

CONSERVATION OF SAIGA



The saiga, Saiga tatarica, lives in a harsh steppe environment. The large humped nose helps this antelope to breathe clean air during dusty summers. In the past, saiga antelopes inhabited vast steppe areas all across Eurasia.

Once a common species, the saiga is now brought to the edge of extinction. An extensive conservation activity at the Stepnoy Sanctuary is aimed at the protection of this species in Russia. Rangers are patrolling the territory of the Sanctuary 24 hours a day to protect saigas from poaching. Informantion and advice provided by the rangers helps local people to comply with the management regime of the Sanctuary. Special protection measures are taken during the saiga calving season when anthropogenic disturbance can have a dramatic effect on the reproduction of saigas. Fire prevention activities carried out at the Sanctuary helps to protect valuable saiga pastures. Continuous maintenance of artificial watering places and mineral licks is highly important for ensuring survival and recovery of saiga antelope.



State Nature Sanctuary



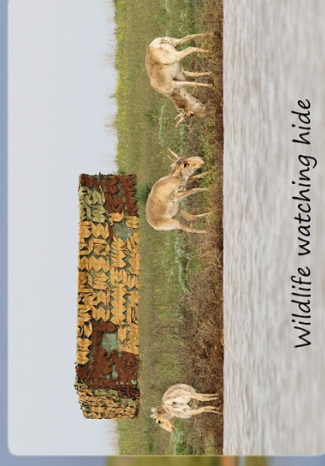
STEPNOY

Astrakhan Region
Russia



BIRD FAUNA

Many bird species use the Sanctuary as nesting and feeding territories or stopover sites. Amazing bird diversity can be observed near water bodies. Large members of Anatidae family, such as common and ruddy shelducks, and various waders (e.g., common stilts and pied avocets) nest on watersides. In summer birds of prey such as hen harrier, steppe eagle, and long-legged buzzard drink and cool down at water bodies. Due to the protection of their nesting grounds, these species regularly breed in the Sanctuary. In the saiga calving season, black vultures and Eurasian griffons migrate to the Sanctuary. The territory of the Sanctuary is used for nesting by demoiselle crane, black-winged pratincole, lesser kestrel, little bustard, and other bird species listed as threatened in the Russian Red Data Book and the IUCN Red List.



Wildlife watching hide



CONSERVATION OF SAIGA



The saiga, *Saiga tatarica*, lives in a harsh steppe environment. The large humped nose helps this antelope to breathe clean air during dusty summers. In the past, saiga antelopes inhabited vast steppe areas all across Eurasia.

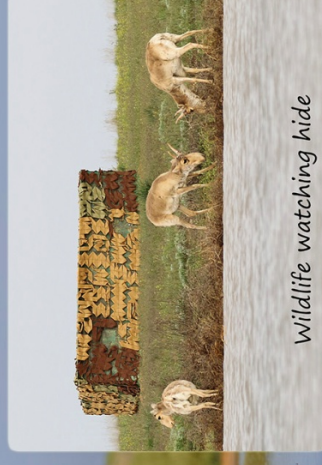
Once a common species, the saiga is now brought to the edge of extinction. An extensive conservation activity at the Stepnoy Sanctuary is aimed at the protection of this species in Russia. Rangers are patrolling the territory of the Sanctuary 24 hours a day to protect saigas from poaching. Informantion and advice provided by the rangers helps local people to comply with the management regime of the Sanctuary. Special protection measures are taken during the saiga calving season when anthropogenic disturbance can have a dramatic effect on the reproduction of saigas. Fire prevention activities carried out at the Sanctuary helps to protect valuable saiga pastures. Continuous maintenance of artificial watering places and mineral licks is highly important for ensuring survival and recovery of saiga antelope.



Eurasian steppes are considered to be one of the ecoregions that have been most severely disturbed by human activity. Although unique communities of endangered steppe plants and animals represent an important component of global biodiversity, strictly protected areas cover only the territories of less than 1% of the Russian steppe ecosystems. Small fragments of the remnant undisturbed steppes are the last refuge for diverse and unique steppe flora and fauna. The Stepnoy Sanctuary was established in 2000 in the Limansky District of the Astrakhan Region of Russia for conservation of the unique complex of feather-grass steppe and rare and endangered species of animals and plants. An area of 109,000 hectares occupied by the Sanctuary is a habitat of saiga antelope. The territory of the Sanctuary is of great importance for the survival and reproduction of this critically endangered species.

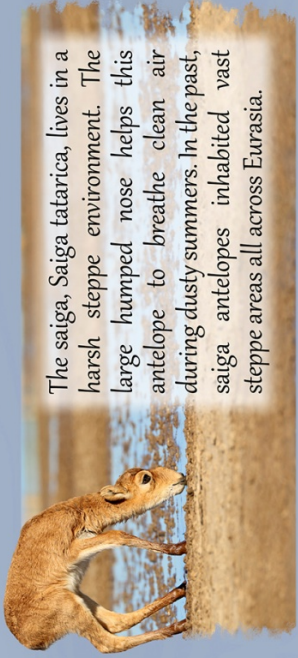
BIRD FAUNA

Many bird species use the Sanctuary as nesting and feeding territories or stopover sites. Amazing bird diversity can be observed near water bodies. Large members of Anatidae family, such as common and ruddy shelducks, and various waders (e.g., common stilts and pied avocets) nest on watersides. In summer birds of prey such as hen harrier, steppe eagle, and long-legged buzzard drink and cool down at water bodies. Due to the protection of their nesting grounds, these species regularly breed in the Sanctuary. In the saiga calving season, black vultures and Eurasian griffons migrate to the Sanctuary. The territory of the Sanctuary is used for nesting by demoiselle crane, black-winged pratincole, lesser kestrel, little bustard, and other bird species listed as threatened in the Russian Red Data Book and the IUCN Red List.



Wildlife watching hide

CONSERVATION OF SAIGA



The saiga, *Saiga tatarica*, lives in a harsh steppe environment. The large humped nose helps this antelope to breathe clean air during dusty summers. In the past, saiga antelopes inhabited vast steppe areas all across Eurasia.

Once a common species, the saiga is now brought to the edge of extinction. An extensive conservation activity at the Stepnoy Sanctuary is aimed at the protection of this species in Russia. Rangers are patrolling the territory of the Sanctuary 24 hours a day to protect saigas from poaching. Information and advice provided by the rangers helps local people to comply with the management regime of the Sanctuary. Special protection measures are taken during the saiga calving season when anthropogenic disturbance can have a dramatic effect on the reproduction of saigas. Fire prevention activities carried out at the Sanctuary helps to protect valuable saiga pastures. Continuous maintenance of artificial watering places and mineral licks is highly important for ensuring survival and recovery of saiga antelope.



State Nature Sanctuary

STEPNOY

Astrakhan Region
Russia



[Click to turn the page](#)

The following activities are prohibited in the Sanctuary:

- ⊘ commercial, sport, and amateur hunting;
- ⊘ destruction of nests, burrows, and other animal shelters;
- ⊘ collection of plants, berries, or seeds;
- ⊘ destruction of soil and vegetation cover;
- ⊘ certain types of economic activity;
- ⊘ littering and pollution of the territory;
- ⊘ off-road vehicle driving and parking;
- ⊘ camping and making fires;
- ⊘ walking dogs unleashed or not fitted with muzzles.

Stepnoy State Nature Sanctuary
ul. Komsomolskaya 69
pos. Liman 416410,
Astrakhan Region, Russia
Tel./Fax: (+7) 851 47 21702
Email: limstepnoi@mail.ru

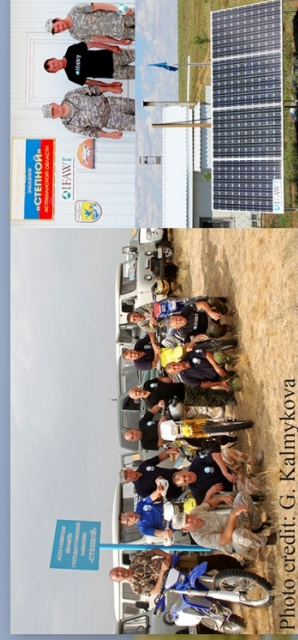


Photo credit: G. Kalmykova

Photos and design: A. Giljov and K. Karenina

[Click to turn the page](#)