminary**)

Tuesday 4.10. Arrival of the participants at Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Registration

Introductory session

Wednesday 5.10. Press conference and Welcome note

Session 1: Reports from European countries: Species conservation status, population size & trends, distribution, pre/post migratory concentrations: locations + period (only for Balkan countries), breeding parameters, etc.

Session 2: Lesser Kestrel and agriculture: Effects of pesticide use, land-use and agricultural policy on Lesser Kestrel prey and the birds themselves

Thursday 6.10. **Session 3: Mixed topics:** Migration routes, wintering grounds, color ring schemes, ring recoveries/resightings, etc.

Session 4: Technical reports: Captive breeding, types of aviaries, breeding parameters, hacking and release techniques, artificial nest structures, tracking techniques, etc.

Friday 7.10.: **Field trip** to the Lesser Kestrel breeding facility in Stara Zagora

Field trip to Lesser Kestrel Adaptation and Release Module in Levka

Saturday 8.10. Conclusions of the meeting, Exchange of materials, Closing ceremony

Departure of the participants from Plovdiv, Bulgaria



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Registration

Please register online under this link:

<http://goo.gl/forms/3i20YfWtAW>

The organizers will try to accommodate registrations submitted after the deadline, but do not guarantee the availability of places and financial support for travel, as the capacity of the workshop is limited. If you need additional information, please contact the Technical Secretariat of the Workshop at sandra.wigger@euronatur.org.

Conference contributions

The submission of abstracts for talks and posters should be made in the online registration form (see the link provided above). At least one author of each contribution should be registered for the Expert Workshop. Abstracts should include: title, authors and affiliations, a brief description of the purpose and methods of the work, as well as main results and a conclusion. A maximum of 2,500 characters (incl. spaces) is allowed per abstract. The organizing committee will evaluate each proposed contribution with regard to its potential of filling identified gaps in basic knowledge and transferability for the conservation for Lesser Kestrel populations. The organizing committee will further decide if a contribution should be made as an oral presentation or if it should be presented as a poster. To facilitate this, please indicate whether you prefer an oral or poster presentation. The deadline for the final decision on the acceptance and type of contributions will be 15 July 2015. All accepted contributions will be published in an abstract booklet. The final programme and the abstract booklet will be provided to the participants at the workshop and will also be available on the project website. If you have any question about abstract submission, please contact directly stefan.ferger@euronatur.org.

Venue, accommodation and food

The workshop will be held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. The Organizing Committee will organize accommodation for all registered participants. We will do our best to accommodate your dietary requirements. Therefore please indicate your needs and wishes, when registering for the conference.

Travel grants

We have a limited budget for travel grants. We aim to provide travel grants for all invited participants, but can guarantee a travel grant only for one person per organisation. The travel grants include all costs for travel, accommodation and subsistence. Please indicate in the online registration, whether you request a travel grant.



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Field trip to the project area

A full-day field trip to the project area, including a visit to the Lesser Kestrel Adaptation and Release Module in Levka and a visit to the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Center of Green Balkans in Stara Zagora is planned for Friday, 7 October. Bring your binoculars!

The **Lesser Kestrel Adaptation and Release Module** is located in the village of Levka in the Sakar Mountains, near the Bulgarian borders with Greece and Turkey. The module is located close to the last known natural breeding colony of the Lesser Kestrel in Bulgaria, which was abandoned in 1989. The Sakar Mountains (highest peak – Vishegrad 865 a.s.l) are a rather hilly area with strong Mediterranean influence bordered by two rivers: Tundzha river to the East and Maritsa river to the West (known as Evros in Greece and as Merich in Turkey). Sakar is one of Bulgaria's richest regions in biodiversity, harbouring a great variety of natural habitats with many species of birds, reptiles, mammals and plants. Sakar is well-known for its population of the Eastern Imperial Eagle, which reaches its highest density within Bulgaria in this area. Three Natura 2000 sites have been designated in the Sakar Mountains, [Sakar SPA](#), [Sakar SCI](#) and [Radinchevo SPA](#). The southern part of Sakar (previously a 30-km wide “no entry” zone) falls within the borders of the [European Green Belt](#) – an international ecological network of regions of preserved biodiversity on either side of the ex-Iron Curtain.

Green Balkans' **Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Center** is located in Stara Zagora. It forms a specialized unit of Green Balkans' work program concerned with the rehabilitation, treatment, recovery, and release of rare wild animals or species threatened with extinction. A breeding stock of Lesser Kestrels has been established at the Center, consisting of 40 wild birds, which have undergone rehabilitation at rescue centers in Spain and were ceded by the government of Extremadura, Spain. This breeding stock also provides offspring to be released in Levka, Sakar SPA. When needed, eggs and abandoned chicks from the colony in Levka are also hatched and reared at the Center. The Center also breeds Saker Falcons and Bearded Vultures for species reintroduction programmes, as well as a big variety of other species like Griffon Vultures, Kestrels, Barn Owls, etc. It is a part of the EEP for the Bearded Vultures, Egyptian Vulture and the Eastern Imperial Eagle. Educational activities and environmental youth programs also belong to the tasks of the Center. Detailed information can be found [here](#).

