



Newsletter

LIFE FOR LASCA

N. 09/2021

Lasca fish farming in Slovenia

The experience gained by the Ticino Park in previous projects has allowed to export the knowledge about breeding and reproduction of Lasca to the Slovenian partner, in order to make it autonomous in these activities.

Below are the main stages concerning the breeding of the target species by FRIS in Slovenia.

- July 2018: Specimens of Lasca of different ages and sizes were transported from the Ticino Park to Slovenia. The transport was carried out in advance of the frigate period (full reproductive phase) to allow the fish to adapt in time to the environmental conditions of the new breeding and be ready for the breeding season. The fish transported, of three years or more, represented the first stock of **breeding animals** in the FRIS farming.
- In the meantime, a FRIS fish farm has been radically restructured and modified to meet the very specific conditions that Lasca requires.
- March 2019: specimens of Lasca have been successfully transferred from Italy (Parco Ticino) to Slovenia (FRIS). Most of which were released into the wild, while a smaller part was transferred to the hatcher to increase the number of individuals intended for breeding in captivity.



Lasca specimen-Photo FRIS



Release into the wild-
PhotoFRIS

- May 2019: Breeding animals have been gradually moved from farming tanks to breeding tanks (heated water from 10 to 20 °C, in recirculation, with pebbles on the bottom to facilitate the release of eggs). In early May, spawning took place on the pebbles. These are transparent eggs, about 1 mm large, adherent to the substrate. For the first time in Slovenia, Lasca eggs were successfully laid in artificial conditions. Subsequently the boxes with pebbles were moved to the containers dedicated to hatching. From this first reproduction were obtained specimens of 2-4 cm, ready for release into the wild.
- October 2019: after an intervention to remove the Common Nose, the fish species that threatens the conservation of Lasca, the first reintroductions of Lasca began in the tributaries of the Vipava. Several specimens have been released in successive phases in the Jevšček stream (a stream that in the studies has been the most suitable for the reintroduction of the species) coming from both the incubator of the Ticino Park and that of FRIS in Slovenia.

A decade after her disappearance, Lasca returned to swim at the Natura 2000 site Dolina Vipave.



Breeding tanks-
Photo FRIS



Release into the
wild-Photo FRIS

Lasca eggs-Photo FRIS

- November 2019: following recoveries and supplies of fish by the Ticino Park and fish obtained from the first reproduction, on this date the stock of Slovenian Lasca to be used for breeding was made up of a good nucleus of sexually mature specimens and young specimens(future breeding).
- May 2020: On May 19, about 30 breeding animals spawned eggs. To test a more gradual reproduction other breeding animals of at least three years and specimens of two years, have been divided into smaller groups.
- June 2020: With the monitoring provided by the project to verify the success of the inputs, the Lasca was found in the estuary of the Jovšček stream. This is the third time the species has been found in the stream since its reintroduction in October last year. Finds of the Lasca upstream and downstream of the place of reintroduction show that the species has spread along the entire section of the Jovšček stream until its runoff into the Vipava River, for a length of 3 km.



Lasca farming tanks-Photo FRIS



Lasca breeding tanks-Photo FRIS



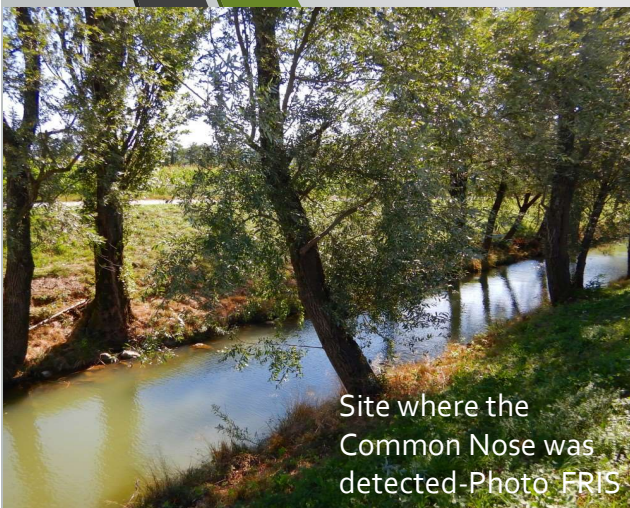
Cobblestone layer to promote spawning-Photo FRIS



- July 2020: On this date, about 2 months after spawning, the success of reproduction in captivity 2020 was ensured by a good number of young specimens.
- September 2020: The Slovenian team recovered some fish from the Ticino Park fish farm. 20,000 fish, about 4 cm long, were released into the wild immediately after arrival in Slovenia. In particular, 6,000 specimens in the Ozlenšček stream and 14,000 in the Močilnik stream.
- It is also expected to reproduce in captivity in spring 2021. If successful, tens of thousands of specimens will be released into the wild to increase the chances of survival of the Lasca in the Vipava valley.

The reduction of the Common Nose in Slovenia

One of the first steps towards the conservation of the wild population of Lasca in the long term is the reduction of threats, in this case the reduction of the Common Nose. Initially, nose breeding sites were identified and mature specimens captured. Due to natural causes, but also to fishing activity and the presence of artificial barriers, the Nose was already decreasing at the Natura 2000 site, subject to the reintroduction of the Lasca. In the summer of 2018, the largest herds of Naso were identified and intensive fishing of the species was carried out, which continued even in subsequent summers. Sports fishermen, even very young ones, have been involved in fishing to learn about the importance of native species such as Lasca, the damage that alien species can cause to ecosystems, and the need for action to promote biodiversity and endangered species.



Site where the Common Nose was detected-Photo FRIS



Common Nose specimen caught during population reduction phases-Photo FRIS