

ANTHROPOGENIC OR ECOLOGICAL TRAP:  
WHAT IS CAUSING THE POPULATION DECLINE  
OF THE LAPWING *VANELLUS VANELLUS*  
IN WESTERN UKRAINE?

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ABSTRACT

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Ecological and anthropogenic traps exist and exert a negative effect on Lapwing populations. We believe that an anthropogenic trap is a partial or delayed manifestation of an ecological trap. In recent decades Lapwing communities have shown higher affiliation with urban landscapes, which negatively influences breeding success and the overall density of the species. It appears that the Lapwing has fallen into an anthropogenic trap, which in Ukraine is represented by agricultural landscapes. The decline in the Lapwing population is mainly caused by high intensity of agriculture, overgrazing, desolation of agricultural lands, changes in the water regime of rivers and lakes, global forestation, increasing disturbance by recreational activity and tourism, and an increase in the distribution and number of predatory mammals. Controlled burns of dead vegetation performed in late spring, household waste disposal, and construction work all contribute to the loss of breeding grounds. As a result the majority of local Lapwing populations declined during last decade, and some populations have gone completely extinct.

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