

THE OCCURRENCE OF WHITE-TAILED SEA EAGLE (*HALIAEETUS ALBICILLA*) IN THE DANUBIAN REGION AND ITS PROTECTION UNDER CHANGED ENVIROMENTAL CONDITIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article is focused on the occurrence of the White-tailed Sea Eagle the Danube (river km 1812-1839), to elaborate management of territorial and species protection and to renew the nesting population of this rare species.

The protection management scheme consists of a selection of localities, which favour a high level of protection a special programe of protection has been agreed between competent institutions. During the winter, they were fed with carcasses and artificial nests was built for them.

INTRODUCTION

The section of the Danube between river kms 1812- 1839 still forms at present a relatively well- preserved territory of inland delta. At present only its small part in the State Natural Reserve "The Island of the Sea Eagle" has been protected (Stollman, 1956). Originally the purpose of the reserve was first of all to protect the nesting sites of the sea eagle, which in the past nested in several localities (Baka, Bodiky, Gabčíkovo, Palkovičovo) of the Slovak section of the Danube (Balat 1956). The extinction of the nesting population was due to several synergically operating antropical factors (the growth of economical activities in the forests, building of acceses to

formerly inaccessible localities and greater number of visitors).

The aim of study was to evaluate the contemporary condition of the white-tailed sea eagle living on the Danube, to elaborate management of territorial and species protection and to renew the nesting population of this rare species.

METHODS

In the year 1989-1994 observations were made to see if the species existed in the wild, its numbers its habitat and its nutritional habits in the Danube. This branch system was also studied and since the year 1993 also on the Gabčíkovo project.

CONCLUSION

Since the last nesting on the year 1964 the sea eagle occurs in the area only in winter months, in numbers of about 8-12, but in the last years their numbers have been growing (Áč, 1977). The most favoured localities were ascertained on the old river Danube and its tributaries. The sea eagle is to be found at the same sites where it nested before.

The protection management scheme consist of a selection of localities, which favour a high level of protection a special program of protection has been agreed between competent institutions. From among the originally selected localities the most perspective appear to be at present the localities at rivers kms 1833, 1823 and 1814. The significance of these localities has been supported by the fact that regular occurrence of the sea-eagle has been observed in them, with its pre-nesting activities.

In nuclear localities artificial nests were built and in case of nesting of the sea-eagle the nesting sites will be guarded and economical activities in the forest will be stopped in the period from December 1st till March 15th, and hunting cut out November 1st till 15th. The artificial nest was built on October 15th, 1994, on a poplar trees in the height of 23 and 20 m. It was built of thicker branches in the size of 1,8x0,8 ms. During the winter, they were fed with carcasses.

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