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# NEWSLETTER

**March 2021**

**LIFE EUROKITE**

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**MEGEG**





“The Green Deal encompasses different objectives. We will deploy renewables at larger scale and need to ensure this will not be to the detriment of biodiversity related goals. Through the LIFE EUROKITE project we will have more data about routes used by birds of prey and this can inform and underpin our strategic choices at all levels, which for me as a scientist this is of crucial importance.”

**Michal Wiezik - Member of the European Parliament for Slovakia (SPOLU)**

Within this newsletter we want to introduce some partners of the LIFE EUROKITE project to you.

## Pro Vértés Public Foundation



Pro Vértés Foundation was established in 1991, in order to solve the nature protection issues arising in the Vértés region within a not for- profits frame. The scope of our activities has been widened through the past years, as a result of our successful and ever more secured activities, has started and continued to date the following programmes: nature protection management; nature-friendly land-management; education and awareness-raising; the protection of historical buildings; eco-tourism; operation of the Vértés Nature Park. Pro Vértés Nonprofit Zrt. serves as the Foundation's service ltd. for these tasks since 2009.

The first programme of Pro Vértés was bird protection, which primarily aimed at the saving of the population of strictly protected endangered birds of prey (Imperial Eagle and the Saker) inhabiting Fejér County. The proof of the success of our efforts is that the populations of these birds have stabilized in the region by now. Among our methods the most important ones are the placement of artificial nests, winter feeding, insulation of medium voltage electric poles.

The red kite was mainly a breeding bird in the lowlands in the first half of the 20th century. From the 1950s to the early 1970s there was a very small number of red kites that brooded in the low mountain range. Then local extinction followed. In 1990 the first breeding pair appeared again. In 2017 the breeding population increased to 12 breeding pairs, in 2018 to 15 breeding pairs and in 2019 to 18 breeding pairs in Hungary. In 2020 the number of breeding pairs had already increased to 25. The most important protective measure is to ensure the breeding success of the broods by identify protection zones.

**László Haraszthy, Pro Vértés Public Foundation**



## Raptor Protection of Slovakia

Raptor Protection of Slovakia (RPS) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, whose mission is to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, with special regard to the conservation of raptors, owls and their habitats in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

RPS activities are focused on 4 program areas:

- (i) survey and on-site protection of birds of prey and owls and their habitats,
- (ii) addressing bird crime, electrocution and bird collisions with power lines,
- (iii) lobbying for sound biodiversity policies, strategies, incentives and conservation management plans, and
- (iv) environmental education and awareness.

RPS started as informal Group for Research of Raptors and Owls in 1975 and transformed into organisation with the same name in 1999. Since 2004 it is known as Raptor Protection of Slovakia. RPS has ca 120 members that act in the whole Slovakia, mostly on voluntary basis. Their activities are coordinated by the RPS Secretariat in Bratislava. RPS cooperates with a range of partners from both public and private sector.

In Slovakia, Red Kite breeds in the western and eastern part of the country, at altitudes from 100 to 600 m above sea level. Abundance of the breeding population is estimated at 20 – 30 pairs. The majority of the breeding population is concentrated in the Záhorie region in western Slovakia. Abundance of the wintering population is estimated at 50 – 150 individuals. The most significant threats to the population are inappropriate forestry activities in the breeding habitats (in particular logging and construction of the forest roads), laying poisoned baits and disturbance (mainly from fishing and hunting activities). Other threats include inappropriate agricultural practices in feeding habitats (eg. chemization, cultivation of unsuitable agricultural crops, meadow plowing, burning of grasslands and stubble) and illegal shooting. Cases of injuries and deaths of specimens resulting from electrocution on 22 kV power lines have been also occasionally reported.

**Zuzana Guziová – Project Manager Raptor Protection of Slovakia (RPS), Boris Maderič - Scientific Coordinator Raptor Protection of Slovakia (RPS) & Ján Svetlík Ornithologist - Field Assistant Raptor Protection of Slovakia (RPS)**

## Czech Society for Ornithology



Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) is a non-governmental organisation uniting birdwatchers, nature lovers, amateurs and professionals interested in the research and protection of birds. It is the Czech national Partner of BirdLife International. It was founded in 1926 and currently the CSO has more than 5000 members and has become a renowned non-governmental organization with a good reputation not only in the Czechia but also beyond its borders.

Czech Society for Ornithology struggles for more than 20 years to eliminate bird crime in Czechia. The scavenging Red Kites are often victims of poisoning, which still persists as dominant way of illegal bird persecution. The EUROKITE project give us hope and powerful tool, which help us to maintain this magnificent bird in our countryside.

**Zdeněk Vermouzek, Director of the Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO)**



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## Coordinating Beneficiary



The TB Raab was commissioned to implement the LIFE EUROKITE project after a pan-European public tender.



## Project partner (Associated Beneficiary)



## Co-financier



## Cooperation partner



This project is co-financed by the LIFE Nature Programme of the European Union

