

NOTES AND SPECIES LIST
OF OBSERVED BIRDS
ROMANIA - JULY 1978

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&
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Introduction

From June 27 to July 17, 1978 we, Pim Bauwens, Loet Bauwens and Janmartin Rahder, visited Romania on holiday by car, leaving the Netherlands on June 25. On June 27, we crossed the Romanian border at Oradea and drove via Cluj, Teius, Alba Iulia, Sebeş, Sibiu and Pitesti to Bucureşti (Bucharest), where we stayed. The detour on the final stretch of this journey was due to a broken-up road and led us through the valley of the river Olt in the southern Carpathians. A number of larger tours were undertaken from Bucharest, including on June 29 the former Lake Calarasi (drained and cultivated); on July 1 Baneasa (the Canaras); on July 2 and 3 the Black Sea coast, Dobrogea from Mangalia via Constanta and Histria to Tulcea; on July 6 Lacul Oltina; on July 12-13 the Danube Delta (Tulcea, Sulina canal and hotel Lebada at Crişan) and once again Histria, followed on July 14 by the Muntii Greçi (Greçi Mountains). On other days we made smaller trips in the vicinity of the capital. On July 17 we left for the Netherlands via Ploeşti - Brasov - Sibiu - Alba Iulia etc. We were back home on July 19.

In all we did not go birdwatching very intensively, but certainly enough to get a good impression of the richness in species and the occurrence of birds in Romania. In addition, we were lucky enough to be able to pay a few visits to Mr Matei Talpeanu of the Natural History Museum "Grigore Antipa" in Bucharest. Mr Talpeanu has an expert knowledge of Romanian avifauna and he told us many interesting facts and gave us many tips at our request. Many of these we followed up, others we were not able to. It would however be a pity not to include all of the information received, and so we combined the latter with our own impressions resulting in a report which is hopefully as informative as possible. Our report thus includes some species we did not see ourselves, either because we did not visit the appropriate area or habitat, or because it was too late in the season, as for example in the case of songbirds. On other species no information could be retrieved, often because we simply did not take notes. At least 153 species were observed in total.

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SPECIES DISCUSSION on the basis of our own observations as well as notes of conversations with Mr M. Talpeanu (MT), ornithologist and as "muzeograv" associated with the natural history museum "Grigore Antipa" in Bucharest and Mr M. Butculescu (MB), hunter and our guide for a few days.

CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Impression: not very common, mainly seen in the Delta. Is hunted for alleged damage to fish stocks (MT).

PYGMY CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*

Impression: fairly common to common regarding the Delta, no observations were made elsewhere. They used to be seen at Lake Calarași, but this area has been drained for agricultural activities (MT). These birds are hunted heavily for the same reason as mentioned for the Cormorant and also to be sold in a stuffed form in the tax-free shops to tourists (including at the Delta hotel in Tulcea: \$10.00). Observed very regularly in the Delta on July 12 and 13, usually in flights of 10-15 exx.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus*

Some observations not specified, Delta.

RED-NECKED GREBE - *Podiceps griseigena*

One pair with young observed on July 6 at a marshy lake along the road past Ostrov, 26 km before Baneasa coming from the west.

LITTLE GREBE - *Podiceps ruficollis*

Some observations in a dead branch of the Danube before the Calarași ferry on June 29.

WHITE PELICAN - *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

On July 3 at Histria, hundreds foraging and later flying to the northwest. Also, on July 3 birds in flight near Sinoe. In the Delta on July 12 and 13 seen regularly, mostly soaring rather high, in not too large groups, mostly about ten. On July 14, several hundred soaring rather high over the mountains in the Macin area near Greçi, direction SSW. Breeds in quite large numbers (in the Delta?) (MT).

DALMATIAN PELICAN - *Pelecanus crispus*

On July 6, one immature in flight at a marshy lake along the road between Ostrov and Baneasa (26 km before Baneasa coming from the west), with some other birds on the lake probably also this species. These birds likely to be immatures from Bulgaria. (MT). Also breeds in the Delta, but not observed there by us.

BITTERN - *Botaurus stellaris*

Not observed.

LITTLE BITTERN - *Ixobrychus minutus*

Fairly common to common in the Delta and at densely vegetated lakes along the Danube (such as the one 26 km before Baneasa coming by road from Ostrov in the west), sometimes in small areas occurring in very high densities by Dutch standards.

LITTLE EGRET – *Egretta garzetta*

Common along the Danube and in the Delta, including along the lakes of the Razelm complex and at Histria.

GREAT WHITE EGRET - *Egretta alba*

Less common than the previous species. Except at the nesting sites in the Delta, nowhere occurring in larger groups. Mostly seen are solitary birds. Observations on July 3 at Histria (a few), on July 12 and 13 along the Sulina canal and at Crisan in the Delta (some tens), and on July 14 at Rachelu (two).

SQUACCO HERON - *Ardeola ralloides*

The most common heron, certainly in the Delta. Also hunted for purpose of sale to tourists. A mounted specimen will cost \$10.00. More concealed than Little Egret (as Little Bittern), but at times found foraging in large numbers at open marshy sites, mostly together with Glossy Ibises. A marshy lake 26 km before Baneasa coming from Ostrov in the west is also a good site.

GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea*

Not common. In total some ten solitary birds seen, in the Delta, at Histria and underway from Bucharest to Calarați, on boggy pastures. Also hunted for "damage to fish stocks".

PURPLE HERON - *Ardea purpurea*

Not common, but commoner than Grey Heron. Mainly along the Danube, in the Delta and at the Razelm complex.

NIGHT HERON - *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Widespread along the Danube, also at smaller waters. Encountered in any swampy area or lake, even to within the city limits of Bucharest. In the Delta occurring in roughly the same density as Squacco Heron, but otherwise more widespread than this.

GLOSSY IBIS - *Plegadis falcinellus*

Occurs in flocks of 5-20 birds at similar sites as Little Egret. Observed on July 1 at a marshy lake 26 km before Baneasa coming from Ostrov in the west (in flight), on July 3 at Histria (a very few), and on July 12 and 13 in the Delta (very many). In total hundreds seen.

WHITE STORK - *Ciconia ciconia*

Widespread. One or more occupied nests in every village, certainly in the whole of eastern Romania.

BLACK STORK - *Ciconia nigra*

Not seen. Breeds in the forest of Babadag and can be seen between this forest and the Delta, flying over and foraging (MT).

SPOONBILL - *Platalea leucoradia*

Only in the Delta. On July 12/13 at MILA 18 a group of 16 birds, and between MILA 18 and Crișan another few solitary birds seen. At Lacul Zmeica there is a breeding colony of approximately 30 pairs.

MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor*

Unspecified number seen at Histria.

GREYLAG GOOSE - *Anser anser*

Hundreds seen at Histria on July 13. In the Delta on July 12/13 some birds flying over.

MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos*

Not very common.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD - *Netta rufina*

One female-type seen in vast reedbed at Enisala (along Razelm) on July 3, level with the ruins.

POCHARD - *Aythya ferina*

Some ten birds on a small lake, south of Constanta on July 2.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK - *Aythya nyroca*

Only one bird observed on the same lake on the same day as mentioned under Pochard.

SHELDUCK - *Tadorna tadorna*

Several birds seen at Histria on July 3.

RUDDY SHELDUCK - *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two birds seen at Histria on July 3. The fact that we encountered them here may point to a non-breeding year. Vasiliu in BWP Volume 1 mentions 20-25 pairs for the whole of Romania. According to MT does not breed every year (as far as the Delta and surrounding area are concerned). Usually on the Insula Popina in the Lacul Razelm.

WHITE-HEADED DUCK - *Oxyura leucocephala*

Not seen. Passage migrant. 100% certain to be observed in December and January on Lacul Techirchiol, south of Constanta. This is a very salty lake that does not freeze over in winter. Very rare as a breeding bird, one nest found with one young about 25 years ago.

OSPREY - *Pandion haliaetus*

Not seen. Only three breeding cases ever, most recently in 1963 in the forest of Letea, a lianas forest.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE - *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Not seen. According to MT, several pairs breed in the Dobrogea, including 1 pair in the forest of Letea.

BLACK KITE - *Milvus migrans*

Breeds along the entire Danube. Observations: two on July 2 in the Baneasa area; three on July 3 between Baneasa and Constanta; three on July 12 between Tulcea and Crişan.

SHORT-TOED EAGLE – *Circaëtus gallicus*

One very probable sighting on July 1 in the Canaras near Baneasa; one very pale bird on July 6 at Lacul Oltina, seen catching and flying off with a snake. Other good chances of sighting in the hills around the Cocos monastery (south of Isaccea) and around Babadag.

SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus*

One seen on July 17 at Comarnic in the Carpathians. According to MT, in Romania the Levant Sparrowhawk is the lowland species, whereas Sparrowhawk breeds only in the mountainous forests of the Carpathians.

LEVANT SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter brevipes*

One male was observed on July 1 in the Canaras near Baneasa, before the middle of the valley, carrying nesting material. Later that day we saw the bird once again, though less well this time. There is only one previous breeding record in the entire southern part of the Dobrogea. This was in 1966, also in the Canaras. A sparrowhawk seen in the Dobrogea will practically invariably turn out to be a Levant. This of course applies only to the summer months (MT).

BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo buteo*

Some observations from the Carpathians and the Dobrogea.

STEPPE BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo vulpinus*

The majority of Buzzard observations concerned this subspecies. Some observations in the Carpathians (June 27 at Sebes), also in the Dobrogea and especially around the Mts. Greçi (July 14 at Cocos).

HONEY BUZZARD - *Pernis apivorus*

Some observations from the Carpathians and the Dobrogea, almost exclusively pale birds. Observed on June 27 at Sebeş and a further two in the Olt valley area; on July 1 three in the Canaras near Baneasa; on July 6 a pair at Oltina.

BOOTED EAGLE - *Hieraetus pennatus*

Impression: fairly common in the Dobrogea in arid hills, though also hunting in wet environments, e.g. on July 3 one over the reedbed at Enisala (along Razelm, but directly bordering a dry barren slope) and on July 13 one in the Delta over the Sulina canal at the junction with the St Gheorge branch. Of a total of ten birds observed, only one was a dark phase, the remainder light phase. Further observations: on July 1 one along the road 8 km before Baneasa coming from the west and a pair in the Canaras; on July

14 one at Cocos, a pair at Niculitel, one in the Greçi area, and one (the dark phase bird) in the Ciucurova area.

GOLDEN EAGLE - *Aquila chrysaetos*

Not seen. Rare breeding bird in the Carpathians: "a pair here and there", e.g. Bucegi Mts (MT).

IMPERIAL EAGLE - *Aquila heliaca*

Several pairs breed in the north of the Dobrogea, e.g. in the vicinity of the Monasterium Cocoş. Two birds observed: an immature at Sinoe on July 3, and a juvenile on July 13 approximately 1 km south of Tulcea airfield, both flying over open plain.

SPOTTED EAGLE - *Aquila clanga*

Not seen. Only occurs in Romania on migration (MT).

LESSER SPOTTED EAGLE - *Aquila pomarina*

Fairly common, especially in the Carpathians. In total eleven birds observed: one between Cluj and Oradea, one at Sebeş, one at Christian, a pair at Titeşti in the Olt valley area in the S-Carpathians, all while journeying on June 27; on July 3 one at Ciamurla de Jos, and on July 12 one at Topolog, both in the Dobrogea; On the return journey to the Netherlands (this time through the N-Carpathians) on July 17 one at Persani, one at Apoldu de Sus, one at Paniceni and one at Beclean.

EGYPTIAN VULTURE - *Neophron percnopterus*

Not seen. Formerly occurred regularly in the Dobrogea, but has disappeared following the laying out of poisoned carrion against wolves and foxes. An encounter in the Canaras is however not an entire impossibility. This species can still be observed in the area of the Iron Gates at the border with Yugoslavia, between Orşova and Şviniza, in the Canyons (MT).

BLACK VULTURE and **GRIFFON VULTURE**: also disappeared from Romania, apart from a single sporadic observation. Same cause as with Egyptian vulture.

MARSH HARRIER - *Circus aeruginosus*

Seen, not specified.

PALLID HARRIER - *Circus macrourus*

Not seen. Occurs in the Dobrogea, with chances of observation in the steppe areas of the Dobrogea, south of the Delta.

SAKER FALCON - *Falco cherrug*

A summer sighting of a large falcon in the Dobrogea will invariably turn out to be a Saker Falcon; the Peregrine Falcon does not breed there. Saker Falcon breeds in forests near open plains and water. Is also a ground hunter and mainly hunts European Souselik. Good places for observation are the Monasterium Cocoş. The Saker Falcon always breeds less than approx. 10 km from the Danube in abandoned nests of White-tailed or Imperial Eagle and the like, because it does not build nests itself (MT). Not seen in spite of an extensive search.

RED-FOOTED FALCON - *Falco vespertinus*

Normally breeds colonially in abandoned nests of Rooks. One male observed on June 29, 10 km along the road from Slobozia to Calarasi. A colony of some ten pairs (but certainly 6 or 7) was observed along the E15, 34 km east of Slobozia at a military site (rocket base) on July 12.

HOBBY - *Falco subbuteo*

Some observations in the Carpathians and some in the Dobrogea. On July 6 one at Lacul Oltina, and one in the Delta on July 12/13. Throughout our stay a bird here and there.

LESSER KESTREL - *Falco naumanni*

Not seen. Very rare in the Dobrogea: one nest found at Monasterium Cocoș. At the Iron Gates near the village of Svinita, 100% chances of observation. There is a colony in this village, 30 km southwest of Orșova (MT).

KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus*

Multiple observations, not specified.

HAZEL GROUSE - *Tetrastes bonasia*

Not seen. Not rare in the Carpathians, but difficult to find. Above an altitude of 1000 meters in mixed forests. In September can be lured with call (MT).

CAPERCAILLIE - *Tetrao urogallus*

Not seen. In the Carpathians, high mountains. Best months are April and May: courtship display.

ROCK PARTRIDGE - *Alectoris graeca*

Not seen. Breeds at the Iron Gates, west of Orșova.

GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix*

Some seen at Histria.

QUAIL - *Coturnix coturnix*

Common in the Dobrogea (MB). Advertising male heard on July 3 at Ciamurla de Jos.

PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus*

Fairly common, not specified.

CRANE - *Grus grus*

Not seen. Breeds very rarely in the Delta, but on migration in October can sometimes be seen in 1000s in the Razelm complex (MT).

GREAT BUSTARD - *Otis tarda*

Not seen. Has declined sharply. Less than 100 pairs still breed west of Bucharest, between the capital and the Olt river on the Campia Boiana. Later in the season there is little chance of sighting them due to the high-standing crop in which they reside. In winter larger numbers can be seen on the plains of the Dobrogea, these are Russian birds. The species is still hunted (MT, MB).

LITTLE BUSTARD - *Tetrax tetrax*

Disappeared from Romania as a breeding bird. Can still be observed during the migrating season (MT).

WATER RAIL - *Rallus aquaticus*

No information.

SPOTTED CRAKE - *Porzana porzana*

Not seen or heard. According to MT, common in the Delta and elsewhere.

LITTLE CRAKE - *Porzana parva*

Not observed. Possibility of hearing this species at night in the Delta (MT).

BAILLON'S CRAKE – *Porzana pusilla*

Not observed. Rarer than Little Crake according to MT.

CORNCRAKE - *Crex crex*

Advertising male heard in the early morning of June 27 in a grassland between hills along the road from Cluj to Oradea.

MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus*
Impression: fairly common species.

COOT - *Fulica atra*
Impression: fairly common species.

OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus*.
Observed, no specifications.

AVOCET - *Recurvirostra avosetta*
One or two seen at Histria on July 13. Breeds in small numbers, e.g. 4 pairs at Bei-Bugeac near Popul.

BLACK-WINGED STILT - *Himantopus himantopus*
Some ten seen at Histria on July 3. Breeds at Murighiol, Histria, Techirchiol and other places (MT).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius*
A number seen along the Black Sea coastal tideline at Constanta on July 2.

KENTISH PLOVER - *Charadrius alexandrinus*
Seen by the sea along the Black Sea coast near Jupiter and Saturn on July 2.

GREY PLOVER - *Pluvialis squatarola*
One seen at Histria on July 13. Passage migrant.

DOTTEREL - *Eudromias morinellus*
Not seen. On a plateau in the mountains near Sibiu occurs as a breeding bird at an altitude of more than 2000 m. Nests among the stones amidst the lichen *S. islandica*. Presumably a relict from the last ice age (MT).

LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus*
Fairly commonly seen, though less than in the Netherlands. Not specified.

BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER - *Limicola falcinellus*
One in summer plumage seen on July 13 at Histria, amidst 21 Curlew Sandpipers. During migration in August, large numbers are recorded along the entire Black Sea coast (MT).

CURLEW SANDPIPER - *Calidris ferruginea*
21 seen on July 13 at Histria, in summer and transitional plumage.

LITTLE STINT - *Calidris minuta*
One seen at Histria on July 3.

REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus*
Multiple observations from the Delta and Histria. Numbers not specified.

GREENSHANK - *Tringa nebularia*
Regular observations mainly from the Delta and Histria, mostly involving solitary individuals.

MARSH SANDPIPER - *Tringa stagnatilis*
Not seen. Rare breeding bird. Found breeding 15 years ago approx. 5 km south of Murighiol, in a small marsh at Bei-Bugeac. Occurs more frequently on migration (MT).

COMMON SANDPIPER – *Actitis hypoleucos*
Many observations, mainly from the Delta on July 12/13.

WOOD SANDPIPER - *Tringa glareola*
Multiple birds seen at Histria.

GREEN SANDPIPER - *Tringa ochropus*

Regularly observed in the Delta on July 12/13, numbers not specified.

RUFF - *Philomachus pugnax*

Some sightings at Histria on July 3. Some males still reasonably well in summer plumage.

SLENDER-BILLED CURLEW - *Numenius tenuirostris*

Not seen. According to MT, it is a rare passage migrant.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT - *Limosa limosa*

Many observations from the Delta on July 12/13.

STONE CURLEW - *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Breeds at many localities, such as Murichiol, Histria and Insula Popina. Only one sighting: one at Histria on July 13.

BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE - *Glareola nordmanni*

Breeds alongside Collared Pratincole in colonies, including at Histria. This species reaches its westernmost range here. Not observed.

COLLARED PRATINCOLE - *Glareola pratincola*

Breeds near brackish or salt water, among other places at Histria, Bei-Bugeac and Insula Popina. Also present in winter (MT). Six birds seen on July 3 at Histria (as well as a not specifically identified *Glareola* on July 13).

SLENDER-BILLED GULL - *Larus genei*

Unfortunately, not seen. Should be observable in summer at Lacul Zmeica (Razelm complex). See under Mediterranean Gull.

BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus*

Widespread.

LITTLE GULL - *Larus minutus*

Multiple adult and immature birds seen at Histria on July 3.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL - *Larus melanocephalus*

On July 2 we witnessed a continuous southward migration of huge numbers along the entire Black Sea coast, including the port of Constanta. This involved mainly adult birds flying offshore at some distance in groups of about ten. Apart from this, three birds were seen at Histria on July 13.

The species breeds alongside Slender-billed Gull at Histria. The eggs are collected by fishermen for consumption and the manufacture of soap.

CASPIAN GULL - *Larus cachinnans*

With hindsight, many of the observations not specifically identified as (adult) Yellow-legged Gull may have involved this species, such as some observations from the Delta on July 12 and 13, along the Bratul Sulina.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL - *Larus michahellis*

The majority of observations from the Delta (mainly along the large river branches) on July 12 and 13 concerned this species, but no more than some ten. Not specifically identified within this group but likely to have been this species, were the gulls occurring commonly in the Black Sea ports, where they nest on rooftops.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus*

Some sightings at Histria on July 3.

GULL-BILLED TERN - *Gelochelidon nilotica*

At least 4 ad. and 1 juv. seen at Histria on July 13. Breeds there and also on the Sahalin peninsula, south of St. George. This is however a military area which is guarded by border troops, making it impossible to enter this area without a permit.

CASPIAN TERN - *Hydroprogne caspia*

Not seen. Does not breed along the Black Sea coast, mostly concerned are Russian birds on migration. Good chances of observation in the Razelm complex (MT).

COMMON TERN - *Sterna hirundo*

Multiple observations from the Delta and Histria.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

Multiple birds seen at Histria on July 3.

BLACK TERN - *Chlidonias niger*

Widespread in the Delta and in marshes along the Danube.

WHISKERED TERN - *Chlidonias hybrida*

Same as Black Tern, but more common than this species. A good place for observation is a marshy lake along the road between Ostrov and Baneasa (26 km before Baneasa coming from the west), where they nest and forage right beside the road. Many were seen here on July 1 and 6, as in the Delta on July 12 and 13.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN - *Chlidonias leucopterus*

Two at the most seen in the Delta at MILA 18 on July 12, among Black Terns.

WOOD PIGEON - *Columba palumbus*

Widespread.

COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*

Widespread, especially in the villages and towns.

TURTLE DOVE - *Streptopelia turtur*

Widespread.

CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus*

Heard several times while travelling through the Carpathians on June 27. Otherwise sparsely observed.

EAGLE OWL - *Bubo bubo*

Breeding bird in the Dobrogea: Gura Dobroge (halfway between Tulcea and Constanta, turn left and drive approx. 10 km into the area). Also, in the Canaras near Baneasa. On July 1 as evening was approaching, we repeatedly heard harsh cries here from a wooded rocky outcrop approx. 2 km past the stone-quarry on the left-hand side, which we ascribed to this species.

SCOPS OWL - *Otus scops*

Quite common in the parks of the capital, amongst others. Tape luring proved unsuccessful, probably due to the late time in the season.

LITTLE OWL - *Athena noctua*

Several observations, including in the parks of Bucharest (tape lured). Further seen on July 3 at ruins at both Histria and Enisala, and on July 13 at Tulcea.

TENGMALM'S OWL - *Aegolius funereus*

Not seen. Breeds in the eastern Carpathians.

URAL OWL - *Strix uralensis*

Not seen. Possibly still breeds in the northern Carpathians. Furthermore, occurring throughout the Carpathians in winter (MT).

SWIFT - *Apus apus*

Widespread.

ALPINE SWIFT - *Apus melba*

Breeds at the Iron Gates (Ieșelnita) and in the Canaras near Baneasa, among other places. We saw 11 birds at the last mentioned locality on July 1 at the end of the valley.

BEE-EATER - *Merops apiaster*

Widespread in the Dobrogea. Locally numerous and otherwise scattered. Seen for example at Calarasi (one on June 29, but more on a later date); a colony of some ten pairs near Ostrov along the road from Calarași on July 1, followed by many on the road to Baneasa and in the Canaras that same day.

ROLLER - *Coracias garrulus*

Widespread in the Dobrogea. Locally numerous and otherwise scattered. Seen for example at Calarasi on June 29 (at least five); many on the road to Baneasa and in the Canaras on July 1; some in the Delta on July 12/13.

KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis*

Two pairs nesting in the vicinity of hotel Lebada at Crișan in the Delta on July 12/13.

HOOPOE - *Upupa epops*

Widespread throughout Romania. Locally numerous and otherwise scattered. Seen for example on June 27 at Teius (Alba Iulia, two) and at Christian (three); one on the road to Calarasi on June 29; many on the road to Baneasa and in the Canaras on July 1; some in the Delta on July 12/13.

BLACK WOODPECKER - *Dryocopus martius*

Not seen. Breeds in the Carpathians and in the forest of Babadag (among other places).

GREY-HEADED WOODPECKER - *Picus canus*

Quite common in moist woods. Observed on July 1 a family in the Canaras near Baneasa; on July 12 one along the E15 at Guirgeni; on July 12/13 several in the vicinity of hotel Lebada at Crișan in the Delta.

GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis*

Some observations from the Carpathians, not specified.

SYRIAN WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopus syriacus*

Common in the woods, city parks and villages of southeastern Romania. Perhaps especially near human settlements. First observed was one in the Olt valley area while journeying on June 27, followed by countless observations in Bucharest, on the road to Calarasi on June 29, and so on.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopus major*

Some observations from, among other places, the woods around the Cocoș Monastery on July 14.

MIDDLE SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopus medius*

Not seen, despite its common occurrence in the drier forests (MT).

WHITE-BACKED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopus leucotos lilfordi*

An ordinary apparition in, among other places, the forests of Babadag (MT). One sighting: one in the vicinity of hotel Lebada at Crisan in the Delta on July 12.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopus minor*

Common. Some observed in the Olt valley area in the southern Carpathians on June 27.

THREE-TOED WOODPECKER - *Picoides tridactylus*

Not seen. Small chances of observation in mountainous woods of, among other places, the Carpathians.

WRYNECK - *Jynx torquilla*

One sighting: one in the Olt valley area in the southern Carpathians on June 27.

SHORE LARK - *Eremophila alpestris balcanica*

Not seen. Breeds in the Carpathians.

Eremophila alpestris flava: Can be observed in winter, mainly in lower lying areas.

SHORT-TOED LARK - *Calandrella brachydactyla*

Common in the Dobrogea, cereal lands. Two observed at Histria on July 3.

CALANDRA LARK - *Melanocorypha calandra*

Common in the Dobrogea. Often seen singing above cereal lands. Multiple observations in the whole of the Dobrogea, but scattered, for example at Histria (and also south thereof) on July 3, and at Topolog on July 12.

WOODLARK - *Lullula arborea*

Several observed in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1.

SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis*

No retrievable data.

CRESTED LARK - *Galerida cristata*

Widespread, villages.

BARN SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica*

Widespread.

CRAG MARTIN - *Ptyonoprogne rupestris*

Not seen. Quite common at the Iron Gates, Ieşelnita (MT).

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW - *Hirundo daurica*

Chances of observation at the Iron Gates, Ieşelnita (MT).

SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia*

Common. A flock of hundreds observed resting on the ground at Histria on July 13.

HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica*

Widespread.

TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis*

Observed, No specifications.

TAWNY PIPIT - *Anthus campestris*

Observations: one in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1; one at Histria on July 3; one at Enisala on July 3.

WHITE WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba*

Widespread.

GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea*

Some observations at mountain streams in the Olt valley area in the southern Carpathians while journeying on June 27, including a nest alongside a stream at Titesti.

BLUE-HEADED YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava flava* and

BLACK-HEADED YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava feldegg*

Widespread, especially the last-mentioned subspecies (e.g. present at Histria), and many intermediate forms with *flava*.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE - *Lanius excubitor*

Present as a breeding bird throughout the country, but least in number (by far) of the commonly occurring species of shrike. Every now and then an observation: a pair at Christian on June 27, and in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1.

LESSER GREY SHRIKE - *Lanius minor*

(Fairly) common. Thus, for example seen in numbers while journeying on June 27, on the road to Calarasi on June 29 (at least three), again in numbers on the road to Baneasa on July 1, and so on.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE - *Lanius collurio*

Widespread. Seen for example while journeying on June 27, on the road to Baneasa on July 1, and so on. Breeding in high numbers unimaginable in the Netherlands, in one case even in the sparse shrubs between a hotel and the beach, as observed in Constanta on July 2.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE - *Lanius senator*

Not seen. Downright rare; sometimes seen in Baneasa. Distribution very variable; over the years a single breeding case in total (MT).

DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis*

Widespread.

ALPINE ACCENTOR - *Prunella collaris*

Not seen, breeds above the tree line.

SAVI'S WARBLER - *Locustella luscinioides*

Observations among other places from the Delta on July 12/13. Numbers?

RIVER WARBLER - *Locustella fluviatilis*

Not heard. Not very common, mainly occurring in forests near water (MT).

REED WARBLER - *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Observations from the Delta on July 12/13. Numbers?

PADDYFIELD WARBLER - *Acrocephalus agricola*

Not seen. This species breeds since 3 years in the forests of the Dobrogea, in Tamarisks along the coastline (foredune) or in very dense reedbeds. Has expanded from the Volga Delta. In the summer of 1978 up to the middle of July, already 16 trappings done by scientists, a large number of which at Sulina (MT).

BLYTH'S REED WARBLER - *Acrocephalus dumetorum*

Not seen. Rare in the Delta (breeding??). One trapped (by scientists) at Jurilovca, June 1978 (MT).

GREAT REED WARBLER - *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Widespread Delta and in marshes along the Danube.

MOUSTACHED WARBLER - *Acrocephalus melanopogon*

Not observed. According to MT breeding, though not common.

AQUATIC WARBLER - *Acrocephalus paludicola*

Not observed. Does not breed in Romania; very rare passage migrant (MT).

SEDGE WARBLER – *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Widespread in the Delta.

ICTERINE WARBLER - *Hippolais icterina*
Several observations, including in the forests around the Cocos Monastery on July 14.

OLIVACEOUS WARBLER - *Hippolais pallida*
Two singing males observed in the park opposite the Dutch Embassy, Strada Athena 18 in Bucharest on June 28. This species used to be very common in Bucharest, but after an extermination campaign against caterpillars five years ago, almost the entire population in Bucharest was wiped out by DDT poisoning. Scantly present in the woods outside the capital (MT).

WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis*
Widespread.

LESSER WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia curruca*
Observed; no specifications.

GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin*
Some observations, not specified.

BARRED WARBLER - *Sylvia nisoria*
Not observed. According to MT not very common, though sometimes also breeding in Bucharest.

BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla*
No notes.

WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus*
No notes.

CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita*
No notes.

WOOD WARBLER - *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*
No notes.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata*
Not seen; status unknown.

PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca*
Not seen; status unknown.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula albicollis*
Not seen; scarce bird of mixed woods near the mountains.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula parva*
Not seen. In upland deciduous woods in the Carpathians (approx. 1000 m); according to MT in the Dobrogea only during migration.

STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata*
No notes.

WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra*
No notes.

ROCK THRUSH - *Monticola saxatilis*

Not seen. Chances of observation in the Maçim mountains, west of Babadag in not too high limestone (chalk) mountains. Possibly also in the Greçi mountains (MT).

WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Quite common in the Dobrogea.

BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe hispanica*

Not seen. According to MT formerly in the Dobrogea (among other places Baneasa). See under Rock Bunting.

ISABELLINE WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe isabellina*

Not seen. According to MT, an encounter with this species is not excluded. There have already been some observations made.

PIED WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe pleschanka*

Common breeding bird of sandstone cliffs near water, such as Lacul Oltina, Insula Popina etc. We ourselves observed two pairs with young at Lacul Oltina on July 6 (eastern bank, just before the village coming from the direction of Baneasa follow the cart track downwards). In Romania, the Danube constitutes the western boundary for this species.

BLACK REDSTART - *Phoenicurus ochrurus*

Observed at ruins and such.

REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Observations originate from, among other places, the Delta.

ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula*

Widespread.

THRUSH NIGHTINGALE - *Luscinia luscinia*

Fairly common in moist woods near water (MT). Possibly two singing birds observed in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1.

NIGHTINGALE - *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Despite its common status, we did not observe this species.

BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula*

Widespread.

FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris*

Quite a few observations from the Carpathians.

SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos*

Widespread.

MISTLE THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus*

Many observations, especially from the Carpathians, though less common than the previous species.

PENDULINE TIT - *Remiz pendulinus*

Quite common in the Delta. Nesting in the willow groves. Several groups of birds, some (or all?) of which juveniles, observed in the vicinity of hotel Lebada at Crişan while rowing in smaller, quiet river branches lined with willows (*Salix*) and reed on July 12/13.

MARSH TIT - *Parus palustris*

Observed in the Carpathians.

SOMBRE TIT - *Parus lugubris*

Not seen. According to MT in the Dobrogea on rocky hills with sparse tree growth. Not in forests.

NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea*

Some observations from the Carpathians.

WALLCREEPER - *Tichodroma muraria*

Not seen. Good chances of observation according to MT in the Bucegi-Mts at the Chéilé Tătarului on the western side of the first canyon from the north. The Ialomita River runs through the canyon.

TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris*

No notes.

SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER - *Certhia brachydactyla*

No notes.

WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

No notes.

DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus*

Not seen. According to MT common at higher levels.

CORN BUNTING - *Miliaria calandra*

Widespread low part of the Carpathians, though not abundant. Thus, seen while journeying on June 27. Also, lowland in the Macin area near Mts Greçi on July 14.

ROCK BUNTING - *Emberiza cia*

Not seen. According to MT at Orșova, Iron Gates. Especially in rocky areas with shrubs.

YELLOWHAMMER - *Emberiza citrinella*

Widespread.

CIRL BUNTING - *Emberiza cirrus*

Not seen. See under Rock Bunting.

ORTOLAN BUNTING - *Emberiza hortulana*

Female seen in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1. According to MT, especially in humid lowlands near Baneasa.

REED BUNTING – *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Observed in the Delta.

CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs*

Widespread.

GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis*

Widespread in the Carpathians. Otherwise:?

SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus*

No notes.

GREENFINCH - *Chloris chloris*

Widespread.

BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

No notes.

HAWFINCH - *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Multiple observations in the Olt valley area in the southern Carpathians while journeying on June 27, and also in the Canaras near Baneasa on July 1; one observed in the forests around the Cocos Monastery on July 14.

LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina*

Widespread.

SERIN - *Serinus serinus*

Multiple observations in the Olt valley area in the southern Carpathians while journeying on June 27.

COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra*

Not seen.

SPANISH SPARROW - *Passer hispaniolensis*

Several at Baneasa on July 1, and a large colony at Histria on July 3. MT: a recent coloniser, including in plains along the Danube and in the Dobrogea. Often in villages. Often breeds alongside *P. domesticus* and sometimes hybridizes with *P. montanus*.

HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus*

Widespread.

STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris*

Widespread.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING - *Sturnus roseus*

Not seen. According to MT sometimes in the Dobrogea, but does not breed there every year. Nests among other places in hollows of Eagle Owl. When breeding occurs, then in large numbers.

GOLDEN ORIOLE - *Oriolus oriolus*

Locally very numerous and otherwise scattered. Seen for example while journeying on June 27 (two between Cluj and Oradea), two on the road to Calarasi on June 29, many on the road to Baneasa and in the Canaras on July 1, several at Cocos on July 14, and so on.

MAGPIE - *Pica pica*

Widespread.

JAY - *Garrulus glandarius*

Widespread, at least in the Carpathians.

RAVEN - *Corvus corax*

Sightings in the area of Sacel in the Carpathians on the return journey on July 17.

ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus*

Observations from the Dobrogea.

HOODED CROW - *Corvus corone cornix*

Widespread.

JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula* (subsp.?)

Widespread.

Final remarks

In three instances, mention is made of tape luring as a method of observation. We would like to say that we no longer approve of this method and we discourage its use.

Three localities need special clarification or justify special mentioning.

Firstly, the route taken from Bucuresti to the former Lake Calarasi and back on June 29 and later occasions was as follows: Urziceni - Slobozia - Calarasi - Raovani.

Secondly, the Canaras near Baneasa. This is a valley with woods, wild pastures and limestone (chalk) cliffs, some kilometers in length. Entrance: coming by road from the west (Ostrov), and approximately 5 km before reaching Baneasa, take a dirt road or track on the righthand side which leads into the valley.

Thirdly, a densely vegetated marsh at the northern edge of a lake, situated along the road from Ostrov to Baneasa, 26 km before Baneasa coming from the west. This is an especially good place to see many Golden Oriole, Whiskered Tern, Squacco Heron, Night Heron, Little Bittern, Glossy Ibis and (fewer) Little Egrets. Also, the only place where we encountered Dalmation Pelican and breeding Red-necked Grebe. Visited by us on July 1 and 6. Presumably Lacul Bugeacului.

According to MT, Mediterranean influences only at Orsova/Iron Gates region at border with former Yugoslavia, with Rock Partridge, Lesser Kestrel, Red-rumped Swallow and Black-eared Wheatear.

In addition, it is worthwhile to also mention some other groups of animals which were observed.

EUROPEAN SOUSLIK - Citellus citellus

Widespread but local in the south and east. First encountered on June 29 on the road to Calarasi, e.g. a colony between Urziceni and Slobozia. Also encountered on July 1, 26 km before Baneasa coming from the west, etc.

FOX - Vulpes vulpes

One seen with cub in the Olt valley area on June 27. Another seen at Histria on July 13.

On July 1 in the Canaras near Baneasa, two tortoises were encountered (one small, and one weighing several kg). Also there that day, a huge green lizard measuring approx. 30 cm may have been a Balkan Green Lizard *Lacerta trilineata*. Other lizards there that day with brown or green backs and black flanks are best left unidentified.

Finally, we cannot resist mentioning some of the highlights which were seen while driving through other countries on the route from the Netherlands to Romania and back. In Germany on June 26, a Black Kite along the Danube near München. In Austria on June 26, a Hawfinch, Honey Buzzards and at Nickelsdorf near the Hungarian border a Bee-eater. In Hungary on June 26, Lesser Grey Shrikes, White Storks, Corn Buntings, Red-backed Shrikes and Honey Buzzards. In Hungary on July 17, a male Red-footed Falcon at Kisujszallas. In Austria on July 18, in the Nickelsdorf area a Serin and two Black Kites.

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