

Second International Meeting SOS *Proteus*. »Conservation of black *Proteus* and its habitat – 30 years after its discovery« / Drugi mednarodni posvet SOS *Proteus*. »Varstvo črne človeške ribice in njenega habitata – 30 let po odkritju«

Gregor ALJANČIČ¹, Magdalena NĂPĂRUȘ-ALJANČIČ¹, Peter TRONTELJ²

¹Tular Cave Laboratory, Society for Cave Biology, Oldhamska c. 8a, SI-4000 Kranj, Slovenia;
E-mails: gregor.aljancic@guest.arnes.si, magda.aljancic@gmail.com

²Department of Biology, Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana, Jamnikarjeva 101, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia;
E-mail: peter.trontelj@bf.uni-lj.si

Upon the 30th anniversary of the discovery of the black proteus (*Proteus anguinus parkelj*), the Tular Cave Laboratory (Society for Cave Biology) organised the second International Meeting SOS *Proteus*. »Conservation of the black *Proteus* and its habitat – 30 years after its discovery«, held on 10.–11. 12. 2016 in Črnomelj, Bela krajina, Slovenia.

The first day of the meeting gathered 72 researchers and experts on proteus, speleobiology, karstology, herpetology, conservation and public outreach from Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Hungary, Germany, Portugal and Romania. The keynote lecture with the title »The black cave salamander (*Proteus anguinus parkelj*) – its history and some other curiosities« was held by Prof. Boris Sket. The program of the meeting was divided into four sessions (Habitat and Ecology; Veterinary and Developmental Studies; Conservation and Field Research; Discussions, Conclusions and Next Steps) and included 13 presentations of the latest findings in the field of research and conservation of proteus and threats to karst groundwater. The presentation part of the meeting was concluded by two short documentaries on the vulnerability of proteus (Tular 2016).

In the closing session, participants joined a discussion on current environmental problems in the habitat of the black proteus. Niko Šuštarčič, Andrej Hudoklin and Gregor Aljančič presented the initiative of the Society Proteus on the urgent protective measures in the proteus habitat in Bela krajina, which was submitted to the Slovenian Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning. The discussion was centred on the most critical threats such as the overuse of biogas-slurry, in search for solutions and advices with the help of the assembled international audience.

The second day of the meeting was dedicated to the public presentation of threats to the black proteus and sources of drinking water in Bela krajina. The general public and media were invited to a short presentation of arguments and to participate in discussions on the urgent protective measures in the affected area habitat of black proteus and the most

important source of drinking water for Bela krajina. The public hearing was attended by 35 participants.



Figure 1. Participants of the 2nd International Meeting SOS *Proteus*: »Conservation of the black *Proteus* and its habitat – 30 years after its discovery«, first day (photo: Boris Grabrijan).

Slika 1. Udeleženci 2. Mednarodnega posveta SOS *Proteus*: »Varstvo črne človeške ribice in njenega habitata – 30 let po odkritju«, prvi dan (foto: Boris Grabrijan).

At the meeting the assembly honoured Professors Boris Sket, Boris Bulog and Dušan Plut for their outstanding contributions to the study and conservation of the black proteus and its habitat.

Extended abstracts of most lectures are presented on the following pages of this issue of *Natura Sloveniae*.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank the honourable host of the meeting, Mrs Mojca Čemas Stjepanovič, the Mayor of Črnomelj. We also thank the Society Proteus, Museum Collection of Črnomelj, and the Zupančič family for their support in the organisation of the meeting.

The 2nd International Meeting SOS *Proteus* was supported by the Slovenian Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning (2550-16-300010) in partnership with the Societas Herpetologica Slovenica and the Slovenian Odonatological Society.

References

Tular (2016): Program of the 2nd International Meeting »SOS *Proteus*: Conservation of black *Proteus* and its habitat – 30 years after its discovery«. Tular Cave Laboratory, Society for Cave Biology, Kranj, 4 pp. http://www.tular.si/images/Tular_docs/SOS_Proteus_2016_Program.pdf [accessed on 11. 5. 2016]