

It has been sought for a long time how to stop the extinction of animal, plant and mushroom species and their living surroundings. When the information on rare and becoming extinct species was started to be gathered, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) elaborated the Red Book and started to publish it in 1966.

In Lithuania rare species conservation measures were applied as far back as the early 20th century, and in 1959 the first Law on Nature Conservation was adopted. In 1976 the first Red Book of Lithuania was prepared and approved. It enlisted 41 animal species and 30 species of plants. The Red Book achieved its purpose – it attracted the public attention to the necessity of the conservation of rare species.

Protected territories have been established for these species. The usage of these areas and the destruction of the living surroundings in them is prohibited.

Currently 777 animal, plant, and mushroom species are in the Red Book. It enlists 23 mammal species, three from which have become extinct in Lithuania, 4 populations already face no real danger to die out.

The Red Book enlists 4 species of beasts of prey. The status of these species is different. However, all of them are extremely sensitive to environment changes and would hardly survive for future generations if not protected severely.



The lynx (*Lynx lynx*) spread on Lithuania's territory at the time after the last icing when the area was predominantly covered by forests. At that time the lynx could be found Europe-wide, however, its natural population has never been large: the number of predators is to be commensurate with ecological conditions.

For many centuries lynxes were hunted in Lithuanian woods for their fur and sometimes even for meat to be tastily roasted. However, not only hunting, usually accidental, caused the extinction of this species of lynx. An extremely negative influence on the lynx population was caused by reducing areas of forests, the changing landscape. Already in the early 21st century, the lynx was regarded a species becoming extinct. In the middle of the century it entirely died out in some regions of Lithuania. Many thought that this species would not survive.



It is not easy to notice lynxes living in forests – they are rather cautious. Sometimes they may be seen near villages located in forests, wood-cutting areas. Their hunting prey varies from the smallest rodents, hares through to deer. The lynx lies in ambush waiting for its prey and does not chase it for a long distance because the lynx gets tired quickly. It ambushes its prey only when the latter approaches closely and has no chances to escape.

In April-May the lynx female gives birth to 2–3 kittens. Within the first twelve days they are blind. However, when three months old, the cubs and their mother start to roam the woods and learn to hunt. At the age of two years, little lynxes are already considered to be grown-up.

A grown-up lynx weighs up to 30 kilograms. It has long legs. Alike all cats, when walking the lynx draws its claws inside and they are not seen on its track. The lynx fur is soft, thick, and spotted. Their 20 cm long black tipped tail and hair tufts at the tip of the ears attract the eye most of all.

Lynxes are always active. When hungry, they may be diurnal hunters, although usually they hunt at night or in morning. They may lead a settled way of life, but in their search for new places they may travel rather long distances. Beasts from Latvia, Poland, and Belarus also reach Lithuania, thus enlarge the local population.

Around the year 1970, the lynx population in Lithuania amounted from 150 to 200 lynx. They were even hunted for a certain period of time. However, caused by a sudden decrease of the lynx population, this hunting was prohibited in 1979. Currently this species is listed in the Red Book. Being among the species conserved in the European Union, lynx residence places are arranged on special protected territories. The lynx has been started to be reproduced in captivity in order to be let into forests in the future and enrich local populations.

We are all responsible for the lynx to live in Lithuania for ever.

Selemonas Paltanavičius



*Silver Ag 925
Quality proof
Diameter 38.61 mm
Weight 28.28 g
The coin edge bears stylized footprints of a lynx
Designed by Rimantas Eidėjus
Mintage 3000 pcs
Issued 2006*

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Tel. +370 - 5 268 03 16, fax +370 - 5 268 03 14, www.lb.lt



*The coin was minted at the
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Lithuanian Collectors Coins

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LITHUANIAN COLLECTORS COINS

*The lynx is a symbol of the
old Lithuanian woods and
conserved nature that has
been preserved up to
nowadays and that gives
bright hopes for the future
of the entire nature.*

