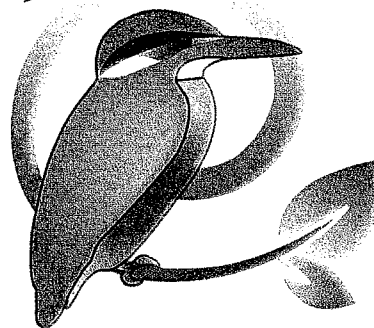
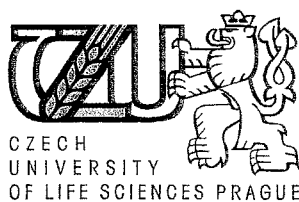


2<sup>nd</sup> European Congress of Conservation Biology  
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**BOOK OF ABSTRACTS**

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initiative, the educational program and awareness-raising methodologies were complemented and strengthened. Based on a preliminary evaluation there is initial evidence that such methods are effective and indications that we are achieving the project educational goals. A participative scenario for dialogue among stakeholders was opened. We started to exchange ideas towards the definition of future productive initiatives which may secure the conservation of the turtle, the environment and improvement of the local communities.

#### 572. RESULTS OF A STUDY OF THE POPULATION OF AESCULAPEAN SNAKE (*ZAMENIS LONGISSIMUS*) IN PODYJI NATIONAL PARK

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Research in to the population of the Aesculapean Snake on the territory of NP Podyji was carried out between the years 2000 – 2008. Caught individuals were individually marked, in order to track their migration in a certain territory. Overall 638 individuals were marked. Seasonal migration, length of migration and habitat preferences of the marked individuals where observed. The time between each catching, expressed in number of days, was assessed and the migration of snakes, expressed in metres, was assessed through repeated catching. Both sexes migrate. The longest distance of migration was 3 750 m. Migration further than 1 km was observed in 11% of males, but only in 0,75% females. On the basis of repeated catching (altogether 1819) it was ascertained that the snakes have a relatively regular yearly schedule (hibernaculum, reproduction stand, summer stand). The influence of possible barriers (roads, cycle tracks, the river Dyje) throughout the country was assessed. According to our results the river Dyje isn't a barrier. The results were used to propose a management plan for this species, concerns above all in enumeration of risk factors, habitat arrangement and the preservation of reproduction sites. The management type suggestions vary from preservative measures to active intervention.

#### 573. CONSERVATION EDUCATION IN FORREST KINDERGARTENS

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Conservation Education in Forest Kindergartens: Forest Kindergarten is an alternative form of pre-school education. The basic idea is to let children develop themselves in the forest in all seasons. There are no buildings and artificial toys. Forest supplies everything the children need. The first Forest Kindergarten was founded in Denmark in 1952 as a common idea of parents wanting their children to grow up outdoors close to the nature. Since that time Forest Kindergartens have spread in many other countries e.g. all Scandinavia, Germany, Canada. The potential of this concept lies in the connection of children's development and the nature processes and principles. Children growing up in Forest Kindergarten understand the value of all parts of nature because they can experience them in relations. Conservation Education is a natural component of the concept. A survey (Haefner, 2002) of children in the first grade in grammar school shows that children attending Forest Kindergarten develop better in all spectra of skills than the ones who attended a regular kindergarten.

#### 574. AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR URBAN WOODLOTS

Wallbank, Nicola Jane, University of Salford, United Kingdom; James, Philip, University of Salford, United Kingdom

Urban vegetation makes a positive contribution to climate change mitigation and to quality of life. However, there are some less desirable associations with, for example, increased antisocial behaviour and fear of crime. Such tensions present city managers with often conflicting end goals for urban green space. In the town of Runcorn, northwest England a series of woodlots and other green spaces were planted during the 1960s to 1980s to form a vegetative framework within which residential and commercial development subsequently took place. Having reached maturity questions are being asked by the town managers about the future of these intra-city woodlots. In this paper the authors discuss the motivation behind the landscaping of Runcorn, the current floral composition, distribution, and ownership and management of these woodlots. Initial findings on the floral composition and diversity within woodlots are described. The preliminary results of botanical surveys undertaken of the woodlots are presented. Species lists and abundance readings taken from selected sites demonstrate the variations within the planting. The paper concludes with a discussion of the need for future work that combines these data with climate change predictions and with perceptions of local residents to develop scenarios for the development of these woodlots to circa 2060.

#### 575. THE IMPACT OF THE DECLINE OF AN ICONIC WEST AUSTRALIAN EUCALYPTUS TREE SPECIES, THE TUART, ON BIRDS

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Tree declines are a global phenomenon, yet little research has been conducted into the impact of tree decline on fauna. In Western Australia, clearing has reduced the tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) to less than a third of its former range and remaining trees are heavily impacted by decline of unknown cause. The disappearance of this iconic tree and subsequent impact on fauna, is a source of grave concern. We investigated the effect of tuart decline on birds by conducting species counts for 24 woodland sites dominated by tuart in various stages of decline. The presence of bird species was compared against habitat parameters: vegetation composition and structure, litter characteristics, and indices of tuart health including the extent of branch dieback, epicormic development and crown condition. Some bird nesting and feeding guilds, particularly hollow-nesters and understorey insect gleaners appear to benefit from tuart decline, possibly due to the greater diversification of resources in declining sites. Several species apparently benefiting from tuart decline are common generalists or open country species; however, increased avian diversity associated with declining sites should not be interpreted as a conservation gain, as specialist species may be detrimentally affected with major ecological consequences.