

# Are we in Europe?

## Results of the first six years of the ongoing program “Birds of Moscow and the Moscow Region”

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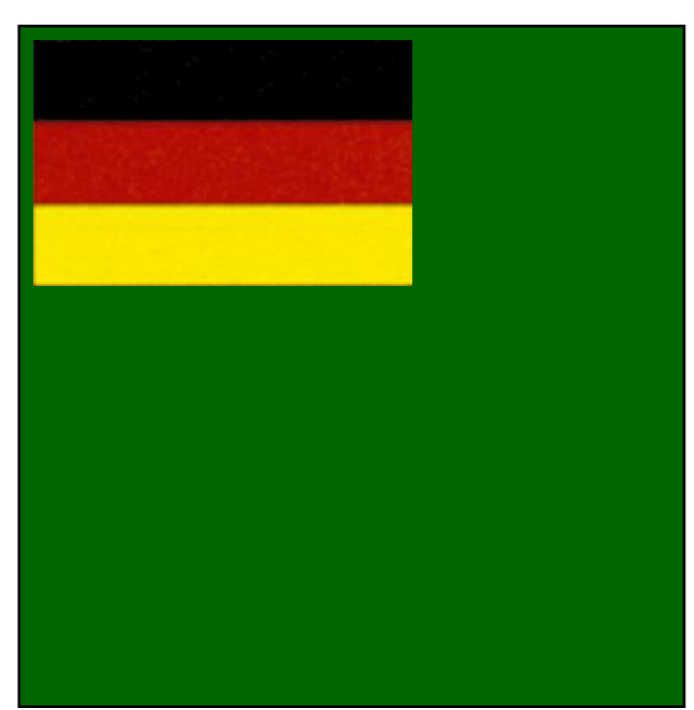
Bird-watching and organizing clubs with such interests is an old tradition in European countries. It is often hard to remember how these clubs came into being.

But in Russia such an interest is only in germ because of the history, the enormous territory, the low standard of living and the absence of even ordinary field guides.

On the other hand, a mean number of ornithologists (amateurs including) per sq. km in Moscow is the highest in Russia, and in all Russia this area is the most economically advanced, so it is here where co-operation in bird-watching has a good chance.



**Germany**  
75 km<sup>2</sup> per one birdwatcher



**The Netherlands**  
4 km<sup>2</sup> per one birdwatcher



**Russia**  
8500 km<sup>2</sup> per one birdwatcher

**GB** 2 km<sup>2</sup> per one birdwatcher

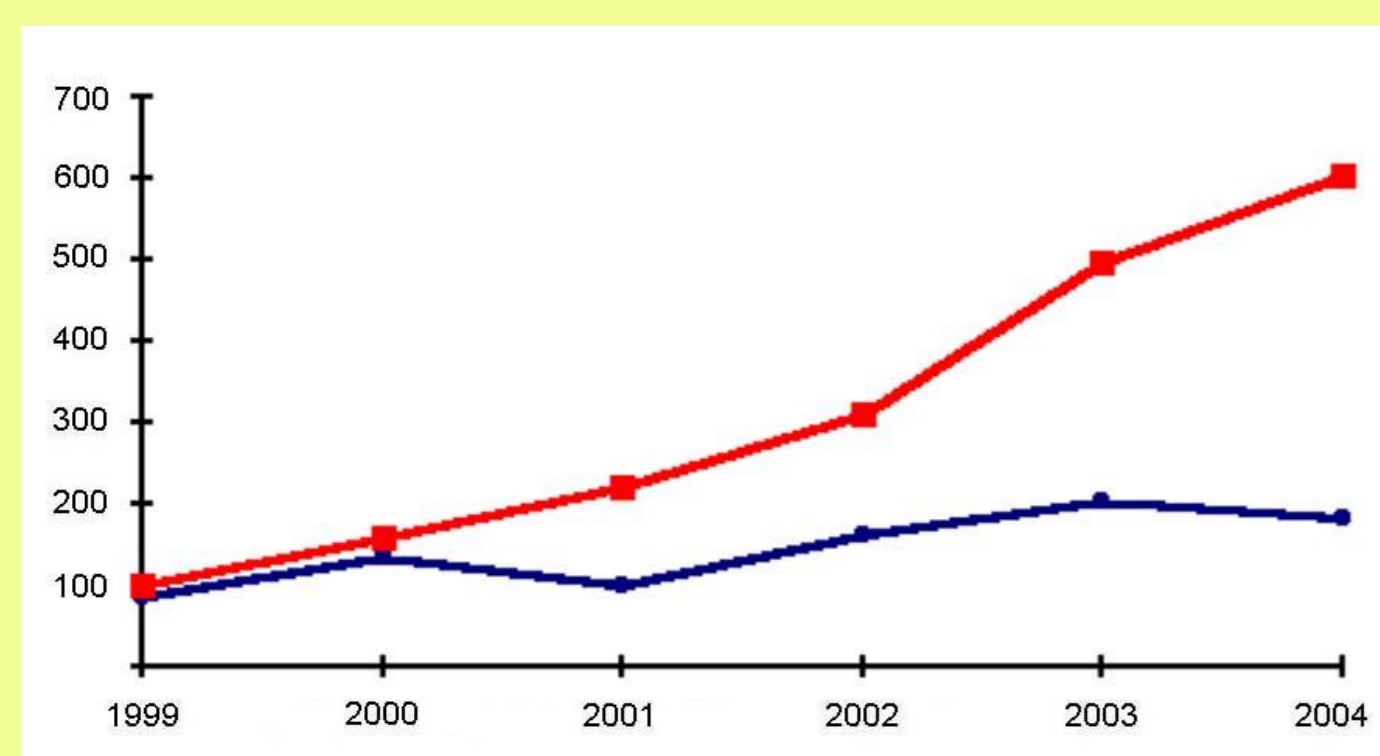


«**Problem of Owlet**» (situation before 1999):  
— What to do if you see this shy and fairly rare bird of the region during one-day autumn excursion?  
— To prepare article? No, it does not worth publication!  
— To forget? No, because it is one of 5–6 records per one year for you and your colleagues!  
Solution: to organize observations data exchange, to collect data from any observers and to publish them. This practice was initiated in 1999 by Mikhail Kalyakin, who convinced some professional ornithologists and amateurs to co-operate in the Program BMMR.



Photo V. Solodushkin

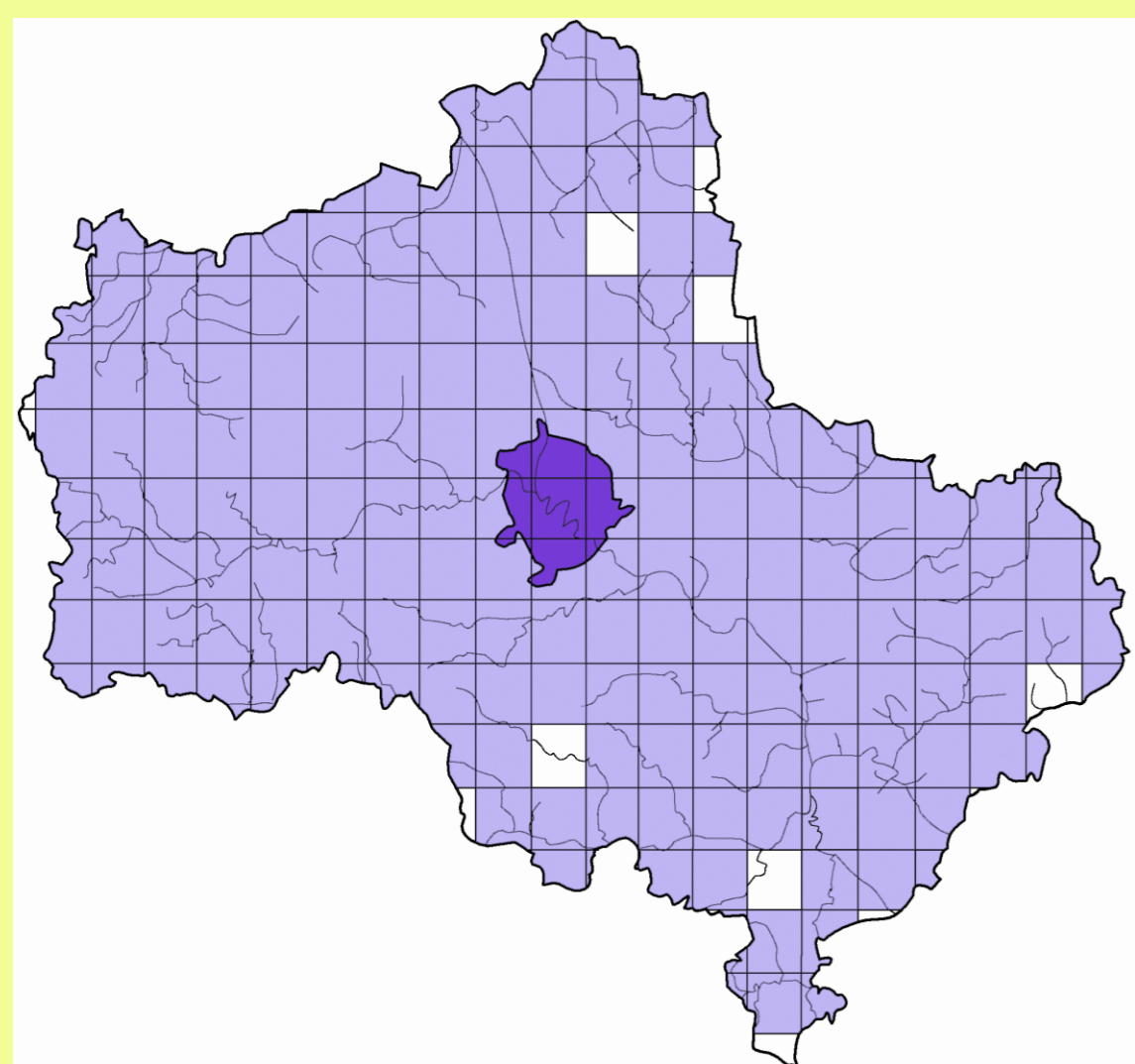
### The program development



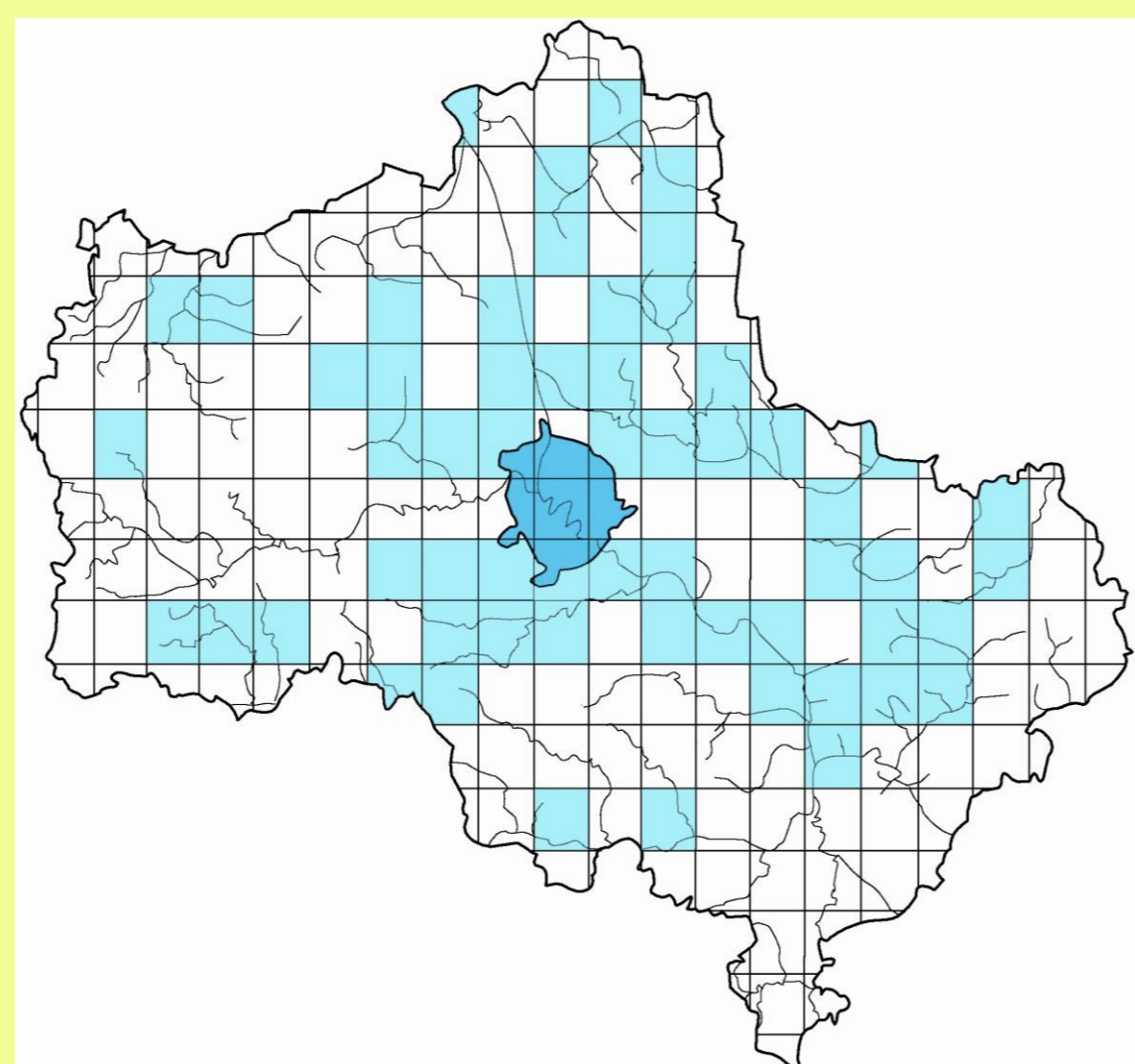
Number of observations sites

The number of participants

Investigated (marked by color) and uninvestigated parts (white) of the territory of the Moscow Region, divided by a 0.5° × 0.5° rectangle grid:



In spring, summer and autumn



In winter

The whole territory of the City has been observed, but different areas with different thoroughness. The next task of the Program is to prepare «Atlas of Moscow City Birds», based on the data of regular surveying of squares 2 × 2 km. This project was launched in 2006.

### Problems = Points for the progress

1. co-operation with clubs of young naturalists;
2. publishing of field guides and CD voice guides;
3. necessity of the participants co-ordination in studying little observed areas and in developing specific projects (counts of selected species, etc.);
4. drawing more attention to bird-counting and identification of their breeding/non-breeding status, not being limited to simple registration of present species.

The main purpose of the Program: to publish a new full review «Birds of Moscow City and the Moscow Region».

Please send your remarks, comments and advice as well as copies or references to articles and notes on clubs establishing and data compiling to the following addresses: [kalyakin@zmmu.msu.ru](mailto:kalyakin@zmmu.msu.ru), [kalyakin@rambler.ru](mailto:kalyakin@rambler.ru) and [voltzit@zmmu.msu.ru](mailto:voltzit@zmmu.msu.ru)  
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The internet conference address in Yahoo, where news about birds of Moscow and the Moscow Region are acceptable (mainly in Russian): <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/birdnewsmoscow/>

Attention! Our moderator Geert Groot Koerkamp can discuss everything you like (all the topics of relevance to birds of the Moscow Region) in English. You are welcome!

### Scientific results of the Program

The official list of bird species observed in Moscow and the Moscow Region has been augmented by 14 points (Purple Heron, Barnacle Goose, Common Shelduck, Ruddy Shelduck, Common Pheasant, Baillon's Crake, Pied Avocet, Laughing Dove, Common Myna, Savi's Warbler, Pallas's Leaf Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler, Bearded Tit, Long-tailed Rosefinch), now it includes 306 bird species.

Data on general distribution, status and registration time in the region have been collected for 273 bird species, recorded here from 1999; data base includes more than 40 000 notes.



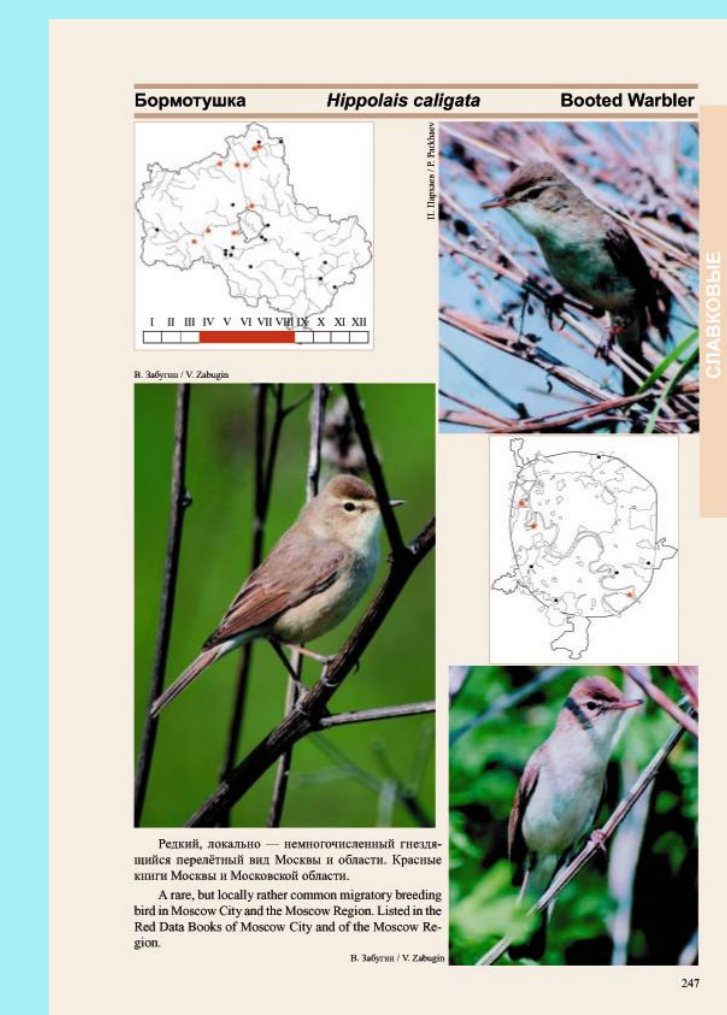
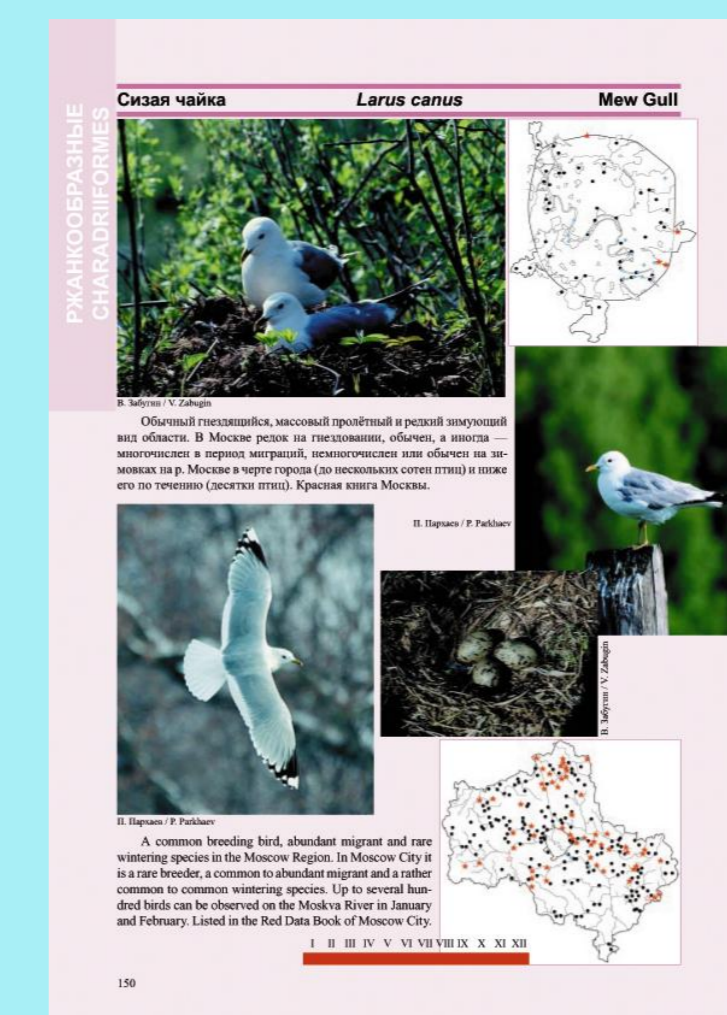
Barnacle Goose was photographed by V. Solodushkin in the National Park “Losinyy Ostrov” near Moscow City.



Savi's Warbler was photographed by M. Kalyakin in the same place.



The annual reports have been being published since 1999, their volume is growing from year to year. In 2005 a special bulletin was established for recent news publication.



Atlas «Birds of Moscow City and the Moscow Region» has been published in 2006.

### What was the poster's purpose?

We will be happy to be introduced into European ornithology community as the most eastern outpost. You are welcome to send all your questions about birds of this enigmatic territory and every kind of comments about ornithology clubs organization.

**And please do not forget to contact us, when you come for bird-watching to the Moscow Region!**