

Contents

VOICE FROM THE WILD	2
PROTECTED AREAS	4
A NATIONAL PARK FOR THE JEWISH AUTONOMOUS REGION: CONSERVING CULTURAL AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY	3
ENDANGERED ECOSYSTEMS: MEADOW STEPPE	5
AFTER THIRTY YEARS, AMUR REGION GETS A NEW ZAPOVEDNIK	6
ANCIENT SITES GAIN NEW STATUS: UGRA NATIONAL PARK	8
CONSERVING CULTURE AND FORESTS IN THE RUSSIAN NORTH: KENOZERSKI NATIONAL PARK	9
FOCUS: BOREAL FOREST UNDER THREAT	
PRIME MINISTER CHERNOMYRDIN SIGNS AWAY KARELIA'S FORESTS	10
THE GREEN BELT OF KARELIA: THE LAST STAND	11
THE RUSSIAN-FINNISH BORDER ZONE: PRESERVING VALUABLE WESTERN TAIGA	13
NEWS OF THE DAY	
RUSSIAN CONGRESS PROTECTED AREAS ON NATURE CONSERVATION: AGONY OR PROMISE OF A DIALOGUE?	14
ECOFORUM'95	16
ECOFORUM'95: ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION GATHER IN KIEV FOR A SECOND "DISCOVERY OF AMERICA"	17
NEW BIOLOGICAL STATION ESTABLISHED IN THE ARCTIC: "WILLEM BARENTS" BIOLOGICAL STATION	18
CONSERVATION LEGISLATION	
A NEW LAW IS PASSED IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION "ON ANIMAL WORLD"	18
ENDANGERED SPECIES	
ELUSIVE AND ENDANGERED: THE SNOW LEOPARD OF CENTRAL ASIA	19
FROM STEPPE TO STORE: THE TRADE IN SAIGA ANTELOPE HORN	21
NORTHERN SAKHALIN: UNIQUE ZONE OF BIODIVERSITY IN DANGER	23
NOT JUST A THISTLE...	25
THE STATUS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN TORTOISE (<i>TESTUDO GRAECA NIKOLSKII</i>) IN THE NORTHERN CAUCASUS	26
BULLETIN BOARD	
CORRECTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE	27
KNOW YOUR METRICS?	27
CONSERVATION CONTACTS	27
CONSERVATION LIBRARY	27



The Biodiversity Conservation Center of the Socio-Ecological Union is a Russian non-profit, non-governmental organization aiming to preserve the biological diversity of Eurasia. BCC's programs help to

conserve wilderness, endangered species and ecosystems, promote public environmental education, and assist other nature conservation groups to achieve these goals.

VOICE FROM THE WILD

(A letter from the editors)

In our fourth issue of *Russian Conservation News*, we bring you important information about little-known regions in Russia which play a vital role in biodiversity conservation. We call your attention to two endangered ecosystems, the first of which is under immediate threat of destruction, following a political decision in May.

Currently, the boreal forests of northern Europe are threatened with extermination. The May 17, 1995 signing by Prime Minister Chernomyrdin of a Decree on the "development" of the border zone between Finland and Russia could have a disastrous impact on the remaining old growth spruce and pine forests in northern Russia. These forests have

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On the Cover:

Eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*)

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