



For Bird Watchers!

# BIRDS IN LUBĀNA WETLAND COMPLEX



**1 Zvidze bird-watching tower** - the landscape of the tower is both the lake and the Zvidze canal, directly facing the lake you can see the only island on the lake - Akmeņsala, where you can see in binoculars Common cormorants or Great white egrets sitting on the ends of trees. The island is home to one of the largest colonies of these birds in Latvia, on the other side of the tower there is a view of agricultural land, where in spring and autumn geese and swans feeding and resting, the most observant can see Grey partridges, as well as on the sides of the Zvidze canal, in the shallows, wading birds like to roam.

**2 The southern dam bird-watching tower** and the southern surroundings of the lake always allow you to get to know birds of prey. The white-tailed eagle and the osprey can be seen in the air, waterfowl can be seen in the open waters. The large expanse of reeds will also provide an opportunity to listen to the species, such as great reed warbler, sedge warbler and others. Also look nearby - nightingales and grey-headed woodpeckers have often appeared in the bushes.

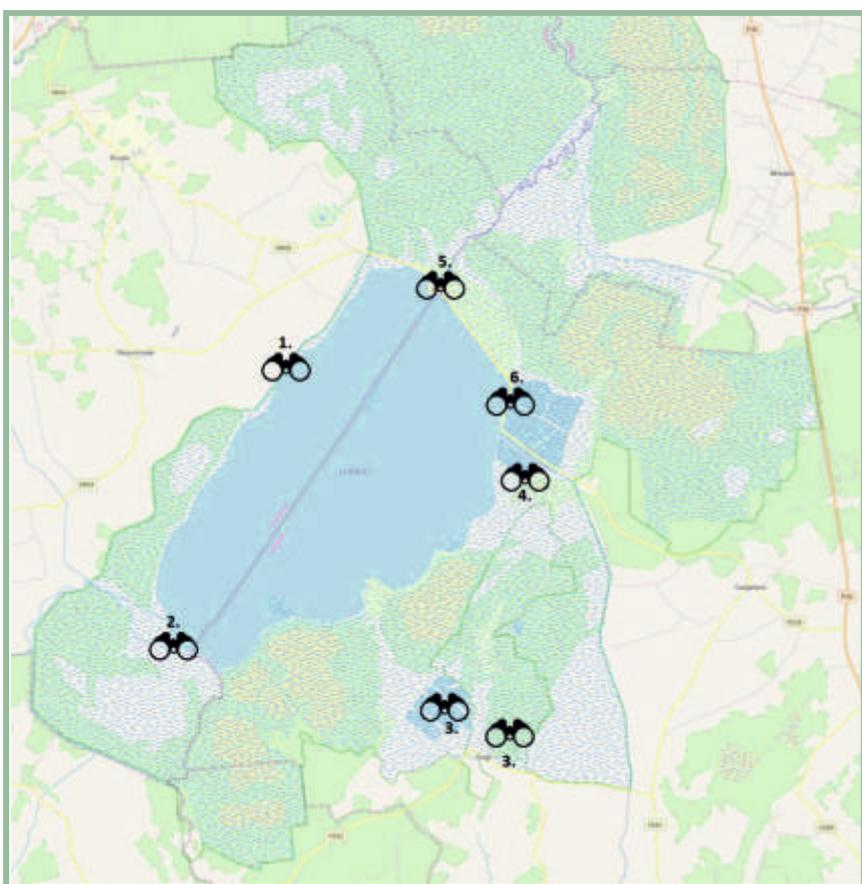
**3 Fish ponds surroundings of Nagļi village,**

**4 Fish ponds "Īdeņi"** - Attention! Fish ponds are privately owned, to visit them it is necessary to contact the owners in advance to avoid unpleasant misunderstandings!

Fish ponds are one of the best places to watch birds. Spring and summer are the best seasons to visit Nagļi. Even in the middle of summer, you can find interesting bird species here, which are difficult to find elsewhere in Latvia. Fish ponds are home to large flocks of Great white egrets, Whooper swans and mute swans, as well as flocks of geese. Here you can observe various birds of prey while hunting - White-tailed eagle, Osprey, Marsh harrier, Common buzzard. Wading birds are concentrated in lowered fish ponds and shallow waters - The black and red-tailed godwit, The ruff, Tringa species, The northern lapwing; floating in the waters - Northern shoveler, Mallard, Red-necked grebe, Great crested grebe, Eurasian coot, Gadwall, Garganey etc.

**5 The surroundings of the Lubāna Wetland Information Centre and the Aiviekste River** - walking along the dam that separates the Aiviekste River from Lake Lubāns. In the lake, along the reeds, you can see Eurasian coot, Great crested grebe, Black-headed gull, Common tern and Black tern. On the Aiviekste side, be attentive and notice the Common kingfisher. Whooper swans and Mute swans nest in the reeds. Walking along the dam, you will see Western yellow wagtail, hear Common rosinch and Nightingales in the bushes. Continuing the way along the Aiviekste River, you will hear woodpeckers in the willows and, looking into the floodplain meadows, look at the sky, maybe you will notice hunting Lesser spotted eagle or a Common buzzard.

**6 Water tourism development center "Bāka"** - a viewing platform will allow you to feel the vastness of Latvia's largest lake - Lubāns, blue clouds and their magical feeling, when sometimes blue clouds and blue water merge and then the lake without borders; you may see Lubāna view and grandeur. The footbridge in the lake is popular with Black-headed gull, while looking at the other side, Kvāpāni fish ponds, in open waters and along reeds water birds enjoy pleasant living conditions - Eurasian coots, Great crested grebes, Great white egrets, Mallards and Mute swans lazily spend their daily lives.



Favorite bird watching places in Lubāna wetland complex (marked on the map with)

### PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR BIRD WATCHING:

- Do not restrain or unnecessarily disturb the birds;
- Remember that in nature all bird species are equally important;
- Protect birds habitats;
- Respect other people's rights and do not violate your own;
- Write down your observations;
- Share your knowledge thoughtfully;
- Try to know more.



**Nature reserve "Lubāna wetland complex"** is the largest inland wetland in Latvia with a total area - 516.32 km<sup>2</sup>. It was established in 2009 with the aim of ensuring the largest lake in Latvia, bogs, forest massif and wetland. The complex represents outstanding habitats specially protected in Latvia and the European Union, as well as a rich and diverse flora and fauna. 257 bird species have been found in the territory of the nature reserve "Lubāna Wetland complex" (367 species in Latvia). The territory is included in the Bird International List of Important Bird Areas and the Ramsar Convention. Lake Lubāns and fish ponds are one of the most important resting and feeding places for migratory waterfowl in the country, a nesting place for 29 European specially protected bird species: Lesser spotted eagles, White-tailed eagles, Whooper swans, Corn crakes, Great snipes and a place where several globally endangered bird species can be found, such as: Great snipes, Corn crakes, White-tailed eagles, Ospreys, Lesser spotted eagles etc.

## Observed bird species:

**1 The Eurasian bittern or great bittern** - This brown-spotted bird is protected in Europe, is very rare to see. It is quite different with its voice. In suitable conditions, it can be heard even at a distance of 5 km and is not mixed with anything else - hollow and peculiar, it resembles the sound of blowing air in an empty bottle.

**2 Great White Egret** - Fifteen years ago, this bright white, stork-sized bird was a rare guest of delusion in Latvia, and every sighting of this glorious bird was an event. Currently, the white egret has joined the family of nesting birds in Latvia. Like its "native" relative heron, the white egret feeds on fish and is often seen hunting near its reeds.

**3 Great Cormorant** - In 1989, the nesting of a cormorant was first demonstrated in Lubāns (J. Baumanis), since then the species has been convincingly established in several other places in Latvia. Akmeņsala on Lake Lubāns is home to one of the largest cormorant colonies in Latvia

**4 Geese** - Tens of thousands of these birds cross the Lubāns wetland every year during the transit. The best places to watch geese are Degumnieki-Barkava fields, as well as fish ponds.

**5 The great crested grebe** - a great swimmer, an amazing diver! Dives in danger, can swim underwater for about 40 meters. In fact, the whole life of this bird spends in the water - on the water, under the water, if not count the nesting time. Very beautiful and graceful are the "wedding" games of crested grebes.

**6 Eurasian coot** - A resident of stagnant waters, it lives in overgrown freshwater lakes and ponds. The main food is plants, but it is omnivorous. Feeds both in water on the surface or by diving, and on land. A loud bird, a lot of screams and echoes with each other, especially at night. Territorial bird. Outside of mating time, small herds tend to form for feeding.

**7 The Osprey** - not a very large, light bird of prey feeds only on fish that are hunted by soaring and aiming from above and then quickly thrown into the water after it.

**8 White-tailed eagle** - this is the largest bird of prey in Latvia, and several of them also live in the Lubāna wetland complex. Old birds also overwinter here, young prefer to travel for the first years. Waterfowl are the favorite food, so if you see a general panic among the winged inhabitants, you can often see the cause by looking up.

**9 The Great snipe** - a symbol of the nature reserve "Lubāna wetland complex". The most suitable are large, ditch-free floodplain meadows, where the annual spring floods and high water levels throughout the nesting season provide soil moisture, looseness and earthworm density, which is the main food for the snipe.

It is a beautiful time, when snipes at sunset take their place in open, wrestling floodplain meadows and herbaceous bogs, cut out their breasts and white tail feathers.

**10 The white-backed woodpecker** - natural forests with all their characteristic elements are needed - growing trees, dry trees and fallen trees of different ages. Feeds on soft, decaying soil, looking for large insect larvae.

**11 The Western Yellow Wagtail** - wet grass bird, the silhouette of the yellow wagtail is similar to the white wagtail, but it is dominated by the yellow color - yellow belly and olive green dorsal wings. Light eyebrow stripe, dark tail with white edges. It can be easily noticed in nature due to the expressive yellow color. The quantity of them has declined dramatically in the 1990s. Since 1995, the number of yellow wagtails in Latvia has decreased by 95%.

**12 Common Kingfisher** - a species of bird living along rivers. The common kingfisher feeds on smaller fish that are caught diving in the water. It forms its own nest in the caves in the outcrops of the coast, which have a pronounced fishy smell. Occurs all year round.



The Eurasian bittern or great bittern  
*Lielais dumplis* *Botaurus stellaris*



Great White  
*Lielais baltais gārnis* *Egretta alba*



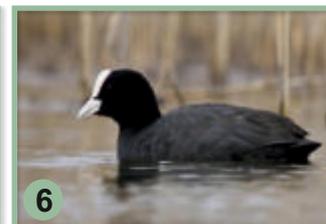
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*



Geese *Anser albifrons*



The great crested grebe *Podiceps cristatus*



Eurasian coot *Fulica atra*



The Osprey *Pandion haliaeetus*



White-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*



The Great snipe *Gallinago media*



The white-backed woodpecker  
*Dendrocopos leucotos*



The Western Yellow Wagtail  
*Motacilla flava flava*



Common Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

The information was collected and prepared by the Lubāna Wetland Information Centre.

Photos used from the website - [www.putni.lv](http://www.putni.lv),  
photo authors (Jānis Jansons, Ainars Mankus, Jānis Ūze,  
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The Lubāna Wetland Information Centre offers tourist guides, binoculars for watching the surrounding birds and landscape, and an orienteering game around the information center. We offer hiking, guide services, information about the nature complex Lubāna Wetland, its natural values and cultural history.

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