

BirdLife Finland succeeds in court battle over endangered species

Title

Long-tailed duck is classified worldwide as Vulnerable. In southern Finland, a license for spring hunting of the species was authorised in year 2011, further threatening the survival of the population. BirdLife Finland and its local member organisation are working to save the species and lodged a complaint to the Supreme Administrative Court of Finland. The complaint proved successful as the Court found the license for spring hunting illegal.

The court decision was based on the unfavourable conservation status of the species and the fact that there is a satisfactory alternative to spring hunting since Long-tailed duck also occur in the area during the autumn.

Pursuing the complaint required considerable work by the NGO's: the appeal documents were lengthy and supported by numerous expert statements, boat research expeditions and long-term monitoring data collected by volunteers at bird research stations. Results of Long-tailed Duck counts carried out by neighboring BirdLife Estonia also helped to prove that the population had decreased considerably.

The majority of the Long-tailed Ducks breeding in northern Europe and western Siberia spend the winter in the Baltic Sea. These birds occur on the coast of Finland especially during spring and autumn migration. What happens to the birds during spring migration in Finland has impacts on the entire Eurasian population of the species.

The BirdLife Partnership hopes that the positive decision by the Finnish Court helps to preserve the species, not only in Finland, but everywhere it migrates.
