

6th September



At the beginning of September, a juvenile Lesser Spotted Eagles tagged with GPS GSM logger this year, moves from its nest to neighboring pair territory. After few days, we tried to solve this unusual movement of the young individual. Unfortunately, the one of the parents of this juvenile was killed by a rotor of a wind turbine localized very close to the nest (600 m).

In 2014 a wind farm was established in Warmia region, where Lesser Spotted Eagles reaches one of the highest density in Poland. In 2015 we ran a monitoring project to figure out how it is going to affect the local population. Thanks to a support from Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management in Olsztyn, we managed to buy 3 GPS GSM loggers and ran Lesser Spotted Eagle nest searching in the 10-km radius area of potential influence of the wind farm. Three closest to wind farm pairs were additionally observed to register space usage of particular individuals.

Location of Lesser Spotted Eagle nests (red dots) and wind turbines (white triangles). Small yellow dots are GPS fixes of juvenile Ben moving from its territory to neighboring pair.



First pair (map attached) did not breed at all this season, while other two managed to raise the chick and one of them (named Ben) was equipped with GPS logger on 3th August. Ben left its nest on 16th August and after two weeks surprisingly moved to the vicinity of neighboring pair nest. On 5th September during a field visit, two juveniles were intensively begging for food at this place. Moreover, a female from this nest fed Ben with a rodent, which proved that the neighbors actually adopted this individual. A question came– what forced Ben to move to the nest of the other pair?



We observed both territories for several hours, but saw pair of adults only in the third territory, while in the second we saw an adult only once, without signs of carrying the young. Therefore we start to check the vicinity of the wind turbines nearby. Twenty meters from wind turbine no. 5 we found a dead Lesser Spotted Eagle adult. The body was torn in few pieces and the skull was crushed, most probably because of hit by a rotor. Corpse was already few weeks old and most probably it was an adult male from territory no. 2. The female must have abandoned the chick after male's death. This season is poor for prey in the Warmia region. The unusual drought affects not only amphibians, but also rodents. It is not sure, if the third pair will manage to feed up both chicks. Let's hope they can and this sad story will serve as a warning to keep the wind farms far away from the eagles territories.



Zdzisław Cenian & Piotr Radek

Added 26th September

Ben survived and is on its way to the wintering grounds. You can follow him at:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zsqtyGmBuGlk.kpJMvV2Ta-Co>