

NOVE KNJIGE

New books

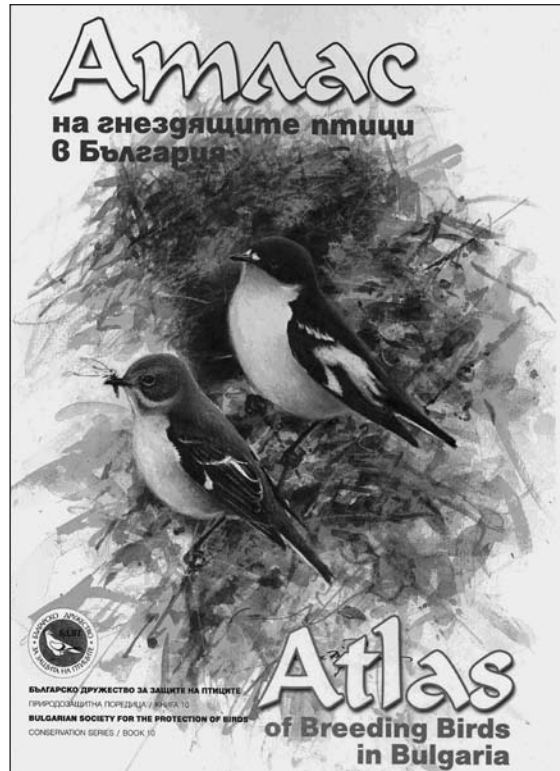
IANKOV, P. (ed.) (2007): **Atlas of Breeding Birds in Bulgaria. Conservation Series, Book 10.** – Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, Sofia. pp. 679.

The atlas is the first ever breeding atlas of the whole country to be produced by Bulgarian ornithologists. And there is no doubt that they can proudly put it side by side with the ornithological atlases of other nations.

It consists of a very detailed introduction section, which comprehensively presents technical and geographical terms, main goals and purpose of the atlas, history of atlases in Bulgaria, methods, species accounts and overview of results.

Species accounts are very detailed and leave little to be desired. The categories of conservation concern for Bulgaria, Europe and globally are presented, as well as species' legal status, estimated population size, estimated trends, distribution pattern, density pattern, historical changes, habitats and altitudinal range. The atlas is completely bilingual (Bulgarian and English), which greatly facilitates the understanding of a non-native reader. Two maps are presented: one concerns distribution, with circles in UTM squares denoting possible, probable and confirmed breeding, while the other denotes the estimated number of pairs in each UTM square. An illustration is added to each species account at a high artistic level. The book as a whole is very thoroughly produced and gives impression of a strong editors' hand. The texts are excellent, very informative and extremely detailed especially in the part describing historical changes in the population. The charts, too, are very clearly made. All the breeding species in Bulgaria are presented, including extinct (with historical records) and introduced species whose background is additionally explained. The atlas also has a function of historical comparison with the mentioned detailed accounts of historical background. The editorial board covered all the major scientific institutions in Bulgaria (academic and university).

If I were to point out any weaknesses of this magnificent book, I would mention the not so clear numbers (density) charts. Since they have no legend,



it is difficult to find out the scale (numbers range) of different sizes of squares. Moreover, the methodology is difficult to find in the voluminous introductory section. The maps would be clearer if they were »self-standing« i.e. with titles and legends. This, however, is just a minor complaint. There is no doubt this is a milestone work, which will be used as a starting point and comparison for any future conservation and atlas work. It is also a very useful handbook for day-to-day conservation work and a stimulus for further work on Bulgarian avifauna. Being aware of the huge amount of organisational, scientific and editorial work done in sometimes not so favourable circumstances, we can only congratulate our colleagues from BSPB for this excellent result.

I thank Nada Tosheva (Executive Director of BSPB) for the copy of the book (although the luggage was indeed pretty heavy!).

Primož Kmecl