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VOICE FROM THE WILD

(A letter from the editors)

More than ever before, the conservation of natural diversity in Russia and the former Soviet Union is threatened by an unstable political system and volatile economy.

At the Biodiversity Conservation Center, we want to serve as a clearinghouse for information about conservation in the former USSR. We wish to share the concerns, discoveries, achievements, and beliefs of the conservation community of the former USSR with those concerned around the world.

We believe that natural diversity neither recognizes political borders nor belongs to any nation or language. We hope that conservationists from the former USSR will become more a part of the worldwide movement, and that conservationists from around the world will become more involved in and knowledgeable about our problems. The task of conserving nature is limited not by political boundaries but only by the desire of an individual to participate in protecting it. So, we have decided to publish an English language bulletin to share our information with those from who we are divided by language barriers.

Much of the information contained here has already been printed in Russian. You will find background history and current news on protected areas, conservation organizations, endangered species, and more. For those of you studying wildlife, protecting wilderness, making policy, or are connected in other ways with conservation, we hope that you will enjoy this first English language edition of *Russian Conservation News!*



On the cover: Black Stork

Although the black stork (*Ciconia nigra*) has a huge range (from Estonia to the Maritime territories in the Far East), it occurs in very small numbers.

Unlike the white stork, the black stork is extremely sensitive to human presence and nests deep in old growth forests. Logging, draining of wetlands, and human disturbance are major threats to the bird's survival. In Russia, black stork and its habitat are protected in *Brianski Les* and *Okski Nature Reserves*.

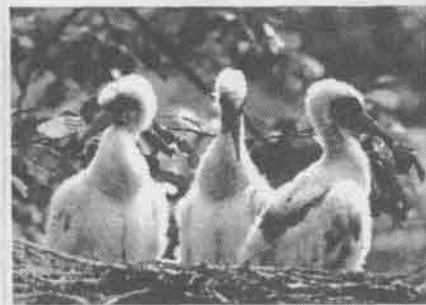


Photo by: Igor Shpilenok,
Briansky Les Zapovednik

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