

NEW DATA ON THE BIRDS OF PONOR MOUNTAINS, (W BULGARIA)

Novi podatki o pticah pogorja Ponor (Z Bolgarija)

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Up to year 2000 only fragmentary data about birds of the Ponor Mountain existed. After that more extensive studies were carried out. The bird species composition and status was determined by STOYANOV (2001) and breeding bird distribution and number by NIKOLOV (2003) and NIKOLOV & VASSILEV (2003 & 2004). The aim of the present study was to broaden the knowledge of bird species composition and status.



Figure 1: Location of the Ponor Mountains in Bulgaria

Slika 1: Položaj pogorja Ponor v Bolgariji

The Ponor Mountains is a part of the Western Stara Planina (STEFANOV 2002; Figure 1) and belongs to the continental moderate climatic zone (VULEV 1997). The study area comprises a total of 272 km² between 360 and 1601 m a.s.l. and borders to the west on the Ginska River, to the south on the Iskretska River; to the east on the Iskar River and abuts to north on the Koznica Mountains. The eastern border of the Ponor Mountains lies on the Via Aristotelis migration route. The major plant communities are formed by trees such as oak *Quercus* sp., hornbeam *Carpinus* sp. and Beech *Fagus sylvatica* (BONDEV 1991).

The present study was carried out during 8 years between 1996 and 2003, for a total of 115 days of

fieldwork. All habitats were visited and observations were made in all seasons. The status of species was described following SVENSSON *et al.* (2000) with some modifications: rB – resident breeding species: present during the whole year; mB – migratory breeding species: coming in spring, breeding in study area and migrating in autumn; P – passage visitor: present only during migration; W – winter visitor: present only during winter period; V – vagrant species: present occasionally, out of migration period and not breeding or wintering in the in the studied area; E – extinct species: conspicuous resident breeders in the study region, which were not proved for the present survey; NF – species with no fixed status: shy resident or migrating breeders, found during past works, but not observed during the present survey.

Till 2001 176 species were known for the Ponor Mountains (STOYANOV 2001). During the present study 9 species unrecorded before in the study area were found (Table 1).

As a final result the number of bird species observed in the Ponor Mountains is 185. Most of them are

Status of birds in the Ponor mountains

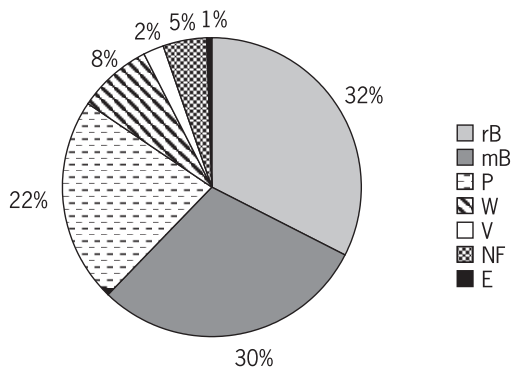


Figure 2: Proportion of different groups of birds according to their status in the Ponor Mountains (legend see text)

Slika 2: Delež skupin ptic glede na njihov status v pogorju Ponor (legenda glej tekst)

breeders – 115 species (NIKOLOV & VASSILEV 2004), where 60 are resident and 55 are migratory. The rest 70 species are not breeding in the study area: the passage visitors during spring and autumn migrations are 41, the winter visitors – 15, the vagrants – 4, these with no fixed status – 9 and there is 1 extinct species (Figure 2).

Table 1: New species found in the Ponor Mountains during the present survey, their status and observation details (abbreviations see text).**Tabela 1:** Nove vrste najdene med raziskavo v pogorju Ponor, njihov status in podrobnosti opazovanja (okrajšave glej tekst).

| Species / Vrsta | Status | Date / Datum | N | Location / Kraj |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------------------|-------------|--|
| <i>Circus pygargus</i> | P | 9 May 1999 | 1 male | 2 km north of Zimevitza village at 1400 m a.s.l. |
| <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> | P | 15 Oct 2000 | 1 | along the Iskar river near Svoге town |
| <i>Gallinula chloropus</i> | mB | Apr – Sep; 2001 & 2002 | 4 | small marsh along the Iskar river near Svoге town |
| <i>Alectoris chukar</i> | NF | | | according to the information from local rangers the Chukar was introduced in the region (Manastirishte area) for hunt in the 90s but it was not confirmed during the present study |
| <i>Aegolius funereus</i> | rB | Feb – Jun; 2000 & 2002 | 4 males | near Dobravitzza village in 2000 and near Brakyovtzi village in 2002 in Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> forest (NIKOLOV 2003). |
| <i>Apus pallida</i> | mB | May 2002 | 6 (3 pairs) | the hut Petrohan |
| <i>Anthus campestris</i> | mB | 24 Jun 2002 | 2 (pair) | northwest of Breze village |
| <i>Anthus pratensis</i> | P | 9 Apr 1999 | 3 | Zimevishki Kladenec valley |
| | | 15 Oct 2000 | 5 | Shiroki Val valley |
| <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i> | P | 15 Oct 2000 | 1 | outflow of Iskretska river |

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Povzetek

Članek prispeva nove podatke o sestavi in statusu nekaterih vrst ptic v pogorju Ponor, Z Bolgarija. Ugotovljenih je bilo devet novih vrst, obdobje raziskave pa je trajalo kar 8 let, opravljenih pa je bilo 115 terenskih dni med leti 1996 in 2003. Skupno število vrst tega območja se je tako povečalo s 176 na 185 vrst. Na pogorju gnezdi 115 vrst (60 stalnic in 55 selivk), ostale vrste pa so: 41 preletnih gostov, 15 zimskih gostov, 4 klateži, 1 izumrla vrsta in 9 vrst, ki imajo nejasen status.

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