

## Birds at Cape Kolka – opportunities for the Sustainable Tourism Development

Cape Kolka, which is a part of Slitere National Park (Latvia), is an excellent and well-known location among European bird-watchers for observation of bird migration. The geographical location of the cape creates exceptionally good conditions for bird watching both in the spring migration period, when a "bottle-neck" effect occurs over the cape, and in the autumn migration period, when the coast of Kolka is a wonderful place to observe the sea birds.

"One of the aims for founding Slitere National Park is to preserve the place where birds can behave naturally. To be in an undisturbed, typical environment. Of course, we are not separated from the rest of the world, and our dream is that Slitere would become a sustainable destination for nature tourists. Therefore we invite the entrepreneurs of Kurzeme northern coast to a discussion on what can be done jointly both to preserve and to use the nature values to ensure the sustainable development of the region," says the head of Kurzeme Regional administration Dace Samīte.





On February 14th, The Nature Conservation Agency organized a seminar in the village Kolka "Birds at Cape Kolka – Opportunities for the Sustainable Tourism Development at Slitere National Park". Invitations to participate in this seminar were sent to the local entrepreneurs of the tourism industry, representatives of the municipality and other interested parties, who conduct or plan to conduct their activities in Dundaga region and which are related to Slitere National Park.

Several presentations were provided during the seminar, which where met with great interest among the listeners. The aims and tasks of "Baltic wings" were presented by the project coordinator Arta Krūmiņa. Ruslans Matrozis, the author of the upcoming book "Bird-watching at Slitere National Park", which shall be published within the "Baltic wings" project, introduced the listeners to the history of bird watching in Kurzeme. Always proactive expert of the National Conservation Agency Vilnis Skuja told about the uniqueness of Cape Kolka during the spring and autumn migration periods, while NCA employees Madars Burnevics and Uģis Strazds shared with their impressions on the Stakholders study trip to Oland, organized by the project partner Föreningen Närsholmen.

The seminar was concluded by the ornithologist Gaidis Grandāns, who is the only guide leading the tours of the foreign bird-watcher groups. The presentation of Mr Grandāns also motivated the attendants to ask multiple additional questions about the practical side of the bird-watching tours and the opportunities for the promotion of sustainable tourism at Slitere National Park.

## For more information:

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Pictures from the seminar taken by Arta Krūmiņa and Ērika Kļaviņa, NCA, 2020.













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