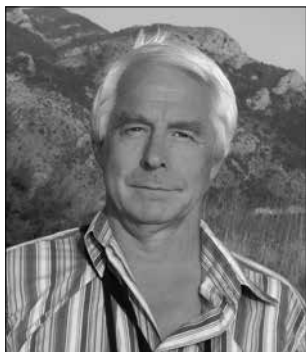


## V SPOMIN: DR. MARTIN SCHNEIDER-JACOBY, 1956–2012

### In memoriam: Dr Martin Schneider-Jacoby, 1956–2012



dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby,  
1956–2012

Martin Schneider-Jacoby je živel nenavadno bogato. Iz rojstnega mesta Cuxhaven ob Severnem morju ga je življenjska pot vodila vse bolj proti jugu: maturiral je v Schwäbisch-Hallu v deželi Baden-Württemberg, diplomiral na Univerzi v Konstanzu ob Bodenskem jezeru, se tu tudi poročil, disertacijo z naslovom "Ptice kot indikatorji ekološkega potenciala savskih lok in možnosti njihovega varstva" pa opravil na Lonjskem polju (Hrvaška). Od leta 1989 je njegovo ime neločljivo povezano s fundacijo EuroNatur. Kot vrhunsko izobražen in predestiniran ornitolog ter naravovarstvenik z znanjem nemškega, angleškega, srbskega, hrvaškega, francoskega ter razumevanjem nekaterih drugih jezikov, denimo slovenskega in celo makedonskega, so mu bile duri številnih dežel, institucij in posameznikov na stežaj odprta. Zlasti navdušen je bil nad zahodnim Balkanom, ki so mu pred dvajsetimi leti vsi obrnili hrbet. Pred, med in po vojnah je tod na svojstven način pomagal pticam in naravi. Pri tem mu je bilo v podporo izvrstno razumevanje zgodovine zahodnega Balkana, iz katere je vzporedno tudi doktoriral. Pomembno vlogo na tej poti proti jugu so imeli profesorja dr. Gerhard Thielcke in dr. Hartmut Ern ter produktivno pokroviteljstvo Fundacije za evropsko naravno dediščino EuroNatur.

Dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby je bil človek presunljivega razpona, nenavadne moči, asketskih potreb in čistih, kot britev ostrih misli. Tako je denimo prevajal gnezdilnice za zlatovranko čez cel Balkan jih namestil v Ulcinjskih solinah ter zatem sestankoval s predsednikom države. Svetoval je Svetovni banki in še isti dan na poplavnih pašnikih Lonjskega polja pomagal pri zganjanju domačih živali na poplavljenih pašnikih, brez katerih žličarke ne bi mogle preživeti. V delti Bune se je pogovarjal s pastirji, kako preprečiti lov na pašnikih, kjer se množično hranijo kolonialne vodne ptice in počivajo tisoči pobrežnikov, samo pol ure kasneje pa že začrtoval prihodnje Ramsarsko območje z najvišjimi državnimi predstavniki v Skadru. Kako mu je ob vsem tem uspelo prešteti vodne ptice in domače živali, da bi ocenil vpliv paše, pa še vedno ostaja skrivnost. Na Livanjskem polju je vso noč popisoval kosce, naslednje jutro pa že vodil delavnico z ministrom in predstavniki kantonov za njegovo varstvo. V zadnjem desetletju je bilo središče njegovih prizadevanj preprečiti nezakonit lov ptic in zagotoviti varna območja vzdolž globalno pomembne mediteransko-črnomske selitvene poti ptic – zlasti v njenem osrednjem območju, imenovanem Adriatic Flyway. Nepredstavljivo lovsko divjanje v Dalmaciji, Črni gori in Albaniji je populacije palearktičnih selivk pripeljalo v domala brezizhodni položaj, ali pa so, kot tenkokljuni škurh, že izumrle. Če je bilo potrebno, se je dr. Schneider-Jacoby, kot denimo v Hutovem Blatu ali Ulcinjskih solinah, postavil med ptice in (krivo)lovce – rezultat je bil resnično presenetljiv in mnogi med njimi so to divjanje zaradi direktnega, a človeško spoštljivega pristopa opustili. Sploh bi lahko dejali, da je bil dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby zagovornik in glasnik Ramsarske in Banske konvencije (AEWA) ter Biosfernih rezervatov (UNESCO) na območju, kjer so zaradi trenutnih težav prezrli razvojni kapital, ki ga ponuja narava.

Schneiderjev obsežni publicistični niz se je z leti bolj nagibal k varstvu naravnih (poplavnih) in kulturnih (pašnih) ekosistemov ter argumentirani politiki varstva in manj k čistemu znanstvenemu pisanju. Kot rezultat tega procesa je za IUCN

oblikoval naravovarstveno strategijo za Balkan. Objavljal je tudi lokalno, da bi nagovoril domačine. Več inspirativno oblikovanih razstav v Sloveniji (Drava - Mura) Bosni in Hercegovini (Livanjsko polje), Hrvaški (Delta Neretve), Črni gori (Ulcinjске soline) in Albaniji (Delta Bune) opisuje njegove osebne in dejanske varstvene prioritete zahodnega Balkana. Nekaj zelo posebnega so bila zlasti njegova predavanja. Bil je mojster interpretacije. Rad je sodeloval z umetniki, kot sta denimo zakonca Harrison iz ZDA. Umetnost je videl kot nujen sestavni del varstva narave. Ornitološka biografija in bibliografija dr. Martina Schneider-Jacobyja bo predstavljena v reviji *Ecology of Birds* v eni izmed prihodnjih števil.

In v Sloveniji? S prvim projektom fundacije EuroNatur "Cerkniško jezero" leta 1991/1992 je vsebinsko in materialno omogočil razmah projektnega dela slovenske ornitologije – natanko ob prelomnem trenutku. Sledili so drugi projekti. Postavil je meje Nature 2000 na Dravi in Muri in prvič slovensko varstvo narave povezal z ekonomijo na kongresu "Biosferni rezervat Drava - Mura" leta 1996 v Radencih, kajpak v prizadevanju ohraniti rečno pokrajino obeh rek. Sodeloval je pri reviji *Acrocephalus* (1999–2012), in sicer kot član uredniškega odbora, pisec ali recenzent člankov. Nadvse rad in pogosto je dr. Martin Schneider-Jacoby Slovenijo predstavljal kot tranzicijski vzor na področju varstva narave in sodobne lovske zakonodaje.

Če smo povsem odkriti, je dr. Martin Schneider oblikoval usmeritve varstva ptic in narave v območju zahodnega Balkana več kot dve desetletji. Hkrati pa je postavil merila ter argumentirano zastopal varstvo ptic in narave tudi navzven. Kot projektni manager fundacije EuroNatur je še posebej podpiral ornitološke organizacije in posameznike in bil njihov mecen. Zadnja pot ga je vodila v Črno goro in Albanijo v začetku pomladi 2012. Tu so nastali njegovi zadnji presunljivi posnetki pobijanja ptic.

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Martin Schneider-Jacoby lived an unusually rich life. From his birthplace at Cuxhaven along the North Sea, the path of life led him further and further south: he completed his secondary schooling at Schwäbisch-Hall in Baden-Württemberg State, graduated from Konstanz University along Lake Bodensee, also married here, and eventually wrote his PhD thesis, entitled "Birds as indicators of the ecological potential of the Sava river floodplain and possibilities for its conservation" at Lonjsko polje (Croatia). From 1989 on, his name was inseparably associated with the EuroNatur foundation. As a highly educated and predestined ornithologist and nature conservationist with the knowledge of German, English, Serbian, Croatian and French languages and partial comprehension of some other languages, such as Slovenian and even Macedonian, doors of numerous countries, institutions and individuals were always wide open for him. He was particularly enthusiastic about the Western Balkans, the region that was totally ignored practically by everybody some twenty years ago. Before, during and after the wars, he did his best to help, in his unique way, the region's birds and nature in general. In this respect he was greatly aided by his perfect knowledge of the Western Balkans' history, from which he in fact obtained his doctorate as well. A very important role on his path towards the south was played by Prof Dr Gerhard Thielcke and Prof Dr Hartmut Ern as well as by the productive patronage of EuroNatur, the European Nature Heritage Fund.

Dr Martin Schneider-Jacoby was a man of immense span, unusual strength, ascetic needs and pure, razor sharp thoughts. He transported, for example, nest boxes for the Roller across the entire Balkans, placed them in Ulcinj salt pans, and then attended a meeting with the President of the country. He counselled the World Bank and on the same day helped, at the flooded pastures of Lonjsko polje, to herd domestic animals at these pastures, without which the Spoonbills could not have possibly survived. In the Buna delta he talked to shepherds about how to prevent hunting in the pastures, where colonial waterbirds feed massively and where thousands of waders stop to rest, while only half an hour later he began to delineate the future Ramsar site together with the highest state representatives in Shkodra. How he also managed to count the waterbirds and domestic animals in order to estimate the grazing impact, remains a mystery till this very day. At Livanjsko polje, he was surveying Corncrakes all night, then led a workshop in the morning hours with the minister and representatives of cantons for the protection of these birds. In the last decade of his life, he was focusing his endeavours on preventing illegal hunting and providing for safe areas along the globally important Mediterranean/Black Sea birds' migration route – particularly in its central part known as the Adriatic Flyway. The unimaginable hunting rage in Dalmatia, Montenegro and Albania brought the populations of Palearctic migratory birds into a virtually hopeless situation, or they have become extinct, as was the case of Slender-billed Curlew. If necessary, Dr Schneider-Jacoby placed himself, like at Hutovo Blato or Ulcinj salt pans, between birds and poachers. The result was surprising indeed, for many of these illegal hunters decided to abandon their hunting rage purely on the account of a direct, although humanly respectful approach. In general, it could be said that Dr Martin Schneider-Jacoby was an advocate and a spokesman of the Ramsar and Bonn Conventions (AEWA) and Biosphere Reserves (UNESCO) in the area where the development capital offered by nature was ignored owing to the current problems.

Through years, Schneider's extensive scientific work became more inclined towards conservation of natural (flooded) and cultural (grazing) ecosystems and justified conservation policy than to pure scientific writing. As a result of this process he prepared, for IUCN, a conservation strategy for the Balkan countries. He also decided to publish his texts locally – to address the locals. Several of the inspirationally prepared exhibitions in Slovenia (Drava - Mura,) Bosnia and Herzegovina (Livanjsko Polje), Croatia (Neretva Delta), Montenegro (Ulcinj Salina) and Albania (Buna Delta) describe his personal and actual conservation priorities of the Western Balkans. Something very special were particularly Martin's lectures, for he was a true master of interpretation. He enjoyed working with artists, such as Mrs and Mr Harrison from the United States. He perceived art as an obligatory component part of nature conservation. The ornithological biography and bibliography of Dr Martin Schneider-Jacoby will be presented in the journal *Ecology of Birds* in one of the future issues.

And what can be said about Dr Schneider-Jacoby in his association with Slovenia? With the first EuroNatur's project "Cerkniško jezero" (Lake Cerknica) in 1991/1992, he enabled, both in terms of the contents and material, an expansion of the project part of Slovenian ornithology – at a very crucial moment. Other projects followed. He set borders of Natura 2000 on the Drava and Mura Rivers and for the first time linked Slovenian nature conservation with economy at the congress entitled "The Drava - Mura Biosphere Reserve", held in 1996 at Radenci in an effort to preserve the riverine landscape of

both rivers. He collaborated with the journal *Acrocephalus* (1999–2012) as a member of the Editorial Board, and writer or peer reviewer of the journal's articles. Dr Martin Schneider-Jacoby loved presenting Slovenia as a transitional model in the sphere of nature conservation and modern hunting legislation.

Dr Martin Schneider was a true trendsetter in bird and nature conservation in the region of the Western Balkans for more than two decades. He set the criteria and represented, with argumentation, bird and nature conservation outwardly as well. As the Project Manager of the EuroNatur foundation he specifically supported ornithological organisations and individuals, acting as their patron at the same time. His last journey led him to Montenegro and Albania in early spring of 2012, where his last heart-rending photographs of birds being shot were taken.

BORUT STUMBERGER

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