

THE FIRST RECORD OF AFRICAN SPOONBILL *Platalea alba* IN CROATIA

Prvi podatek o afriški žličarki *Platalea alba* na Hrvaškem

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In the morning hours of 4 Oct 2005, we observed one adult individual of African Spoonbill *Platalea alba* (colour appendix – Figure 1), in a flock of 120 Eurasian Spoonbills *Platalea leucorodia* at Podunavlje fishponds (UTM CR25, Kopački rit Nature Park, NE Croatia). The first thing we noticed on this bird were its bright red legs and then its red face. The silvery cover of its beak, delimited by red, was also well visible. Wing feathers were normal and not cut, and the bird was not wearing a ring. It behaved normally within the flock of Eurasian Spoonbills and there was no sign that would suggest that this bird had escaped from captivity or some bird collection. Mr Mario Romulić managed to make a series of photographs and suitably documented this rare phenomenon. As far as we know, this is the first observation of this species in Croatia (KRALJ & RADOVIĆ 2002, KRALJ 2005). The record was confirmed by the National Rarities Committee. African Spoonbills are distributed south of Sahara (HANCOCK *et al.* 1992). It occurs rarely in Europe, where it is considered an escapee, although it has been recorded in France, Spain, Denmark and Austria (MULLARNEY *et al.* 1999). During 2005, one bird was being observed throughout the summer along the Po River, Italy (NICOLA BACHETTI, *pers. comm.*). On 2 and 3 Oct 2005, one individual was observed at Lake Csaj-to near Tömörkény in Hungary, approximately 142 km east north-east from Kopački rit. The bird was photographed and these observations were shown on Hungarian website [www.birding.hu].

Povzetek

Dne 4.10.2005 je bil opažen en osebek afriške žličarke *Platalea alba* na ribnikih Podunavlje (UTM CR25, Park narave Kopački rit, SV Hrvaška), gre za prvi podatek za Hrvaško, ptica ni bila označena in tako najverjetneje ne gre za ubežnico. Podatek je potrdila nacionalna komisija za redkosti.

References

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