

## A REVIEW OF THE OBSERVATIONS OF GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO *Clamator glandarius* IN BULGARIA IN 2006 AND 2007

### Pregled opazovanj čopaste kukavice *Clamator glandarius* v Bolgariji v letih 2006 in 2007

STOYAN CH. NIKOLOV<sup>1</sup>, LYUBOMIR PROFIROV<sup>2</sup>,  
GEORGI GERDJKOV<sup>3</sup> & DIMITAR GRADINAROV<sup>4</sup>

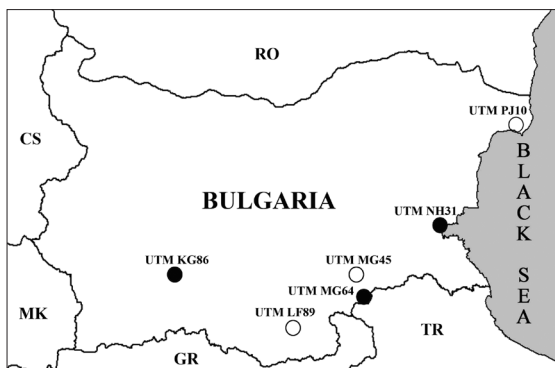
<sup>1</sup> Central Laboratory of General Ecology/  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 2 Gagarin  
Str., BG-1113 Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail:  
nikolov100yan@abv.bg

<sup>2</sup> Ecological Consultant & Wildlife Tourguide,  
Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: lovebird@techno-link.  
com

<sup>3</sup> Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds,  
Plovdiv, Bulgaria, e-mail: sakarbirds@yahoo.com

<sup>4</sup> Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds,  
Sofia, Bulgaria, e-mail: dimitaski@abv.bg

In Bulgaria, the Great Spotted Cuckoo is a rare and poorly studied species (NANKINOV *et al.* 1997) with a very small population consisting of 5 to 15 breeding pairs (KOSTADINOVA & GRAMATIKOV 2007). Presented below are several findings of the species during the breeding season in the last two years (Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** Observation sites of the Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* in Bulgaria in 2006 and 2007. Open circles (○) represent observations in 2006, full circles (●) in 2007.

**Slika 1:** Lokacije opazovanj čopaste kukavice *Clamator glandarius* v Bolgariji v letih 2006 in 2007. Beli krožci ponazarjajo opazovanja v letu 2006, črni v letu 2007.



**Figure 2:** Great Spotted Cuckoo *Clamator glandarius* in 1<sup>st</sup> summer plumage observed on 23 May 2007 in Besaparski Hills (UTM KG86), southern central Bulgaria (photo: D. Gradinarov)

**Slika 2:** Čopasta kukavica *Clamator glandarius* v prvem letnem perju, opazovana 23.5.2007 na Besaparskih gričih (UTM KG86), južna osrednja Bolgarija (foto: D. Gradinarov)

On 11 May 2006, a single bird was observed flying around a Poplar *Populus* sp. tree along the River Krumovitzta near the village Dolna Kula (UTM LF89), Eastern Rhodopes. So far, the species was registered in this region occasionally in 1993 (K. RUSKOV *unpubl.*) and 1994. On 13–15 May 2006, two birds were observed in the region of Kavarna town, between Cape Kaliakra and Bulgarevo village (UTM PJ10) (V. KATRANDEJIEV & P. SIMEONOV *unpubl.*). The observation was made in an Important Bird Area for Bulgaria (KOSTADINOVA & GRAMATIKOV 2007), and till now the species has not been reported for this north-eastern region of the country (SOLER & MILCHEV 1997). On 9 Jun 2006, an adult bird was observed south-west of Topolovgrad town (UTM MG45), Sakar Mountains (A. IGNATOV *unpubl.*). On 24 Apr of the ensuing year, a pair of Great Spotted Cuckoos was registered 1.5 km south-east of Filipovo village (UTM MG64), in the same region. At 19.00 h, the birds chased each other from tree to tree, displaying high rate of vocalization. The observation was made in comparatively open landscape with small groups of trees, shrubs and dispersed fields of tobacco and cereals. So far, the species has not been reported for the area (MILCHEV & KOVACHEV 1998). On 23 May 2007, three Great Spotted Cuckoos were observed in Besaparski Hills (UTM KG86), southern central Bulgaria. One among them was an adult individual, while the other two were 1<sup>st</sup> summer birds (SVENSSON *et al.* 1999; Figure 2). During the observation, the Great Spotted Cuckoos behaved vigorously and



**Figure 3:** A courtship display between the 1<sup>st</sup> summer Great Spotted Cuckoos *Clamator glandarius*, as one of them approached the other by offering it a caught caterpillar, observed on 23 May 2007 in Besaparski Hills (UTM KG86), southern central Bulgaria (photo: D. Gradinarov)

**Slika 3:** Dvorjenje med čopastimi kukavicami *Clamator glandarius* v prvem letnem perju – ena je ponudila drugi ujeto gosenico; opazovane 23.5.2007 na Besaparskih gričih (UTM KG86), južna osrednja Bolgarija (foto: D. Gradinarov)

displayed high rate of vocalisation. They kept close to the vineyards and their surroundings and often perched on the lower branches of the neighbouring scrubs. A courtship display was observed between the 1<sup>st</sup> summer birds, as one of them approached the other by offering it a caught caterpillar (CRAMP 1985; Figure 3). We confirmed this locality as a potential breeding site for the species, considering that it had been found in the same area during the breeding season 3 years earlier, but then a single individual was observed and breeding was not confirmed (NIKOLOV *et al.* 2004). Between 28 Apr and 10 Jun 2007, two Great Spotted Cuckoos were often registered in the south-western part of Lake Atanasovsko (UTM NH31), in the region of Bourgas city (K. BEDEV *unpubl.*). The birds were flying around several nests of Magpie *Pica pica*, but young individuals were not found. The breeding of Great Spotted Cuckoo was confirmed in the Bourgas region, UTM LH12, in 2003 (BEDEV 2003), but near Lake Atanasovsko the species was recorded only once – in May 1996 (MICHEV *et al.* 2004).

### Povzetek

Avtorji podajajo kratek pregled opazovanj čopaste kukavice *Clamator glandarius* v gnezditvenem obdobju v letih 2006 in 2007 v Bolgariji. Lokacije opazovanj so bile: 11.5.2006, Dolna Kula, vzhodni Rodopi, UTM LF89, 1 os.; 13.–15.5.2006, mesto Kavarna, UTM PJ10, 2 os.; 9.6.2006, JZ od Topolovgrada, UTM MG45, 1 os.; 24.4.2007, JV od Filipova, UTM MG64,

2 os.; 23.5.2007, Besaparski griči, UTM KG86, 3 os. (1 ad. in 2 v prvem letnem perju), opazovano dvorjenje med čopastimi kukavicami v prvem letnem perju; ena je ponudila drugi ujeto gosenico; 28.4.–10.6.2007, Atanasovsko jezero, UTM NH31, 2 os.

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