

E.U. vandalism, a site destroyed.

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The Lukna meadows, early spring. Picture the scene, a shallow wetland abounding with birds - Ruff, some 300 or more in active lek, strutting and chasing; Garganey and Shoveler quietly floating past; Wood Sandpipers by the dozen, if not hundred. The seasonal floods across these grasslands provided one of the richest bird habitats in the entire area, home to numerous species, common and rare. Add to the birds already mentioned, breeding Black-tailed Godwits, huge flocks of passage White-fronted and Bean Geese and the picture begins to build, an oasis of utmost importance. Throw in the occasional Red-necked Phalaropes and Marsh Sandpipers, the visiting White-tailed Eagles and the frequent White-winged Black Terns and you'd begin to believe you were in one of the finest bird reserves in the area.

And a reserve it should have been, but tax payers of Europe, you have just destroyed it, the place is no more. In an act that is little short of simple vandalism, the European Union provided the funding to drain the entire area. And for what? For nothing! Lithuania is awash with meadows standing idle, the entire country is dotted with farmland abandoned and, even at this very site, little of the land in the area is used in a meaningful way, if used at all.

Congratulations E.U., you have obliterated one more special little place in Europe. Shame on you, so much for enlightened environmental times.

How it was...

