



REPORT  
2016

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ЕКОКЛУБ  
Зелена Хвиля



# THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOLUNTEER MOVEMENTS IN UKRAINE

A brief overview of the work with public  
organizations and national parks in the  
development of ecovolunteer movements

October 2015 - June 2016



The report is a joint effort of the Ukrainian Environmental Club "Green Wave" and WWF in Ukraine.

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Special thanks to ALL VOLUNTEERS who took part and continue helping our team in nature conservation in Ukraine; and also to Valeriia Nemykina for inspiration, and to Shelia Slemph for her belief in us and continuous moral support.

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Kiev, 2016

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The events of recent years in Ukraine radically changed Ukrainian society. In 2013 volunteering was the prerogative of a fairly small group of people. Since the beginning of the revolution and the war, however, volunteering has become one of the most notable and important phenomena in Ukrainian society, which has even begun to influence the state. In fact, volunteers have replaced ineffective government mechanisms including those within the military. It is particularly notable, that hundreds of volunteers were involved in different areas in assisting with military paper work. Conservationism has a number of difficult and unsolved problems, which almost never utilized volunteer help in the past. The integration of concerned, socially active people within the past three years has greatly helped address numerous environmental issues, as the most active community understands the importance of environmental protection and is ready to join environmental volunteering. Volunteering has become fashionable and environmental volunteering is now a trend.

The number of rich people in the capital and in regional centers (primarily IT specialists, lawyers, economists, etc.) is growing. This has led to a willingness to spend money and time for volunteering, which also combines business with pleasure.

Thus the conditions for the development of environmental volunteerism in the country appeared. Through proper guidance this could greatly benefit the environment. The results of the work described below demonstrate the importance of the development of volunteerism in the country.



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## II. PERFORMANCE OF TASKS

To achieve our aim, namely the development of an effective volunteer network, the following objectives were set:

1. Mobilizing volunteers
2. Building partnerships
3. Ensuring coordination between NGO's



Pic.1. Volunteers are ready to count orchids in Pyryatynskiy national park.



# 1. MOBILIZING VOLUNTEERS

One of the first objectives of the volunteer program was to involve as many volunteers for conservation work as possible.



The main way to attract volunteers is through social networks. An online application form was launched (<http://bit.ly/2eioamF>). All information was shared on Facebook and VKontakte (Russian speaking social network). Based on the answers of volunteers, a Google-newsletter was developed. In the newsletter we announced volunteer activities and disseminated other useful information.



To improve our understanding regarding what volunteers would like to do, we created a survey in which we asked them about any special interests for possible volunteer work (field work, non-field work, distance work). By field work is meant: visits to protected areas and the forestry sector, whilst non-field work incorporates varied work in the cities, and distance work involves preparing distribution materials, updating the website etc. This offered the possibility to systematize fields of volunteer involvement and understand who will be more interested in which activity.

To make communication easier we created a FB group page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/914868895274789/>).

A separate page on the web-site was created ([http://wwf.panda.org/uk/you\\_can\\_help/volunteers/](http://wwf.panda.org/uk/you_can_help/volunteers/)). It incorporated a list of events, announcements and reports, in which everyone could see already mentioned projects.

Further involvement of volunteers took place in several ways:

- Through announcements and news of our events;
- Through different reposts of news/information posted on the volunteer web page on FB;
- Through personal contacts;
- Through conferences, public speeches etc.

**THE MAIN WAY TO  
ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS  
IS THROUGH SOCIAL  
NETWORKS.**

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## 2. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

The issue of finding new places where volunteers could be involved became a difficult problem to solve. The main problem was the absence of ecovolunteering culture. People and organizations therefore do not have experience working with volunteers. Moreover, there is seems to be a lack of ideas in the regions on how to attract more volunteers.

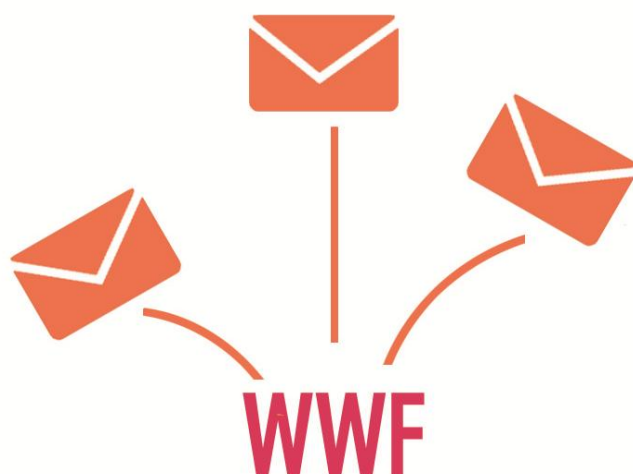
Information about new places was gathered through multiple channels. Firstly an already collected database of activities under the "Know and Protect" project was used (<http://bit.ly/2eCItYB>). It was updated based on new data. Secondly, information was used from the Ministry of Environment's official response regarding the plan of volunteer activities in various national parks and nature reserves. Thirdly, some information on the needs for volunteer aid was received during personal contacts with representatives of the protected areas.

In addition, attempts were made to communicate with the State Agency of Forest Resources of Ukraine. A meeting was held with a representative of SAFRU and we have delivered a formal appeal to attract volunteers to work in the forestry sector. Unfortunately, the agency was not interested in any volunteer involvement.

A questionnaire was also launched to potential activists who need volunteers to implement their ideas (<http://bit.ly/2e5yZfT>). The main responses received were however mainly concentrated on garbage collection and we thusly decided to not engage our volunteers with such activities.

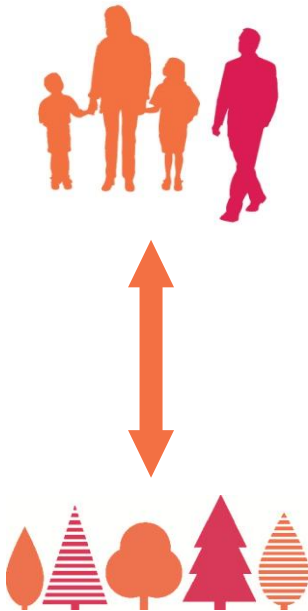
**THE MAIN PROBLEM  
WAS THE ABSENCE OF  
ECOVOLUNTEERING  
CULTURE IN THE  
COUNTRY.**

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### 3. ENSURING COORDINATION BETWEEN NGO's

Within an environmental volunteering organization only a small number of NGO's and conservation areas are involved, despite the great potential to mobilize volunteers in the country. Therefore, coordination between different organizations and institutions played an important role in converting ecovolunteering into a powerful tool for environmental protection.



It was especially important to establish a bridge between public (including environmental NGO's) and protected areas. Protected areas require a lot of work that could be done by volunteers. There are many concerned citizens willing to help on a volunteer basis and would simultaneously gain new experiences and impressions. Sadly, there seems to be no interest for protected areas and its needs within society.

In order to improve cooperation, we asked some NGO's to involve volunteers from our database into their work and that of other NGO's. However, there were so few events organized by other NGO's that it made little sense to cooperate with them.

In order to establish a bridge between national parks and the community, requests were sent to the Ministry of Environment and various national parks in order to improve the use of voluntary activities. As we physically can't cover all the existing protected areas, we tried to establish a platform so that volunteers could join the volunteer activity in selected national park.

We shared information about current events in national parks across the country on our FB page and these were particularly popular with people online from the respective regions of our projects.

As the ecovolunteering movement in Ukraine is still at its first stages of development, it was important to understand the whole list of problems that hinder its development and try to find ways to resolve them. Therefore, this question shall be raised at the vital volunteer round table, which will unite members of various NGO's, representatives from governmental institutions and protected areas that have experience of volunteer activities.

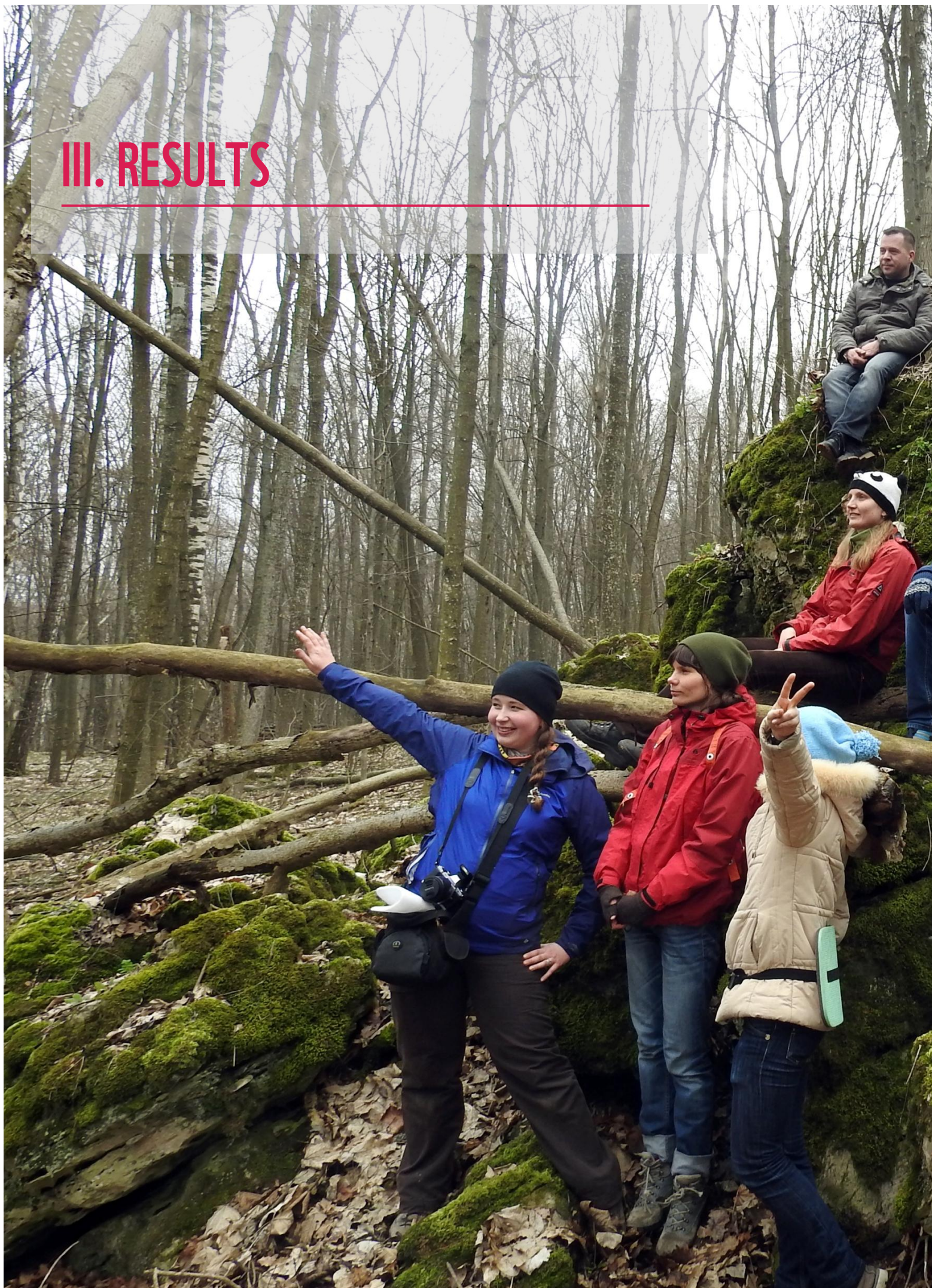
**IT IS ESPECIALLY  
IMPORTANT TO  
ESTABLISH A BRIDGE  
BETWEEN PUBLIC AND  
PROTECTED AREAS.**

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### III. RESULTS

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Pic.2. After fauna survey in Dermansko-Ostrozkiy National Park volunteers visited Zinkiv stone natural reserve.



# 1. OVERVIEW

Due to the active information campaign as well as the active involvement of volunteers in different environmental events, public opinion concerning eco volunteerism has changed.

Many protected areas understood the potential of volunteers. For example, newly created national park "Tsumanska Pusha" from the outset emphasized the importance of volunteer work. The national park created a community of its volunteers on FB and became the first national park where our volunteers went to help (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1714069895545252/>).

National park Pyryatynsky approached us for help with the planting of trees and became the first national park where the list of volunteer activities at the scientific and technical park council was officially approved.

The success of the voluntary trips has led to the growing interest of other protected areas in employing volunteers. Our effective communication campaign contributed to the fact, that an increasing number of people continuously express their desire of becoming a volunteer.

Voluntary campaigns identifying the illegal sale of Christmas trees and spring flowers ([http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?262210/pervocvity](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?262210/pervocvity)) helped to highlight the total inefficiency of the governmental enforcement system in the fight against such types of poaching. An informational campaign in the media raised awareness of the problem in the public and also provided methodological and technical support for activists who are involved in such activities. This resulted in the proposal of a recommendation to the State Agency of Forest Recourses of Ukraine and a bill to change the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences. An article analyzing the court's decision regarding the illegal sale of spring flowers has been published on WWF web-site (<http://bit.ly/2elk6UQ>).

As a result, we have formed a large community of people who care. The community includes already "active" activists, as well as people who have never been engaged in volunteering before. Such a large community allows us to even find very specific specialists for a wide range of ecological questions. In addition to the existing strong database, we now have a large platform to disseminate a wide range of useful environmental and other volunteering information. This thus allowed us to become not only a platform for "good deeds", but also a space with a wide range of information and resources.



**820 VOLUNTEERS  
SUBSCRIBED IN TOTAL**

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**789 field work**  
**653 non-field work**  
**646 distant work**  
**94 financial support**

## 2. MOBILIZING VOLUNTEERS

As of June 19, we have received 820 volunteer profiles from all regions of Ukraine, including the occupied region of Crimea and parts of Donbas.

According to the survey 789 volunteers out of 820 did field work.

Practical non-fieldwork was completed by 653 volunteers and distance work by 646.

In addition to these tasks, we also asked for «financial assistance» support, to which 94 people responded that they were ready to occasionally help financially.

### Field work

Fieldwork was a priority throughout the year and was conducted in regular visits to nature reserves and national and regional parks. All the attempts to organize volunteer work in forestries failed as their officers didn't want to work with volunteers.

The national parks were chosen for volunteer trips because they wanted to host volunteers. A number of national parks, to whom requests were sent, said that they were not interested in volunteers. Among those parks are: Yavorivskiy, Synevyr, Desyansko-Starogutskiy and Pivnichne Podillya. A number of national parks simply ignored such requests, e.g. Verhovinsky, Pryazovskiy, Dzharylgachskiy, Kremenz Mountains, Dniester Canyon, and Carpathian Biosphere Reserve.



At this stage we faced the problem that no national parks were looking for volunteers, but we attempted to convince them and impress upon them the idea, that volunteers could be helpful.

Only few protected areas gladly took up the idea of volunteering, which was mostly thanks to the dedicated conservationists who work there.

During the reporting period we organized eight volunteer trips to Kanevsky Nature Reserve, Holosiyivsky, Dermansko-Ostrozkyi, Pyryatynsky and Kivertsivskiy National Parks, and to Mizhrichynskiy Regional Landscape Park. Dermansko - Ostrozkyi and Pyryatynsky national parks were visited twice.



## ACTIVITIES IN NATURE RESERVES

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### **Winter forest fauna survey** (Kanivskiy Nature Reserve)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?259832/Kaniv-vyizd](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?259832/Kaniv-vyizd),  
(Holosiivskiy national park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?260611/volunteers-Golosiievo](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?260611/volunteers-Golosiievo), (Dermansko-Ostrozkiy National Park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?261218/vyizd-Dermasko-Ostrozkiypark](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?261218/vyizd-Dermasko-Ostrozkiypark)



### **Installation of artificial nests and houses for birds and bats** (Dermansko-Ostrozkiy National Park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?263510/volontery-pobuvaly-v-pekli](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?263510/volontery-pobuvaly-v-pekli) )



### **Planting of trees** (Pyryatynskiy National Park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?265056/volontery-posadyly-lis-u-puriatyni](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?265056/volontery-posadyly-lis-u-puriatyni)



### **Construction of facilities at eco trails** (Mizhrichinskiy Regional Landscape Park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?267130/vyizd-mizrichia](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?267130/vyizd-mizrichia)



### **Installation of buildings for bumblebees and buildings for insects** (Pyryatynskiy National Park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?268671/drugui-vyizd-do-pyriatynu](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?268671/drugui-vyizd-do-pyriatynu)



### **Orchids Surveys** (Pyryatynsky and Kivertsivskiy National Parks) [http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?271290/volontery-obstegyly-cumansku-pushu](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?271290/volontery-obstegyly-cumansku-pushu)



### **Looking for oldest oaks** (Kivertsivskiy national park)

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?271290/volontery-obstegyly-cumansku-pushu](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?271290/volontery-obstegyly-cumansku-pushu).



78

## VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATED IN THE FIELD TRIPS

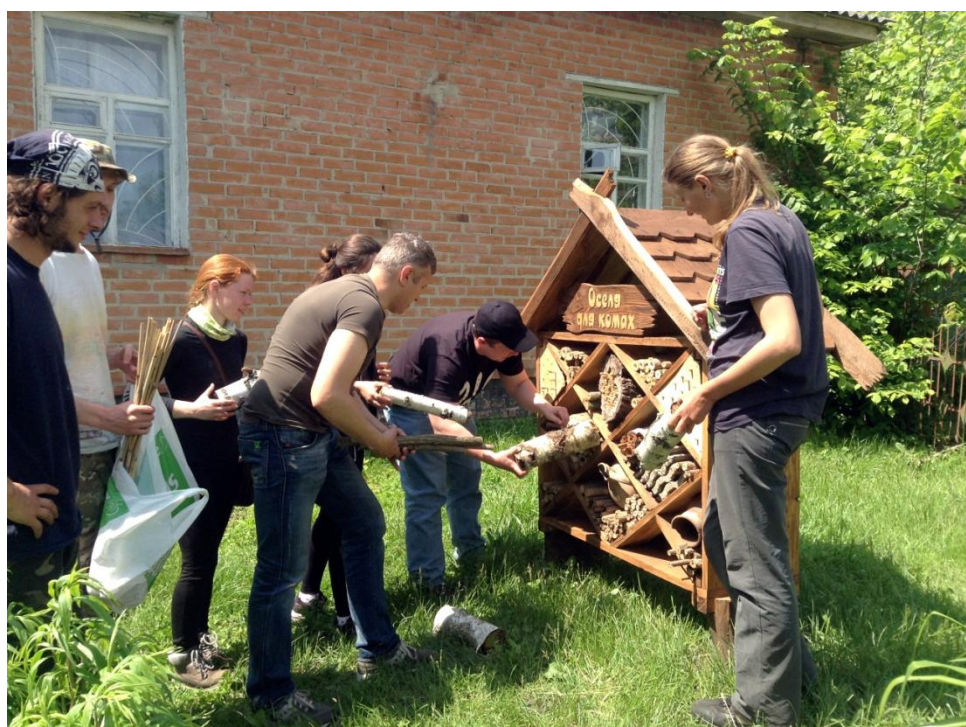
During such voluntary trips volunteers were able to perform any work, ranging from routine to highly scientific tasks. They could do these tasks no matter what profession they had, as long as there were people in the protected areas that could provide an appropriate briefing on the work. The trips attracted a total of 67 volunteers.

In addition to the organization of trips, we also distribute information about volunteer work in various national parks, which our volunteers could join.

In addition to the trips organized by us, volunteers also took part in trips organized by protected areas, namely at Khotynskiy national park (<http://bit.ly/2eitvtj>) and at National Park "Biloberezhzhya Svyatoslav". In Khotynskiy park volunteers made artificial nests for fish in the reservoir and in National Park "Biloberezhzhya Svyatoslav" surveyed orchid fields. 12 people took part in these trips.

In total 78 people attended these volunteer program field trips.

*Pic. 3. Volunteers are constructing a building for insects in Pyryatynskiy National Park.*



© WWF-DCP / Valeria Nemykina





© Dasha Shyrialeva

Pic. 4. Volunteers searching for old age oaks in Kivertsivskiy national park.



© WWF-DCP / Valeria Nemykina

Pic. 5. Winter forest fauna survey Kanivskiy Nature Reserve.





## THIS ACTIVITY INVOLVES PRACTICAL WORK IN THE CITIES.

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## Practical non-field work

This activity involves work in the cities. One of the examples of such an activity was the campaign regarding the illegal sale of Christmas trees, where volunteers searched for locations selling trees and checked the trees' label that indicates its legality. This work was combined with distance work, which will be discussed below. As a result, about 20 volunteers checked more than 100 sale locations of Christmas trees in various cities of Ukraine, including Kiev, Kirovograd, Dnipro, Odessa, Lviv, Kharkiv and many others.

Another activity in which volunteers took part was dedicated to identifying the illegal sale of spring flowers. The action was organized in cooperation with several other activists (<http://bit.ly/2dyoMp2>). Volunteers additionally reported about sale locations of spring flowers (<http://bit.ly/2dpdHDg>) and called police when they were identified.

This type of volunteer work also includes the design of ecological trails in Golosiyivsky National Park. The idea to involve volunteers in the development of new trails emerged following the voluntary trips to national parks during the winter and since then the volunteer initiative group has met every couple of weeks. This group has already decided on the concept and content of the stands and interactive objects. The development work is therefore close to completion, after which volunteers will start making the equipment for eco trails within the national parks' territories.

Additionally, volunteers assisted the preparations for Earth Hour, Natura 2000 and the Emerald Network round table. They did this by participating in the preparation and dissemination of materials.

*Pic. 6. Volunteers check special tags on Christmas trees.*



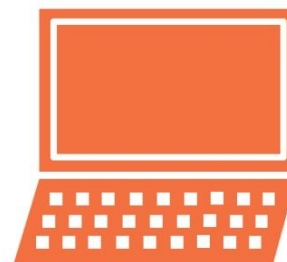
© Oksana Plyas

## Distant work

Distance work attracted those volunteers that did not have the opportunity and time to travel somewhere and could thus help remotely.

Firstly, volunteers were involved in the Christmas tree campaign. Volunteers have created a map of checked points, on which everyone could see where to buy a tree in a pot. 24 volunteers took part in the development of this map. The map was very popular online and received over 50,000 views (<http://bit.ly/2ejh7O4>).

A large part of the distance volunteers help by translating various articles into Ukrainian.



## Financial assistance

Since many environmental problems are linked to a lack of funds, it was logical to add the category of ‘financial aid’ into the voluntary questionnaire.

Financial aid was provided by volunteers twice – firstly, during a vital drive to fundraise the funds to print stands for the “Dzharylgachsky” national park. During one hour the required amount of 1,300 UAH was collected and we could have even collected much more.

Volunteers also have helped to collect items and money for the national park, “Meotida”, that lost their office because of the Russian occupation of the town Novoazovsk (<http://bit.ly/2dyqVkB>).



## Further support

In addition to the mentioned volunteer work, volunteers have been involved in many other types of sporadic assistance. Since we support the broadest possible cooperation between the various organizations, we have tried to engage our volunteers in further actions initiated by other activists or organizations.

For example, we found some volunteers that regularly participated in scientific ornithological alloys on the Dnipro river after ornithologists requested volunteer assistance.





Other volunteers participated in the planting of trees in Kyiv, which was organized by Boyarka forest research station (<http://bit.ly/2dMrWTy>).

Volunteers also helped write articles about conservation areas for Ukrainian Wikipedia.

Volunteers participated in work on buffalo farms in Transcarpathia, participated in the cleaning campaign "Let`s do it Ukraine" and in the environmental action on the Trahtemyriv peninsula.

*Pic. 7. Volunteers are planting trees in Znesinnya National Park in Lviv.*



© WWF-DCP / Bohdan Prots

*Pic. 8. Volunteers are harvesting reed and covering the roof of recreational points in Pyryatynskiy National Park.*



© Olexander Yatsenko

### 3. COORDINATION WITH OTHER NGO'S

The round table that was organized on the 11th of May was attended by 27 representatives from different organizations, namely from the national parks Holosiyivsky, Slobozhansky, Dvurechansky, Pyryatynsky, Biloberezhzhya Svyatoslava and NGO's such as "Feathered friends", Environment People Law, "SVIT-Ukraine", "Carpathian paths", Western Ukrainian Ornithological Society, Public Institute for nature Protection and many others

([http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?267531/volonterstvo-kruglyi-stil](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?267531/volonterstvo-kruglyi-stil)).

The round table was very important in order to better understand the state of ecovolunteerism in Ukraine and how we can move forward. The results are largely reflected in the future plans discussed below.

Additionally to the round table there also were two presentations on the ecovolunteerism. These occurred during trainings for representatives from conservation areas, held on the 29th of April, and during the workshop about the protected areas of West Polissya, held on the 14-15th of June (<http://bit.ly/2dypowc>).

© Maxim Gorpenyuk

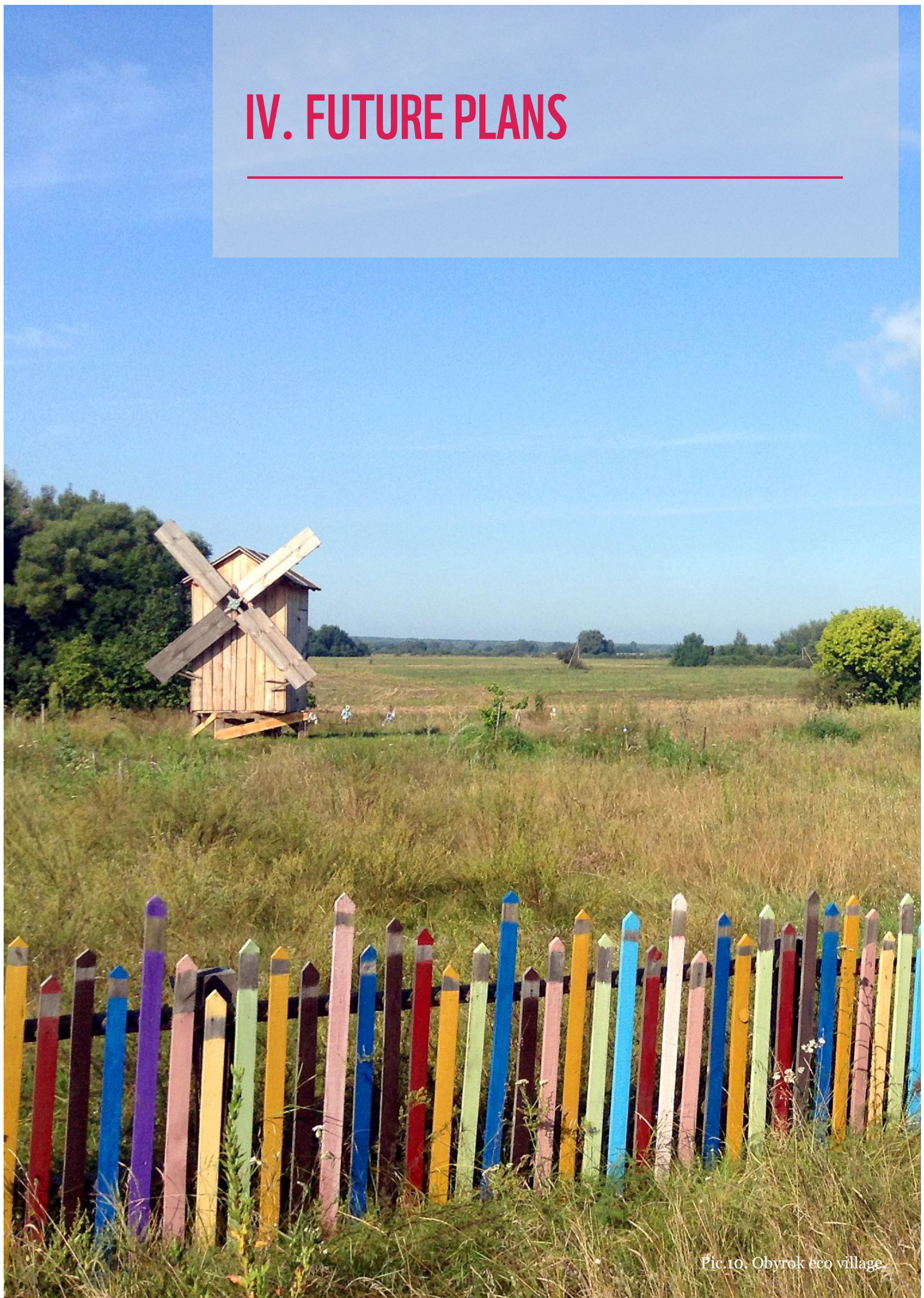


*Pic. 9. The participants of the volunteer round table in Kyiv.*



## IV. FUTURE PLANS

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Pic.10. Obyrok eco village.



Based on our personal vision of the situation and the results of the round table, several urgent problems that hinder further development of environmental volunteering were seen as such:

■ **Problems associated with personnel in protected areas.** This includes a lack of understanding in the necessity of volunteers by the administration and staff, and reluctance or inability to work with them.

■ **High level administrative problems.** The Ministry of Social Policy (which is responsible for volunteering) does not work on ecovolunteering, even though it falls within its remit. Ecovolunteering is not incorporated into regional programs of local councils. There is no real operational law regarding volunteering.

■ **Administrative problems at national parks.** This includes the entrance fee for volunteers (especially in the Carpathian national parks), a lack of responsibility for the preservation of the objects built/refurbished by volunteers and a lack of awareness of the Scientific and Technical Council in national parks.

■ **Communication problems.** There is a lack of proper communication between volunteers, scientists and institutions, and there is no transfer of responsibility from the Ministry of Environment to the public.

■ **Financial problems.** This includes the already inherent lack of funding and the lack of cooperation with businesses.

**DIFFERENT PROBLEMS  
HINDER FURTHER  
DEVELOPMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
VOLUNTEERING IN  
UKRAINE.**

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## OBJECTIVES FOR FUTURE WORK

1. To write guidelines for any work with volunteers that will: describe the main aspects of volunteering, highlight positive examples of cooperation between the community and protected areas here and abroad, describe basic methods of communication with businesses, give tips on writing grants and fundraising and calculate the cost-effectiveness of volunteers. The technique should be disseminated among staff of protected areas, environmental NGO's, and the forestry sector.

2. To organize round table meetings, to which stakeholders will be invited, and conduct trainings on the raised above issues. We will work on these issues through the following scheduled events: from the 2nd-3rd of July, as part of the so-called "Energizer Camp" in Bug Guard National Park, we shall

present the reports on environmental volunteerism. From the 26th-27th of July there will be a seminar on protected areas in the Karmalyukove and Podillya national parks. During this seminar a report on eco-volunteering will be presented. From the 1st-4th of August (still to be confirmed) we are planning to hold a regional round table meeting about eco-volunteering in Slobozhansky national park.

## Further Objectives:

- Development of a common information platform that will provide information regarding various volunteer events of different organizations.
- Organization of meetings between the Ministry of Social Policy and the public, involving representatives of the Ministry of Environment.
- Encouragement of direct involvement by the Ministry of Environment.
- Continuation of cooperation with various protected areas Volunteers, along with ourselves, are going to visit several conservation areas (see table below).



## WHO WE ARE

### GREEN WAVE



“Ukrainian ecological club “Green wave” works since 2006 for conservation and restoration of nature, raising environmental public awareness including youth and children, providing information and capacity building for public and supporting and participating in scientific research. It is based at National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (Kyiv, Ukraine)

### WWF UKRAINE



WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the Earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

WWF is working in Ukraine for more than 20 years within the WWF-Danube-Carpathian program to save and protect the natural riches of the region – forests, wilderness, large carnivores, rivers and wetlands, and the Danube sturgeon.



### US FOREST SERVICE

A multi-faceted agency that manages and protects 154 national forests and 20 grasslands in 44 states and Puerto Rico. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

# WWF in numbers

**+100**

WWF is in over 100 countries,  
on 6 continents

**1961**

WWF was founded  
in 1961

**+5 M**

WWF has over 5 million  
supporters

**+5,000**

WWF has over 5,000  
staff worldwide



#### Our mission

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and  
to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[ukraine.panda.org](http://ukraine.panda.org)