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Bulletin of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv (Bull. Nat. Hist. Mus. Plovdiv) is the official scientific bulletin of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, published by Plovdiv University Press. The journal accepts submissions of original studies in the field of palaeontology, natural history, geology and speleology, zoology, botany, ecology, biogeography, museology, history of natural science, information about museum collections, etc.

The official language of the journal is English. Exceptions are possible, certain manuscripts may be published in Bulgarian language, with extensive abstract in English.

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About the Journal

In 1970, the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv issues Volume 1 of the journal "Bulletin of the Natural Science Museum Plovdiv". In 1973 Volume 2 was released.

Before the release of the independent journal of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, researchers at the museum published their articles in "Annals of the Museums in the Plovdiv Region" and from 1975 in "Bulletin of the museums in Southern Bulgaria", which was published until 1995 (a total of 21 volumes).

With the creation of the Bulletin of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, the Regional Museum of Natural History – Plovdiv resumed issuing its scientific journal.

The journal accepts for publishing short messages (up to 4 pages), original research papers (from 4 to 10 pages) and review articles (over 10 pages) in the above mentioned fields and formatted according to the instructions for authors.

The logo of the journal is the paleoendemic beetle *Rhodopaea angelovi* Gruev & Tomov, 1968¹, known only from a small area in the Rhodope Mountains, south of Plovdiv. The species is named after Professor Emeritus Pavel Angelov, one of the first directors of the museum, who collected the type specimens.

From the Editorial Board

¹ Gruev B., V. Tomov. 1968. A new genus and species *Rhodopaea angelovi* gen. et sp. n. (Coleoptera, Chrysomelidae) from Bulgaria. Rev. Ent. URSS, XLVII(3):553-555 (in Russian with English summary).

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Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv

34 Hristo G. Danov Str., Plovdiv 4000,
BULGARIA; Phone: +359 32 626683

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University of Plovdiv Publishing House

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The fungus gnats (Diptera: Sciarioidea) collection of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv

Svetlozara Kazandzhieva^{1,2*}

1 - National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

1 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., 1000 Sofia, BULGARIA

2 - Regional Museum of Natural History – Plovdiv, 34 Hristo G. Danov Street, 4000 Plovdiv, BULGARIA

*E-mail: svetlozara.k@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5018-8951>

Abstract. A list of 308 identified specimens of fungus gnats of the families Bolitophilidae, Diadocidiidae, Ditomyiidae, Keroplatidae and Mycetophilidae mainly from Bulgaria, and some from Greece, in the collection of Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv with notes on the collection and its condition is presented. Detailed information is provided about 32 specimens from the Oriental region - 3 holotypes (*Stenophragma borneense* Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020; *Chetoneura lagangensis* Kazandzhieva & Bechev, 2022; *Dziedzickia longistyla* Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2023), 24 paratypes (*Stenophragma borneense* Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020; *Dziedzickia pectinata* Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011; *Dziedzickia bifida* Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011), and 5 other identified specimens preserved in the museum collection. Additional information is given about unidentified specimens of Mycetophilidae, Keroplatidae and Sciariidae.

Keywords: fungus gnats, collection, Mycetophilidae, Bulgaria, Greece, Oriental.

Introduction

Fungus gnats are representatives of the families Bolitophilidae, Diadocidiidae, Ditomyiidae, Keroplatidae and Mycetophilidae (Diptera: Sciarioidea). So far, 320 species are known from Bulgaria (Bechev, 2006, 2010; Bechev & Pavlova, 2012, 2016; Kurina & Chandler, 2018; Pavlova, 2020a; Pavlova, 2020b; Pavlova & Stojanova, 2020).

The present article provides a list of identified specimens of fungus gnats deposited at the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, information about unidentified material, its labeling and/or preservation. The collection was deposited to RNHM – Plovdiv by Dimitar Bechev in 2022 and contains mainly dry specimens from the families Bolitophilidae, Diadocidiidae, Ditomyiidae, Keroplatidae,

Mycetophilidae, and very few Sciariidae. The majority of insects were collected by D. Bechev from 1981 to the early 2000s from Bulgaria and some parts of Greece. The collection also contains material from the Oriental region (including holotypes and paratypes) collected by Ignac Sivec, Svetlozara Kazandzhieva and Dimitar Bechev, from Greece collected by Ignac Sivec, and from Turkey collected by Hasan Koch.

Material and methods

The majority of specimens are dry, few are preserved in alcohol. The collection is curated within the Invertebrates Division of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv and comprises 58 boxes, described as follows: Comparative collection - boxes labeled DB01 to DB29 (Fig. 1.).



Fig. 1. Comparative collection – box DB08. Photograph: Dimitar Bechev.

The comparative and additional collections contain specimens from 308 species collected and identified by D. Bechev.

Additional collection - labeled box 21 to box 29. The additional collection contains more specimens of the species mentioned above.

Unspecified, partially sorted dry material - boxes labeled DB51 to DB70.

Unspecified, partially sorted material in alcohol, preserved in jars and tubes: from Greece – *Mycomya*, *Boletina*, *Trichonta*, *Phronia*, *Zygomysia*, *Cordyla*, *Mycetophila*, *Exechiini*; from Bulgaria – Rhodopes, Strandzha, Sakar, Tsarevo, Sinemorets.

The identification of most species was done by D. Bechev with few exceptions.

Information from labels is provided for the Oriental specimens only (Table 2), labeling of the dry specimens in comparative and additional collections is mostly hand-written. Genitalia were macerated in KOH and stored in glycerol in welded nylon tubes with stoppers (Fig 2.1.) and plastic blister cavities (Fig 2.2.).

Results

The full collection data is presented below in Table 1 and Table 2.

Data from the partially sorted, unspecified dry specimens is provided here:

DB51 (Mycetophilidae, Keroplatidae, *Bolitophila*, *Diadocidia*), DB52 (Keroplatidae, *Macrocera* from Rhodopes), DB53 (Mycetophilidae, NE, SE Bulgaria, Rhodopes), DB54 (Mycetophilidae from Yarlovo, Hrabrino, Veslets, Plovdiv, E Rhodopes), DB55 (Mycetophilidae), DB56 (Mycetophilidae from Rila, Varna, Kamchia, Lilkovo, Asenovgrad, Chudnite Mostove, Sitovo), DB57 (Mycetophilidae), DB58 (Mycetophilidae from Hrabrino, Lilkovo), DB59 (Mycetophilidae from Vrachanska Planina, Karash, Slavyanka), DB60 (Mycetophilidae from Strandzha), DB61 (Mycetophilidae from Karash, Vratsa, Rila), DB62 (Mycetophilidae, *Azana* from Greece, Rila), DB63 (Sciaridae), DB64 (Mycetophilidae, *Brevicornu*), DB65 (Mycetophilidae), DB66 (Mycetophilidae,

Zygomyia, Phronia), DB67
(Mycetophilidae from Rhodopes, Rila),
DB68 (Mycetophilidae, Gnoristini,

Sciophilini, Leiini), DB69
(Mycetophilidae, Mycomya, Neoempheria)
DB70 (Mycetophilidae, Allodia).

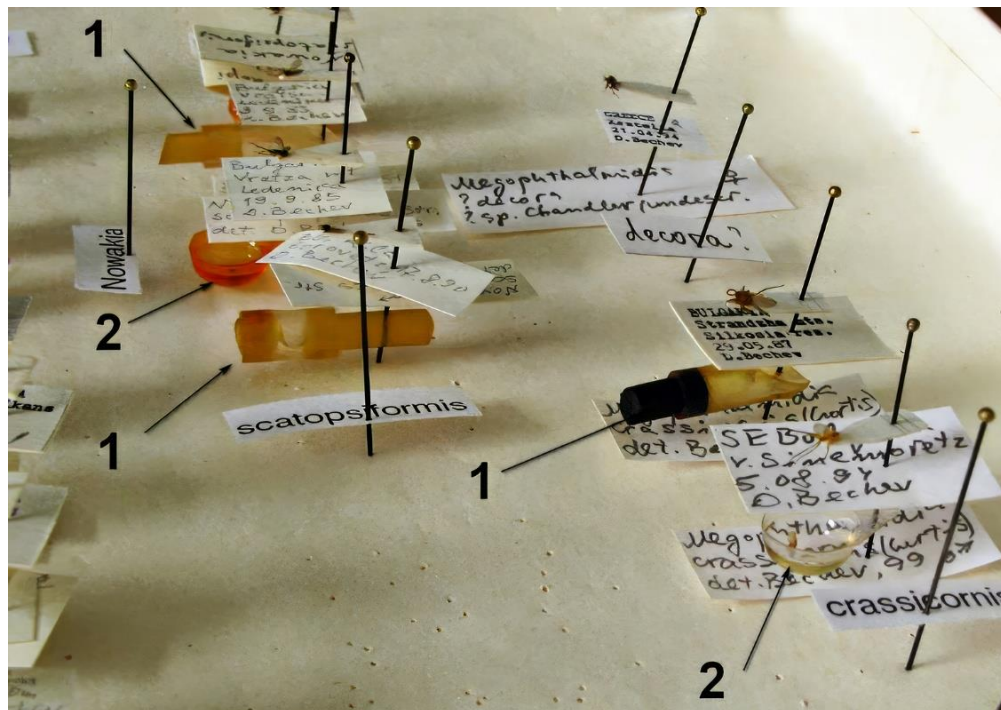


Fig. 2. Storage of genitalia in welded nylon tubes with rubber stoppers (1) and plastic blister cavities (2). Photograph: Dimitar Bechev.

Table 1. List of materials in D. Bechev's comparative (DB01-DB29) and additional (Box 21-Box29) collections deposited at RNHM – Plovdiv.

Family/ Subfamily/ Tribe	Species	Comparative collection in Box DB#	Other specimens in Box #
Bolitophilidae	<i>Bolitophila (Bolitophila) basicornis</i> (Mayer, 1951)	DB01	
	<i>Bolitophila (Bolitophila) cinerea</i> Meigen, 1818	DB01	Box 23
	<i>Bolitophila (Bolitophila) saundersi</i> (Curtis, 1836)	DB01	Box 23
	<i>Bolitophila (Bolitophila) tenella</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB01	
	<i>Bolitophila (Cliopisa) fumida</i> Edwards, 1941	DB01	
	<i>Bolitophila (Cliopisa) hybrida</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB01	

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	<i>Bolitophila (Cliopisa) maculipennis</i> Walker, 1836	DB01	
	<i>Bolitophila (Cliopisa) pseudohybrida</i> Landrock, 1912	DB01	
Diadocidiidae	<i>Diadocidia (Adidocidia) valida</i> Mik, 1874	DB02	
	<i>Diadocidia (Diadocidia) ferruginosa</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB02	Box 23
	<i>Diadocidia (Diadocidia) spinosula</i> Tollet, 1948	DB02	
Ditomyiidae	<i>Ditomyia fasciata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB03	Box 21
	<i>Symmerus annulatus</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB03	
Keroplastidae/ Keroplastinae/ Keroplastini	<i>Cerotelion racovitzai</i> Matile & Burghel-Balancesco, 1969	DB04	Box 21
	<i>Cerotelion striatum</i> (Gmelin, 1790)	DB04	
	<i>Keroplatus reaumurii</i> Dufour, 1839	DB04	
	<i>Keroplatus testaceus</i> Dalman, 1818	DB04	
	<i>Keroplatus tipuloides</i> Bosc, 1792	DB04	
Keroplastidae/ Keroplastinae/ Orfeliini	<i>Antlemon (Antlemonopsis) brevimanum</i> (Loew, 1871)	DB05	
	<i>Isoneuromyia semirufa</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB07	
	<i>Macrorrhyncha collarti</i> (Tollet, 1955)	DB05	
	<i>Macrorrhyncha flava</i> Winnertz, 1846	DB05	
	<i>Monocentrotia lundstromi</i> Edwards, 1925	DB07 (England)	
	<i>Neoplatyura modesta</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB07	
	<i>Neoplatyura nigricauda</i> (Strobl, 1893)	DB07	
	<i>Orfelia bezzii</i> (Strobl, 1910)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia bicolor</i> (Macquart, 1826)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia fasciata</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia nemoralis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia nigricornis</i> (Fabricius, 1805)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia tristis</i> (Lundström, 1911)	DB06	
	<i>Orfelia unicolor</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB06	Box 21, 27
	<i>Platyura marginata</i> Meigen, 1804	DB07	
	<i>Pyratula oracula</i> Chandler, 1994	DB07	
	<i>Pyratula perpusilla</i> (Edwards, 1913)	DB07	Box 21
	<i>Pyratula subcanariae</i> Chandler, 2001	DB07	
	<i>Urytalpa ochracea</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB07	
	<i>Urytalpa dorsalis</i> (Staeger, 1840) = <i>Urytalpa rhapsodica</i> Chandler, 1995	DB07	
Keroplastidae/ Macrocerinae/ Macrocerini	<i>Macrocera anglica</i> Edwards, 1925	DB10	Box 21
	<i>Macrocera angulata</i> Meigen, 1818	DB11	Box 21

	<i>Macrocera centralis</i> Meigen, 1818	DB11	Box 21
	<i>Macrocera crassicornis</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB12	
	<i>Macrocera estonica</i> Landrock, 1924	DB09 (England)	
	<i>Macrocera fasciata</i> Meigen, 1804	DB12	Box 23
	<i>Macrocera fascipennis</i> Staeger, 1840	DB11 (England)	
	<i>Macrocera fastuosa</i> Loew, 1869	DB11	
	<i>Macrocera gemagea</i> Bechev, 1991	DB09	
	<i>Macrocera grandis</i> Lundström, 1912	DB11	
	<i>Macrocera inversa</i> Loew, 1869	DB12	
	<i>Macrocera kerteszi</i> Lundström, 1911	DB10	
	<i>Macrocera lutea</i> Meigen, 1804	DB10	Box 21, 27
	<i>Macrocera maculata</i> Meigen, 1818	DB11 (England)	
	<i>Macrocera nigricoxa</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB12	
	<i>Macrocera parva</i> Lundström, 1914	DB12	
	<i>Macrocera phalerata</i> Meigen, 1818	DB08	
	<i>Macrocera pilosa</i> Landrock, 1917	DB09	
	<i>Macrocera stigma</i> Curtis, 1837	DB08	
	<i>Macrocera stigmoides</i> Edwards, 1925	DB09	
	<i>Macrocera vittata</i> Meigen, 1830	DB10	Box 21
Myceophilidae/ Gnoristinae	<i>Apolephthisa subincana</i> (Curtis, 1837)	DB13	
	<i>Boletina anderschi</i> (Stannius, 1831)	DB14	Box 21, 25
	<i>Boletina basalis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB14	
	<i>Boletina dubia</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB14 (England)	
	<i>Boletina gripa</i> Dziedzicki, 1885	DB14	
	<i>Boletina lundstroemi</i> Landrock, 1912	DB14	
	<i>Boletina nigricoxa</i> Staeger, 1840	DB14	
	<i>Boletina nitida</i> Grzegorzec, 1885	DB14	Box 25
	<i>Boletina pallidula</i> Edwards, 1925	DB14	
	<i>Boletina plana</i> (Walker, 1856)	DB14	
	<i>Boletina sciarina</i> Staeger, 1840	DB14	Box 25
	<i>Boletina trispinosa</i> Edwards, 1913	DB14	Box 25
	<i>Boletina trivittata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB14	Box 22, 25
	<i>Coelosia flava</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB13	
	<i>Coelosia fusca</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB13	
	<i>Grzegorzekia collaris</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB13	
	<i>Palaeodocosia janickii</i> (Dziedzicki, 1923)	DB13	
	<i>Saigusaia flaviventris</i> (Strobl, 1894)	DB13	
	<i>Synapha fasciata</i> Meigen, 1818	DB13	Box 23
	<i>Synapha vitripennis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB13	Box 21, 23

	<i>Tetragoneura ambigua</i> Grzegorzek, 1885	DB13	Box 23
	<i>Tetragoneura sylvatica</i> (Curtis, 1837)	DB13	
Myceophilidae/ Leiinae	<i>Clastobasis alternans</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB15	Box 23
	<i>Docosia gilvipes</i> (Walker, 1856)	DB15	Box 24
	<i>Docosia moravica</i> Landrock, 1916	DB15	Box 24
	<i>Greenomyia mongolica</i> Laštovka & Matile, 1974	DB15	
	<i>Leia bimaculata</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB15	Box 21
	<i>Leia cylindrica</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB15	Box 21
	<i>Leia picta</i> Meigen, 1830	DB15	
	<i>Leia winthemii</i> Lehmann, 1822	DB15	
	<i>Megophthalmida crassicornis</i> (Curtis, 1837)	DB15	
	<i>Novakia scatopsiformis</i> Strobl, 1893	DB15	
	<i>Rondaniella dimidiata</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB15	Box 21
Myceophilidae/ Mycetophilinae/ Exechiini	<i>Allodia (Allodia) anglofennica</i> Edwards, 1921	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Allodia) lugens</i> Wiedemann, 1817	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Allodia) ornatcollis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Allodia) truncata</i> Edwards, 1921	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) alternans</i> (Zetterstedt, 1838)	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) barbata</i> (Lundström, 1909)	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) foliifera</i> (Strobl, 1910)	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) grata</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) neglecta</i> Edwards, 1925	DB16	
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	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) triangularis</i> (Strobl, 1895) as <i>retracta</i> Plassmann	DB16	
	<i>Allodia (Brachycampta) westerholti</i> Caspers, 1980	DB16	
	<i>Allodiopsis domestica</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB16	
	<i>Allodiopsis pseudodomestica</i> (Lackschewitz, 1937)	DB16	
	<i>Allodiopsis rustica</i> (Edwards, 1941)	DB16	Box 27
	<i>Anatella ciliata</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB17	Box 27
	<i>Anatella lenis</i> Dziedzicki, 1923	DB17	Box 27
	<i>Anatella minuta</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB17	Box 27
	<i>Anatella novata</i> Dziedzicki, 1923	DB17	

<i>Anatella simpatica</i> Dziedzicki, 1923	DB17	
<i>Anatella turi</i> Dziedzicki, 1923	DB17	
<i>Brevicornu (Brevicornu) fissicauda</i> (Lundström, 1911)	DB17	Box 28
<i>Brevicornu (Brevicornu) griseicollae</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB17	Box 28
<i>Brevicornu (Brevicornu) ruficorne</i> (Meigen, 1838)	DB17	
<i>Brevicornu (Brevicornu) sericoma</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB17	Box 28
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<i>Brevicornu</i> spp. unidentified	DB17	
<i>Cordyla brevicornis</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB29	
<i>Cordyla crassicornis</i> Meigen, 1818	DB29	
<i>Cordyla fasciata</i> Meigen, 1830	DB29	
<i>Cordyla fissa</i> Edwards, 1925	DB29	
<i>Cordyla flaviceps</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB29	
<i>Cordyla fusca</i> Meigen, 1804	DB29	
<i>Cordyla nitidula</i> Edwards, 1925	DB29	
<i>Cordyla semiflava</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB29	
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<i>Exechia dizona</i> Edwards, 1925	DB18	
<i>Exechia dorsalis</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB18	Box 24
<i>Exechia exigua</i> Lundström, 1909	DB18	Box 26
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<i>Exechia fulva</i> Santos Abreu, 1920 as <i>peyerimhoffi</i>	DB18	Box 24
<i>Exechia fusca</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB18	Box 26
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<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) furcata</i> (Lundström, 1912)	DB19	
<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) lackschewitziana</i> (Stackelberg, 1948)	DB19	
<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) magnicauda</i> (Lundström, 1911)	DB19	Box 27
<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) subulata</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB19	Box 27

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	<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) unguiculata</i> (Lundström, 1911)	DB19	
	<i>Exechiopsis (Exechiopsis) vizzavonensis</i> (Edwards, 1928)	DB19	
	<i>Exechiopsis (Xenexechia) crucigera</i> (Lundström, 1909)	DB19	
	<i>Exechiopsis (Xenexechia) davatchii</i> (Matile, 1969)	DB19	
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	<i>Notolopha cristata</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB16	Box 27
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	<i>Pseudobrachypeza helvetica</i> (Walker, 1856)	DB20	Box 27
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	<i>Rymosia fasciata</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB20	Box 27
	<i>Rymosia fraudatrix</i> Dziedzicki, 1910	DB20	
	<i>Rymosia placida</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB20	Box 27
	<i>Rymosia setiger</i> Dziedzicki, 1910	DB20	
	<i>Rymosia spinipes</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB20	Box 27
	<i>Rymosia virens</i> Dziedzicki, 1910	DB20	Box 27
	<i>Synplasta gracilis</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB20	
	<i>Synplasta exclusa</i> (Lackschewitz, 1937) as <i>sintenisi</i>	DB20	
	<i>Tarnania fenestralis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB20	
	<i>Tarnania nemoralis</i> (Edwards, 1941)	DB20	
	<i>Tarnania tarnanii</i> (Dziedzicki, 1910)	DB20 (Russia)	
	<i>Rymosia virens</i> Dziedzicki, 1910	DB20	Box 27
	<i>Synplasta gracilis</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB20	
	<i>Synplasta exclusa</i> (Lackschewitz, 1937) as <i>sintenisi</i>	DB20	
	<i>Tarnania fenestralis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB20	
	<i>Tarnania nemoralis</i> (Edwards, 1941)	DB20	
Myceophilidae/ Mycetophilinae/ Mycetophilini	<i>Dynatosoma fuscicorne</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB21	Box 23
	<i>Dynatosoma majus</i> Landrock, 1912	DB21	Box 23
	<i>Dynatosoma nigromaculatum</i> Lundström, 1913	DB21	
	<i>Dynatosoma nobile</i> (Walker, 1848)	DB21 (Russia)	
	<i>Dynatosoma reciprocum</i> (Walker, 1848)	DB21 (Russia)	
	<i>Dynatosoma ussuriense</i> Zaitzev, 1986	DB21 (Russia)	
	<i>Epicypa torquata</i> Matile, 1977	DB21	
	<i>Mycetophila abiecta</i> (Laštovka, 1963)	DB22	
	<i>Mycetophila adumbrata</i> Mik, 1884	DB22	

<i>Mycetophila alea</i> Laffoon, 1965	DB22	Box 25, 29
<i>Mycetophila bialorussica</i> Dziedzicki, 1884	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila blanda</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB22	Box 29
<i>Mycetophila caudata</i> Staeger, 1840	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila celator</i> (Laffoon, 1957)	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila confluens</i> Dziedzicki, 1884	DB22	Box 28
<i>Mycetophila curviseta</i> Lundstrom, 1911	DB22 (England)	
<i>Mycetophila czizeki</i> Landrock, 1911	DB22	Box 22
<i>Mycetophila distigma</i> Meigen, 1830	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila dziedzickii</i> Chandler, 1977	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila edwardsi</i> Lundström, 1913	DB22	Box 29
<i>Mycetophila formosa</i> Lundström, 1911	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila fraterna</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB22	Box 28
<i>Mycetophila finlandica</i> Edwards, 1913	DB22 (England)	
<i>Mycetophila fungorum</i> (De Geer, 1776)	DB22	Box 28
<i>Mycetophila gibbula</i> Edwards, 1925	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila hyrcania</i> Laštovka et Matile, 1969	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila lamellata</i> Lundström, 1911	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila lastovkai</i> Caspers, 1984	DB22	
<i>Mycetophila luctuosa</i> Meigen, 1830	DB22	Box 22
<i>Mycetophila lunata</i> Meigen, 1804	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila marginata</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB23	Box 22, 29
<i>Mycetophila mitis</i> (Johannsen, 1912)	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila morosa</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila occultans</i> Lundström, 1913	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila ocellus</i> Walker, 1848	DB23	Box 29
<i>Mycetophila ornata</i> Stephens, 1829	DB23	Box 28
<i>Mycetophila pumila</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB23	Box 29
<i>Mycetophila scotica</i> Edwards, 1941	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila sigillata</i> Dziedzicki, 1884	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila signata</i> Meigen, 1830	DB23	Box 22
<i>Mycetophila signatoides</i> Dziedzicki, 1884	DB23	Box 22
<i>Mycetophila spectabilis</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB23	Box 29
<i>Mycetophila stolidula</i> Walker, 1856	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila stylata</i> (Dziedzicki, 1884)	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila tridentata</i> Lundström, 1911	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila trinotata</i> Staeger, 1840	DB23	Box 28
<i>Mycetophila unguiculata</i> Lundström, 1913	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila vittipes</i> Zetterstedt, 1852	DB23	
<i>Mycetophila v-nigrum</i> Lundström, 1913	DB23	Box 22
<i>Phronia cinerascens</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB24	

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	<i>Phronia conformis</i> (Walker , 1856)	DB24	
	<i>Phronia exigua</i> (Zetterstedt, 1852)	DB24	
	<i>Phronia forcipata</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB24	
	<i>Phronia nitidiventris</i> (van der Wulp, 1858)	DB24	
	<i>Phronia obtusa</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB24	
	<i>Phronia signata</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB24	
	<i>Phronia tenuis</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB24	
	<i>Platurocypta punctum</i> (Stannius, 1831)	DB21	
	<i>Sceptonia costata</i> (Wulp, 1858)	DB25 (Scotland)	
	<i>Sceptonia cryptocauda</i> Chandler , 1991	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia flavipuncta</i> Edwards, 1925	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia fumipes</i> Edwards, 1925	DB25 (England)	
	<i>Sceptonia humerella</i> Edwards, 1941	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia membranacea</i> Edwards, 1925	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia nigra</i> (Meigen, 1804)	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia pilosa</i> Bukowski, 1934	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia pughi</i> Chandler , 1991	DB25	
	<i>Sceptonia tenuis</i> Edwards, 1925	DB25	
	<i>Trichonta apicalis</i> Strobl, 1898	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta beata</i> Gagné, 1981	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta clavigera</i> Lundström, 1913	DB21	Box 21
	<i>Trichonta conjungens</i> Lundström, 1909	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta falcata</i> Lundström, 1911	DB21	Box 21, 27
	<i>Trichonta fragilis</i> Gagné, 1981	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta fusca</i> Landrock, 1918	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta girschneri</i> Landrock, 1912	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta melanura</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB21	Box 21, 27
	<i>Trichonta subfusca</i> Lundström, 1909	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta submaculata</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta terminalis</i> (Walker, 1856)	DB21	Box 21
	<i>Trichonta venosa</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB21	
	<i>Trichonta vitta</i> (Meigen, 1830)	DB21	Box 21, 27
	<i>Trichonta vulgaris</i> Loew, 1869	DB21	Box 21, 27
	<i>Zygomysia valida</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB25	
Mycetophilidae/ Mycomyinae	<i>Mycomysia annulata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB26 (England)	
	<i>Mycomysia (Cymomyia) circumdata</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomysia (Mycomysia) bicolor</i> (Dziedzicki, 1885)	DB26	
	<i>Mycomysia (Mycomysia) cinerascens</i> (Macquart, 1826)	DB26	Box 22, 26

	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) denmax</i> Väisänen, 1979	DB26	<i>Svetlozara B. Kazandzhieva</i> Box 22
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) digitifera</i> Edwards, 1925	DB26	
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) fasciata</i> (Zetterstedt, 1838)	DB26	
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) flavicollis</i> (Zetterstedt, 1852)	DB26	Box 22, 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) marginata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB26	Box 22, 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) neohyalinata</i> Väisänen, 1984	DB26	
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) occultans</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB26	
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) parva</i> (Dziedzicki, 1885)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) sigma</i> Johannsen, 1910	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) tenuis</i> (Walker, 1856)	DB26	Box 22, 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) tridens</i> (Lundström, 1911)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) vittiventris</i> (Zetterstedt, 1852)	DB26	Box 22
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) wankowiczii</i> (Dziedzicki, 1885)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomya) winnertzi</i> (Dziedzicki, 1885)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomyopsis) penicillata</i> (Dziedzicki, 1885)	DB26	
	<i>Mycomya (Mycomyopsis) trilineata</i> (Zetterstedt, 1838)	DB26	Box 26
	<i>Mycomya (Neomycomya) fimbriata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB26	
	<i>Neoempheria bimaculata</i> (von Roser, 1840)	DB27	
	<i>Neoempheria lineola</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB27	
	<i>Neoempheria pictipennis</i> (Haliday, 1833)	DB27	
	<i>Neoempheria proxima</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB27	
	<i>Neoempheria striata</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB27	
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	<i>Acnemia amoena</i> Winnertz, 1863	-	Jar DBb2
	<i>Acnemia angusta</i> Zaitzev, 1982	-	Jar DBb2
	<i>Acnemia falcata</i> Zaitzev, 1982	DB 28	
	<i>Acnemia longipes</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB 28	Box 23
	<i>Acnemia nitidicollis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB 28	Box 21, 23
	<i>Azana (Azana) anomala</i> (Staeger, 1840)	DB 28	
	<i>Azana (Azana) flavohalterata</i> Strobl in Czerny & Strobl 1909	DB 28	
	<i>Azana (Jugazana) nigricoxa</i> Strobl, 1889	DB 28	
	<i>Megalopelma nigroclavatum</i> (Strobl, 1910)	DB 28	
	<i>Monoclona rufilatera</i> (Walker, 1837)	DB 28	

<i>Neuratelia minor</i> (Lundström, 1912)	DB 28	Box 23
<i>Neuratelia nemoralis</i> (Meigen, 1818)	DB 28	Box 23
<i>Paratinia sciarina</i> Mik, 1874	DB 28	
<i>Phthinia humilis</i> Winnertz, 1863	DB 28	
<i>Phthinia winnertzi</i> Mik, 1869	DB 28	
<i>Polylepta guttiventris</i> (Zetterstedt, 1852)	DB 28	
<i>Polylepta borealis</i> Lundstrom, 1912	DB 28 (Russia)	
<i>Sciophila baltica</i> Zaitzev, 1982	DB 28	Box 21, 23
<i>Sciophila fenestella</i> Curtis, 1837	DB 28	
<i>Sciophila hirta</i> Meigen, 1818	DB 28	
<i>Sciophila lutea</i> Macquart, 1826	DB 28	Box 21, 23
<i>Sciophila nonnisilva</i> Hutson, 1979	DB 28	
<i>Sciophila rufa</i> Meigen, 1830	DB 28	Box 21, 23
<i>Sciophila thoracica</i> Staeger, 1840 as <i>quadriterga</i>	DB 28	Box 23
<i>Speolepta leptogaster</i> (Winnertz, 1863)	DB 28	

Table 2. List of identified specimens of fungus gnats from the Oriental region stored in alcohol in the collection of RNHM – Plovdiv (hol = holotype, par = paratype).

Family Subfamily/ Tribe	Coll. Code	Species	Type	Spec. Sex	Locality data	Notes
Mycetophilidae / Sciophilinae	ORI2_ HOL1	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	hol	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	*Holotype Intact, wings folded
Keroplatidae/ Orfeliini	ORI2_ HOL2	<i>Chetoneura</i> <i>lagangensis</i> Kazandzhieva & Bechev, 2022	hol	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Gunung Mulu NP, Lagang cave; 14.7.2019, leg. Kazandzhieva, sweep net	*Holotype Terminalia a in microvial with the specimen
Mycetophilidae / Gnoristinae	ORI2_ HOL3	<i>Dziedzickia</i> <i>longistyla</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva 2023	hol	1♂	MALAYSIA: Malaysia: Sarawak, Kubah NP, leg. Kazandzhieva	n/a
Mycetophilidae / Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A1	<i>Stenophragma</i> <i>borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P2 Almost intact, parts of legs missing
Mycetophilidae / Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A2	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P3 Almost intact, parts of legs missing

<i>Svetlozara B. Kazandzhieva</i>						
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A3	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P4 Intact in good condition
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A4	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P5 Almost intact, left wing damaged
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A5	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P6 Intact
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A6	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P7 Intact in good condition
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A7	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P8 Almost intact, parts of antennae missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A8	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P11 Almost intact, one leg missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A9	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P12 Legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A10	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P13 Almost intact, parts of legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A11	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P14 Intact
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A12	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P15 Almost intact, parts of legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A13	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P16 Almost intact, parts of legs missing

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Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A14	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P17 Head, wings and parts of legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A15	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P18 Terminalia in microvial with the specimen
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A16	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P10 Intact, one tarsus missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A17	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P9 Almost intact, parts of antennae and legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI1_ A18	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P1 Almost intact, parts of antennae and legs missing
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI2_ A19	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P19 Wings slide- mounted in Euparal
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	ORI2_ A20	<i>S. borneense</i> Bechev & Kazandzhieva, 2020	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Sarawak, Kubah NP, 21.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	P20 Terminalia stored with the specimen, wings slide- mounted in Euparal
Mycetophilidae/ Gnoristinae	ORI2_ PDZ1	<i>Dziedzickia</i> <i>pectinata</i> Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011	par	1♂	THAILAND: Nakhon Nayok: Khao Yai N. P., PA TABAK, 17- 28.4.2001	n/a
Mycetophilidae/ Gnoristinae	ORI2_ PDZ4	<i>Dziedzickia</i> <i>pectinata</i> Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011	par	4♂, 1♀	THAILAND: Nakhon Nayok, Khao Yai N. P. Khao - Kheo, 17- 28.4.2001	n/a
Mycetophilidae/ Gnoristinae	ORI2_ PDZ2	<i>Dziedzickia</i> <i>bifida</i> Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011	par	1♂	MALAYSIA: Hulu, Perak, Belum Expedition, B. Camp, I. Sivec leg., light trap	n/a

Mycetophilidae/ Gnoristinae	ORI2_ PDZ3	<i>Dziedzickia bifida</i> Sevcik, Bechev & Hippa, 2011	par	1♂	THAILND: Chiang Dao Wildlife Research Station, 12- 13.5.2004, Sivec & Horvat leg.	n/a
Bolitophilidae	OR1_ B2	<i>Bolitophila japonica</i> Okada, 1934	No	1♂	NEPAL: Parvat, Ghorepani, 2860 m, in Rhododendron forest, 13.10.2006, leg. D. Bechev, ♂	n/a
Bolitophilidae	OR1_ B3	<i>Bolitophila japonica</i> Okada, 1934	No	2♂	NEPAL: Parvat, Ghorepani, 2860 m, in Rhododendron forest, 13.10.2006, leg. D. Bechev, 2 ♂	n/a
Mycetophilidae/ Sciophilinae	OR1_ B1	<i>Eudicrana</i> sp.	No	1♀	MALAYSIA: Sabah, Kinabalu NP, 23.7.2019; leg. Kazandzhieva	n/a
Mycetophilidae/ Leiinae	ORI2_ AL01	<i>Allactoneura argentosquamosa</i> (Enderlein, 1910)	No	1♂	THAILAND: Chiangmai, Zoo; 21-28.05.1988; leg. Chantaramongkol	det. D. Bechev, 2022 Terminalia strongly lightened
Mycetophilidae/ Leiinae	ORI2_ AL02	<i>Allactoneura cincta</i> De Meijere, 1907	No	1♂	INDONESIA: N. Sumatra, W Pematang Siantar, 750 m; 23.02.1994; Leg Sivec, I.	det. D. Bechev, 2022

Discussion

During the collecting period (1981-2000s), the collection was supplemented without systematic revision of samples or taxonomic re-evaluation.

As the most extensive collection of its kind in the country, it requires a reassessment in light of recent taxonomic advancements. Unidentified specimens should be formally identified, and further research is needed on materials from Greece, Turkey, and the Oriental region. Given the ongoing refinement of species concepts through the study of type specimens, additional

materials and molecular genetics, certain designations may be inaccurate and require critical assessment.

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Psocodea (Insecta) reports from the Upper Thracian Lowland: published data and new records

Dilian G. Georgiev^{1, 2, *}, Vassil K. Genchev³

¹Department of General Animal Husbandry, Section Ecology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Trakia University – Stara Zagora, 6000 Stara Zagora, BULGARIA

²Department of Ecology and Environmental Conservation, Faculty of Biology, Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, 24 Tzar Assen Str., 4000 Plovdiv, BULGARIA,

*E-mail: diliangeorgiev@uni-plovdiv.bg, dilyan.georgiev@trakia-uni.bg

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2885-4895>

³Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, Plovdiv, BULGARIA

Abstract. This study presents an updated overview of the Psocodea (Insecta) fauna of the Upper Thracian Lowland in Southern Bulgaria, based on both published records and new field collections from 2017 to 2025. A total of 26 species were documented, 18 of which are new for the region. Specimens were collected from a variety of natural and human-modified habitats, including riparian forests, mixed deciduous woodlands, conifer plantations, and urban environments.

Keywords: lowlands, psocids, diversity, species, habitats

Introduction

The Psocodea (barkflies or booklice) are a small but ecologically significant group of insects, playing a key role in the decomposition of organic matter in forest ecosystems. Despite their importance, the knowledge of Psocodea diversity in Bulgaria (a total of 73 species known: Georgiev, 2020, 2022, Georgiev *et al.*, 2024), particularly in the Upper Thracian Lowland, remains fragmented.

The aim of the present study is to summarize the available published information and to provide new data on the psocids of the Upper Thracian Lowland.

Material and methods

Barkflies were collected irregularly between 2017 and 2025 from different habitats and localities of the Upper Thracian Lowland, Southern Bulgaria. Sieving of leaf litter and beating the vegetation were mainly used. The material was preserved in 96%

ethanol and examined in the laboratory. Species identifications were based mainly on Lienhard (1998). A review of all published data was made and information was summarized (Georgiev, 2017a, b, 2018).

Results

A total of 26 species are known from the Upper Thracian Lowland, from which 18 were new records to the area. The species were collected across a range of habitats, including floodplain forests (*Salix*, *Ulmus*), mixed deciduous forests (*Quercus*, *Carpinus*, *Acer*), conifer plantations (*Pinus nigra*), shrublands near agricultural land, and urban environments. The greatest species richness was observed in riparian and mixed forests.

Trogiidae

***Lepinotus reticulatus* Enderlein, 1905**

Reported by Georgiev (2018): “Plovdiv, Trihalmic Hill, near the Faculty

of Biology, Plovdiv University, detritus beneath *Robinia pseudoacacia* L. and *Celtis australis* L., N42 08 51.84 E24 45 1.2, 150 m a. s. l., 06.04.2017, 7♀, 3 nymphs.”

New material examined: 30.04.2017, Kovach vill., river bank forest (*Salix* sp., *Ulmus* sp.) near water source, N42 17 47.5 E25 50 47.9, 128 m a. s. l., 1♀, from a trunk of *Salix* sp., collected by sieving; 14.09.2021, between Kalitinovo and Preslaven villages, mixed broadleaf forest (*Acer*, *Ulmus*, *Carpinus*), N42 25 00.6 E25 44 35.9, 138 m a. s. l., 1♀, from detritus of leaves and grasses, collected by sieving; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 1♀, from *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation; 01.09.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., 3 ♀.

***Lepinotus inquilinus* Heyden, 1850**

Reported by Georgiev (2017a): “28.4.2017, north of Lyubenovo vill., bank of Sazliyka river, flood forest of *Salix* sp., among small pieces of wood and detritus deposited by waters at the base of a willow, N42 12 33.2 E25 56 01.3, 99 m a. s. l., 2 ♀, coll. by sieving.”

Psyllipsocidae

***Dorypteryx domestica* (Smithers, 1958)**

Reported by Georgiev (2018): “Plovdiv, Kyuchuk Parizh district, apartment in a block of flats, on wall behind a dresser, N42 07 30.27 E24 44 17.15, 120 m a. s. l., 29.08.2017, 1 nymph; Plovdiv, the library of the Regional Natural History Museum of Plovdiv, on a wall, N42 07 30.27 E24 44 17.15, 120 m a. s. l., 29.08.2017, 1 ♀.”

***Psyllipsocus ramburii* Selys-Longchamps, 1872**

Reported by Georgiev (2018): “Plovdiv, the library of the Regional Natural History Museum of Plovdiv, on a wall, N42 07 30.27 E24 44 17.15, 120 m a. s. l., 29.08.2017, 1 ♀”.

Liposcelididae

***Liposcelis decolor* (Pearman, 1925)**

Reported by Georgiev (2017b): “22.02.2017, Bulgaria, Upper Thracian Lowland, Plovdiv City, The attic of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, beneath entomological boxes, N42° 8' 56.55" E24° 44' 34.34", 4 dead, dry specimens, D. Georgiev leg., det., coll.”, and Georgiev (2018): “Plovdiv, Kyuchuk Parizh district, apartment in a block of flats, on wall behind a dresser, N42 07 30.27 E24 44 17.15, 120 m a. s. l., 29.08.2017, 1 ♀”.

New material examined: 01.09.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., 3 ♀.

***Liposcelis corrodens* (Heymons, 1909)**

Reported by Georgiev (2017b): “22.02.2017, Bulgaria, Upper Thracian Lowland, Plovdiv City, The attic of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, beneath entomological boxes, N42° 8' 56.55" E24° 44' 34.34", 1 dead, dry specimen, D. Georgiev leg., det., coll.”

***Liposcelis bostrychophila* Badonnel, 1931**

Reported by Georgiev (2017a): “28.4.2017, north of Lyubenovo vill., bank of Sazliyka river, flood forest of *Salix* sp., among small pieces of wood and detritus deposited by waters at the base of a willow, and under bark of a willow trunk, N42 12 33.2 E25 56 01.3, 99 m a. s. l., 3 ♀, coll. by sieving”, and Georgiev (2018): “Plovdiv, bank of Maritsa River

near Grebna Baza, flood forest, under bark of *Sambucus* sp., N42 09 08.7 E24 43 08.1, 166 m a. s. l., 18.05.2017, 1 ♀; Plovdiv, Bunardzhik Tepe Hill, broadleaf park forest, under bark of *Fraxinus* sp., N42 08 42.9 E24 44 18.1, 199 m a. s. l., 29.08.2017, 1 ♂.”

***Liposcelis pearmani* Lienhard, 1990**

Material examined: 30.04.2017, Kovach vill., river bank forest (*Salix* sp., *Ulmus* sp.) near water source, N42 17 47.5 E25 50 47.9, 128 m a. s. l., 2 ♀, from a trunk of *Salix* sp., collected by sieving; 11.9.2021, north of Trilistnik vill., near Stryama River, bushes and trees at river bank, N42 12 47.0 E24 51 49.4, 166 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp. and *Rubus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation.

***Liposcelis priesneri* Enderlein, 1925**

Material examined: 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation.

***Liposcelis rufa* Broadhead, 1950**

Material examined: 14.09.2021, between Kalitinovo and Preslaven villages, mixed broadleaf forest (*Acer*, *Ulmus*, *Carpinus*), N42 25 00.6 E25 44 35.9, 138 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from a dry branch, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 2 ♀, from *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation.

Caeciliusidae

***Valenzuela flavidus* (Stephens, 1836)**

Material examined: 17.06.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6,

159 m a. s. l., 1 ♀; 13.06.2025, near Yagodovo vill., bushes, N42 07 33.6 E24 50 34.8, 154 m a. s. l., from various bushes, 1 ♀, collected by beating the vegetation.

***Valenzuela piceus* (Kolbe, 1882)**

Material examined: 14.11.2021, E of Byal Izvor vill., *P. nigra* forest, N42 09 36.5 E25 38 43.7, 135 m a. s. l., 2 ♀, from dry branches with leaves of *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation.

Stenopsocidae

***Graphopsocus cruciatus* (Linnaeus, 1768)**

Material examined: 20.05.2021, East of Stara Zagora city, between agricultural lands and shrubs, N42 26 02.7 E25 42 24.4, 170 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from *Prunus cerasifera* Ehrh., collected by beating the vegetation; 14.09.2021, between Kalitinovo and Preslaven villages, mixed broadleaf forest (*Acer*, *Ulmus*, *Carpinus*), N42 25 00.6 E25 44 35.9, 138 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from *Acer tataricum* L., collected by beating the vegetation; 15.09.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., scrubs and trees between agricultural lands (*Prunus spinosa* L., *P. cerasifera*, *Rubus* sp., *Ulmus* sp.), N42 26 00.0 E25 47 50.9, 129 m a. s. l., 1 ♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Juglans regia* L., collected by beating the vegetation; 19.10.2021, west of Han Asparuhovo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands, N42 26 36.4 E25 50 20.3, 94 m a. s. l., 4 ♀, from *P. cerasifera*, collected by beating the vegetation; 07.11.2021, E of Trankovo vill., pasture lands near a small river (Dunda River) with very few bushes and trees, N42 17 19.2 E25 49 37.9, 141 m a. s. l., 1 ♂, from *Carpinus betulus* L., collected by beating the vegetation; 09.11.2021, south of Topolyane vill., along Sazliyka River, river bank forest of *Salix* sp. with scrubs, N42 17 46.8 E25 52 11.9, 102 m a. s. l.,

1♂, 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 14.11.2021, E of Byal Izvor vill., *P. nigra* forest, N42 09 36.5 E25 38 43.7, 135 m a. s. l., 1♂, from dry branches with leaves of *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 2♂, 10♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., bushes, N42 10 43.9 E25 13 21.5, 112 m a. s. l., 1♀, from *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 02.12.2021, S of Dinkata vill., N bank of Topolnitsa River, scattered *Salix* sp. bushes and trees, N42 16 56.4 E24 13 30.2, 220 m a. s. l., 5♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 05.12.2021, near Yastrebovo vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 17 14.8 E25 39 45.0, 160 m a. s. l., 4♂, 3♀, from dry and live branches of *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 28.05.2022, Bozduganovska Koriya forest, *Quercus* sp., *Fraxinus* sp. and *C. betulus* forest, N42 22 17.9 E25 44 30.0, 126 m a. s. l., 1♀, from *P. cerasifera*, collected by beating the vegetation; 27.04.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 07 33.6 N24 50 34.8, 154 m a. s. l., 3♀.

Amphipsocidae

***Kolbia quisquiliarum* Bertkau, 1882**

Material examined: 25.10.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 07 33.6 E24 50 34.8, 154 m a. s. l., 1♀.

Lachesillidae

***Lachesilla pedicularia* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

Material examined: 11.9.2021, north of Trilistnik vill., near Stryama river, bushes and trees at river bank, N42 12 47.0 E24 51 49.4, 166 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp. and

Rubus sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 19.10.2021, west of Han Asparuhovo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands, N42 26 36.4 E25 50 20.3, 94 m a. s. l., 3♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Carpinus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 09.11.2021, south of Topolyane vill., along Sazliyka river, river bank forest of *Salix* sp. with scrubs, N42 17 46.8 E25 52 11.9, 102 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation (found dead and dry); 19.09.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., 3♀, 01.10.2024, same locality, 1♂, 1♀.

***Lachesilla quercus* (Kolbe, 1880)**

Material examined: 14.09.2021, between Kalitinovo and Preslaven villages, mixed broadleaf forest (*Acer*, *Ulmus*, *Carpinus*), N42 25 00.6 E25 44 35.9, 138 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Acer campestre* L., collected by beating the vegetation; 18.09.2021, south of Kolena vill., near Kumurdzha river, bushes and trees near stream, N42 26 50.1 E25 45 10.7, 187 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Ulmus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 4♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 1♀, from *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 17.06.2024, Yagodovo vill., yard of a house, N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., 4♀; 07.01.2025, same locality, from dry leaves on the ground, 1♀.

***Lachesilla bernardi* Badonnel, 1938**

Material examined: 15.09.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., scrubs and trees between agricultural lands (*P. spinosa*, *P. cerasifera*, *Rubus* sp., *Ulmus* sp.),

N42 26 00.0 E25 47 50.9, 129 m a. s. l., 2♂, 2♀, from dry branches with leaves of *J. regia*, collected by beating the vegetation; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 28.05.2022, Bozduganovska Koriya forest, *Quercus* sp., *Fraxinus* sp. and *C. betulus* forest, N42 22 17.9 E25 44 30.0, 126 m a. s. l., 2♂, from dry stems with seeds of *Arctium lappa* L., collected by beating the vegetation; 22.03.2025, Yagodovo vill., yard of a house, N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., from dry leaves on the ground, 2♂, collected by hand; 31.05.2025, near Yagodovo vill., bushes, N42 07 33.6 E24 50 34.8, 154 m a. s. l., from old cloth on the ground, 4♀, collected by hand; 09.06.2025, near Yagodovo vill., bushes, N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., from old cloth on the ground, 2♀, collected by hand.

Ectopsocidae

***Ectopsocus briggsi* McLachlan, 1899**

Material examined: 09.11.2021, south of Topolyane vill., along Sazliyka river, river bank forest of *Salix* sp. with scrubs, N42 17 46.8 E25 52 11.9, 102 m a. s. l., 1♂, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 14.11.2021, E of Byal Izvor vill., *P. nigra* forest, N42 09 36.5 E25 38 43.7, 135 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1♂, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 05.12.2021, near Yastrebovo vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 17 14.8 E25 39 45.0, 160 m a. s. l., 2♂, 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation.

***Ectopsocus meridionalis* Ribaga, 1904**

Material examined: 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation.

***Ectopsocus petersi* Smithers, 1978**

Material examined: 23.05.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands planted with *Triticum aestivum* L., N42 26 47.8 E25 46 31.8, 167 m a. s. l., 4♀, 2♂, from *Cupressus* sp., 1♂, from *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 23.05.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands planted with *T. aestivum*, from branches of *P. spinosa*, N42 26 41.8 E25 46 11.2, 158 m a. s. l., 1♂, collected by beating the vegetation; 14.09.2021, between Kalitinovo and Preslaven villages, mixed broadleaf forest (*Acer*, *Ulmus*, *Carpinus*), N42 25 00.6 E25 44 35.9, 138 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *A. campestre*, collected by beating the vegetation; 15.09.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., scrubs and trees between agricultural lands (*P. spinosa*, *P. cerasifera*, *Rubus* sp., *Ulmus* sp.), N42 26 00.0 E25 47 50.9, 129 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *J. regia*, collected by beating the vegetation; 18.09.2021, south of Kolena vill., near Kumurdzha river, bushes and trees near stream, N42 26 50.1 E25 45 10.7, 187 m a. s. l., 1♂, from dry branches with leaves of *Ulmus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 19.10.2021, west of Han Asparuhovo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands, N42 26 36.4 E25 50 20.3, 94 m a. s. l., 4♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Carpinus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 19.10.2021, west of Han Asparuhovo vill., mixed broadleaf forest (*C. betulus*, *P. cerasifera* *Acer* spp., *Quercus* spp.), N42 26 26.8 E25 49 52.1, 78 m a. s. l., 2♂, from dry branches with leaves of *C. betulus*, 1♀,

from *Ulmus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 07.11.2021, E of Trankovo vill., pasture lands near a small river (Dunda river) with very few bushes and trees, N42 17 19.2 E25 49 37.9, 141 m a. s. l., 1♂, from *C. betulus*, collected by hand; 09.11.2021, south of Topolyane vill., along Sazliyka river, river bank forest of *Salix* sp. with scrubs, N42 17 46.8 E25 52 11.9, 102 m a. s. l., 6♂, 4♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 2♂, 7♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected by beating the vegetation; 02.12.2021, S of Dinkata vill., N bank of Topolnitsa river, scattered *Salix* sp. bushes and trees, N42 16 56.4 E24 13 30.2, 220 m a. s. l., 3♀, from dry branches with leaves of *Salix* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 05.12.2021, near Yastrebovo vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 17 14.8 E25 39 45.0, 160 m a. s. l., 4♂, 6♀, from dry and live branches of *Quercus* sp., collected by beating the vegetation; 28.05.2022, Bozduganovska Koriya forest, *Quercus* sp., *Fraxinus* sp. and *C. betulus* forest, N42 22 17.9 E25 44 30.0, 126 m a. s. l., 1♂, from dry branches, collected by beating the vegetation; 28.03.2024, N of Yagodovo vill., bushes near a canal, N42 07 33.6 E24 50 34.8, 153 m a. s. l., 1♂; 08.04.2024, Yagodovo vill., yard of a house, N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., 2♂, 7♀; 17.06.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., 2♂; 04.07.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., 1♂, 1♀; 07.01.2025, Yagodovo vill., yard of a house, N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., from dry leaves on the ground, 2♀, collected by hand.

***Ectopsocus vachoni* Badonnel, 1945**

Material examined: 17.11.2021, NE of Pamukchii vill., *Quercus* sp. forest, N42 19 19.9 E25 39 26.7, 131 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves, collected

by beating the vegetation; 07.01.2025, Yagodovo vill., yard of a house, N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., 2♀, from dry leaves on the ground, collected by hand; 18.05.2025, near Yagodovo vill., bushes, N42 05 47.4 E24 51 22.0, 164 m a. s. l., 2♀, from old cloth on the ground, collected by hand; 09.06.2025, same data, 1♀; 13.06.2025, near Yagodovo vill., bushes, N42 07 33.6 E24 50 34.8, 154 m a. s. l., from various bushes, 2♀, collected by beating the vegetation.

Elipsocidae

***Cuneopalpus cyanops* (Rostock, 1876)**

Material examined: 14.11.2021, E of Byal Izvor vill., *P. nigra* forest, N42 09 36.5 E25 38 43.7, 135 m a. s. l., 1♀, from dry branches with leaves of *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 3♀, from *P. nigra*, collected by beating the vegetation.

***Elipsocus moebiusi* Tetens, 1891**

Material examined: 23.05.2021, north of Gorno Botevo vill., broadleaf trees and shrubs at the boundaries of agricultural lands planted with *T. aestivum*, from branches of *P. spinosa*, N42 26 41.8 E25 46 11.2, 158 m a. s. l., 1♂, collected by beating the vegetation; 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 2♂, 4♀ (1♂, 1♀ found dead), from *P. nigra* and *Paliurus spina-christi* Mill., collected by beating the vegetation.

***Hemineura dispar* Tetens, 1891**

Material examined: 25.11.2021, E of Plodovitovo vill., mixed forest (*Quercus* sp., *P. nigra*), 4♂, 4♀, from *P. nigra* and *P. spina-christi*, collected by beating the vegetation.

***Hemineura* sp.**

Material examined: 19.10.2024, Yagodovo vill., N42 06 38.5 E24 51 03.6, 159 m a. s. l., 3♂.

Psocidae

Amphigerontia contaminata (Stephens, 1836)

Material examined: 28.05.2022, Bozduganovska Koriya forest, *Quercus* sp., *Fraxinus* sp. and *C. betulus* forest, N42 22 17.9 E25 44 30.0, 126 m a. s. l., 1♀, from *P. spinosa*, collected by beating the vegetation.

Amphigerontia intermedia (Tetens, 1891)

Reported by Georgiev *et al.* (2024): 28.05.2022, Bozduganovska Koriya forest, *Quercus* sp., *Fraxinus* sp. and *C. betulus* forest, N42 22 17.9 E25 44 30.0, 126 m a. s. l., 1♂, from *P. spinosa*, collected by beating the vegetation.

Conclusions

The diversity of Psocodea in the Upper Thracian Lowland reflects the region's complex mosaic of habitats. Species richness was highest in riparian and mixed deciduous forests, which offer a variety of microhabitats such as moist detritus, decaying wood, and rich vegetation structure. Several species, such as *Graphopsocus cruciatus* and *Ectopsocus petersi*, were widely distributed across multiple habitat types, indicating ecological plasticity. In contrast, species like *Dorypteryx domestica* and *Liposcelis decolor* were restricted to urban and synanthropic environments, highlighting the importance of human-modified habitats as refuges for some taxa. The presence of both habitat generalists and specialists suggests a relatively stable and functionally diverse barkfly community in the region.

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Short Note

First records of Psocodea (Insecta) from La Désirade Island, Guadeloupe

Dilian G. Georgiev^{1, 2, *}, Todor M. Mishev²

¹Department of General Animal Husbandry, Section Ecology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Trakia University – Stara Zagora, 6000 Stara Zagora, BULGARIA

²Department of Ecology and Environmental Conservation, Faculty of Biology, Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”, 24 Tzar Assen Str., 4000 Plovdiv, BULGARIA,

*E-mail: diliangeorgiev@uni-plovdiv.bg, dilyan.georgiev@trakia-uni.bg
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2885-4895>

Abstract. This study presents the first records of four Psocodea species from the Island of La Desirade, Guadeloupe. Barkflies were collected during a one-day survey on August 20, 2025, from three distinct localities. The recorded species are: *Liposcelis bostrychophila* Badonnel, 1931, *Ectopsocus maindroni* Badonnel, 1935, *Ectopsocus thibaudi* Badonnel, 1979, and an unidentified species from the genus *Archipsocus* Hagen. *Liposcelis bostrychophila* is a new record for the entire Antilles, while the species from the genus *Archipsocus* is a new record for Guadeloupe.

Keywords: Caribbean, diversity, habitats, psocids, species

Introduction

The Antilles, in particular, are a group of islands with unique ecological characteristics, yet their psocid fauna is still poorly known. Prior studies in the region, such as those by Badonnel (1979, 1981, 1988, 1989), have provided initial insights, but extensive areas, including the island of La Desirade, have not been systematically explored. The collection of psocid specimens from these lesser-studied islands is crucial for creating accurate regional checklists and understanding species distribution patterns.

The aim of the present study is to provide the first records of Psocodea species from the Island of La Desirade, Guadeloupe, based on specimens collected during a recent field survey.

Material and methods

Barkflies were collected during one day, 20.08.2025, by the second author from three localities on La Desirade Island, Guadeloupe (Fig. 1.):

1: 20.08.2025, near Plage des Galets, 16°17'47.3"N 61°05'32.8"W, 13 m a. s. l., arid bush;

2: 20.08.2025, near Plage du Desert, dry bush, 16°18'25.0"N 61°03'16.5"W, 55 m a. s. l.;

3: 20.08.2025, Guadeloupe, East Part of La Desirade Island, 16°20'21.0"N 61°00'32.3"W, 20 m a. s. l., forest of Manchineel (*Hippomane mancinella*), from dry and fresh leaves.

All material was collected by beating the vegetation above a plastic container, by brush and stored in 96% ethanol and examined in the laboratory. The photos

(specimens in glycerin) were taken by a camera Canon PowerShot SX500IS through the eyepiece of a light microscope Optika.

Species identifications were based on Mockford (1993) and Lienhard (1998), distributions were considered according Badonnel (1981) and Lienhard (2016).



Fig. 1. Sampling localities on the La Désirade Island (numbers correspond with those in Material and Methods).

Results and Discussion

Four species were recorded as new records for the La Désirade Island, and one – as a new record for the Antilles:

Family Liposcelididae

Liposcelis bostrychophila Badonnel, 1931

Material examined: loc. 3, 1 ♀ (Fig. 2A). Remark: This species is cosmopolitan (Lienhard, 2016). New record for the entire Antilles.

Family Ectopsocidae

Ectopsocus maindroni Badonnel, 1935

Material examined: loc. 1, 2 ♂ (Fig. 2B). Remark: The species was reported for Guadeloupe only from the area of Morne Claire Fontaine, Basse Terre Island (Badonnel, 1981).

Ectopsocus thibaudi Badonnel, 1979

Material examined: loc. 1, 12 ♀, 8 ♂; loc. 2, 16 ♀, 9 ♂; loc. 3, 10 ♀, 5 ♂. Remark: The species is known from USA, Antilles, Mexico, Puerto Rico and the Guianas (Lienhard, 2016). Considering the numerous specimens collected, probably widely distributed and abundant in the area of La Désirade Island, inhabiting dry vegetation of various species, including the highly toxic Manchineel (*Hippomane mancinella*).

Family Archipsocidae

Archipsocus sp.

Material examined: loc. 1, 1 ♂. Remark: Identification of species from this genus is difficult and specific.

Series of both male and female specimens are sometimes required, along with a detailed study of their distinctive characteristics. Nevertheless,

a species from this genus has not been reported from Guadeloupe until now. This is the first record of the genus in the region.

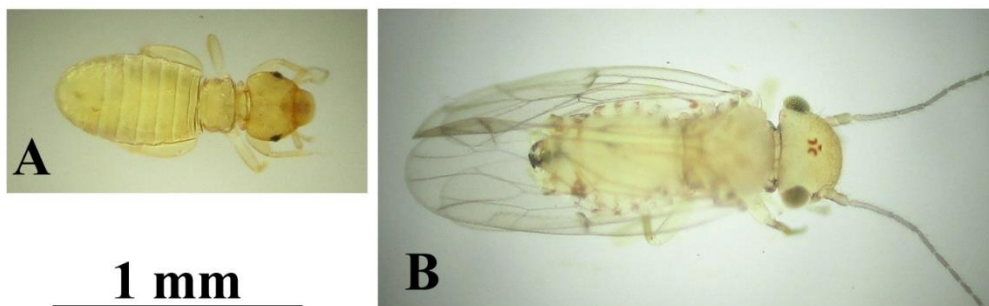


Fig. 2. Two of the Psocodea species recorded from La Desirade Island: A – *Liposcelis bostrychophila* (female, loc. 3), B – *Ectopsocus maindroni* (male, loc. 1).

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Short Note

A new record of *Telescopus fallax* (Fleischmann, 1831) (Squamata: Colubridae) near the border between Bulgaria and Greece in the Rhodope Mountains, Xanthi Regional Unit

Teodor D. Chetalbashev*

Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, 34 Hristo G. Danov Str., Plovdiv 4000, Bulgaria

*E-mail: t.chetalbashev@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-5738-8550>

Abstract. This study presents a new record of the European Cat Snake (*Telescopus fallax*), based on a deceased juvenile specimen from the Western Rhodopes in the Xanthi Regional Unit, Greece, 2.4 km away from the border with Bulgaria. The record fills a gap within the known range of the species and raises the question of its distribution in the neighboring parts of Bulgaria, where known records are extremely limited.

Keywords: European Cat Snake, Mediterranean Cat Snake, Northern Greece, Western Rhodopes

Introduction

The Xanthi Regional Unit is a part of the Eastern Macedonia and Thrace administrative region located in North-Eastern Greece and has a total area of 1,793 km². About 54% of its territory is occupied by forests, followed by cultivated and fallow land (32%), pastures (7.5%) and areas under water (4%) (IMSI, 1999–2000). Furthermore, the area includes some of the southernmost parts of the Western Rhodopes, which have a unique Continental-Mediterranean climate and biodiversity (Stefanov, 2006). It borders the Aegean Sea to the south and the Bulgarian provinces of Smolyan and Kardzhali to the north. To the west lies the regional unit of Kavala, to the northwest - that of Drama and to the east - that of Rodopi.

The European Cat Snake *Telescopus fallax* (Fleischmann, 1831) is a secretive and almost completely crepuscular and

nocturnal species. It inhabits warm stony areas such as degraded or rocky deciduous woodlands, slopes, old walls, ruins and orchards, sometimes near human settlements. (Arnold & Ovenden, 2004; Speybroeck *et al.*, 2018). In the Balkans, it occurs mainly along the Mediterranean coast, as well as the Greek mainland and most of the Aegean and Ionian Islands. Its range in Bulgaria is limited, consisting of the valleys of the Struma and Arda Rivers (Beshkov & Nanev, 2002; Naumov, 2007).

Despite the relatively wide distribution, its detection has largely remained difficult, likely due to its nighttime activity and the scarcity of research, focused specifically on it (Domozetski *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, each report can be of great value for understanding its biological and ecological characteristics.

Material and methods

On the 24th of August 2025 at 17:57 h, a deceased juvenile snake was found at the immediate vicinity of the Iamatikes Piges settlement, on the pathway to the hot springs located there (41.3477 °N, 25.0132 °E; elevation 400 m), just 2.4 km south-southeast from the border with Bulgaria (Smolyan province) - Fig.1. The specimen, measured approximately 23 cm in total length, was being actively moved by ants (*Cataglyphis* sp.) which initially brought attention to it - Fig. 2. It was identified *in situ* as *T. fallax* by the dorsal spots, the head shape and the vertical eye slits (Naumov, 2007). The occurring habitat corresponded to 91AA of the EUNIS Habitat Classification – white-oak forests, dominated by *Quercus pubescens* Willd on stony places with a varying rock type foundation (Kavrakova *et al.*, 2009). Due to the immediate proximity of the urban territory, the terrain was under strong anthropogenic pressure.

Results and Discussion

The specimen was rather preserved and did not show signs of predation. The only visible damage was a small crushed spot in the upper body area. Possible causes of death could be a human intervention or the result of an attack from a domestic cat which are known to sometimes kill prey, including snakes, without feeding on it (Cecchetti *et al.*, 2021).

Publications throughout the years have given some knowledge on the extension of this species in North-Eastern Greece (Fig. 1.): Southern Evros area (Helmer & Sholte, 1985); Central Xanthi area - about 23.4 km to the south of the presented data and the closest to it (Chondropoulos, 1989); Southern (Cattaneo & Cattaneo, 2014) and North-Eastern (Christopoulos, 2022) Rodopi area. Yet, on the Bulgarian side of the Rhodope Mountains, the data about its distribution is exceptionally scarce with

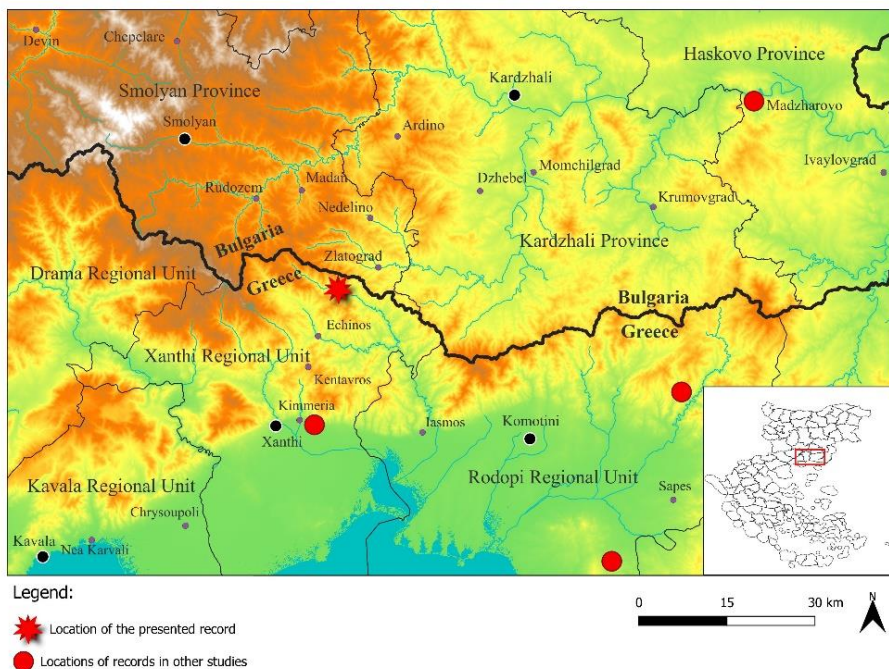


Fig. 1. Map of the presented and other reported records of *Telescopus fallax* in the Xanthi Regional Unit and the neighboring provinces in Greece and Bulgaria (map created with QGIS v.3.40.11 (QGIS.org, 2025)).

just one published record from the Eastern Rhodopes - Madzharovo, Haskovo Province (Petrov *et al.*, 2002) - about 77 km away to the northeast from the presented record. Additionally, all of these localities, except for the Southern Evros and North-Eastern Rodopi areas, have been further invigorated by community observations within the iNaturalist network from the last few years (iNaturalist, 2025).

Similarly to other reports on new herpetofauna records (Georgiev & Mollov, 2016; Christopoulos, 2022; Georgiev, 2025), the presented data fills a gap in the distribution of the species, even though it falls within its expected

range. Additionally, the close distance to the Smolyan Province of Bulgaria, from which there are no known records of *T. fallax*, raises the question about its potential presence there. While most distribution maps portray this part of the border between the two countries as the limit of this snake's extension, it should always be taken into consideration that species and ecosystems rarely follow the political boundaries which humans draw on maps (Speybroeck *et al.*, 2018). For these reasons, this report is of great interest to herpetology and may serve as the pavement for further studies in the area, where missing links between the populations of this species in the two countries clearly exist.



Fig. 2. Dorsal (left) and ventral (right) view of the deceased juvenile *Telescopus fallax*, found in the Xanthi Regional Unit.

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Dr. Kaloyan Ivanov for his expertise in identifying the ant genus. Lastly, the author owes special thanks to his good friend Tsvetomir, who pointed out the deceased specimen, which otherwise could have been missed.

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Short Note

A Recent Record of Sturgeon (*Acipenser* sp.) in the Maritsa River near Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria, with Reference to Historical Data

Kristiyan B. Vladov *

Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, 34 Hristo G. Danov Str., Plovdiv 4000, Bulgaria

*E-mail: vladovkristiyan@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2444-1074>

Abstract. In 2022, a single specimen belonging to the genus *Acipenser* was recorded in a suburban section of the Maritsa River near Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria. The fish was captured during recreational spinning angling, photographed, and released alive. Reliable identification to species level was not possible. The record provides new data on the contemporary ichthyofauna of the Maritsa River.

Keywords: fish, ichthyofauna, Maritsa River, Plovdiv, sturgeon

Introduction

Over the years, the species composition of the fish fauna of the Maritsa River and its tributaries has been documented by various authors. The earliest data were provided by Heckel (1837), who reported 17 fish species from five families. In the early 20th century, Kovatcheff (1921) recorded 25 species from 11 families, while Chichkoff (1935) noted 26 species from nine families, including the presence of *Acipenser sturio* (Linnaeus, 1758). Records of sturgeon occurrence in the Maritsa River are found only in a limited number of early publications (Kovatcheff, 1921; Morov, 1931; Zashev, 1961).

In the mid-20th century, Mihaylova (1965) documented 18 species from eight families and reported a significant decline in the ichthyofauna compared to the

1930s, with sturgeons no longer being recorded. Subsequent studies conducted in the Plovdiv region and along the Maritsa River during the late 20th and early 21st centuries also failed to record representatives of the genus *Acipenser* (Velcheva & Mehterov, 2005; Kolev, 2013; Gecheva *et al.*, 2011; Georgiev *et al.*, 2015; Mollov & Georgiev, 2015; Petrov & Mollov, 2022; Georgiev, 2022).

The present note complements the most recent published data (Georgiev, 2022) by reporting a new occurrence of sturgeon in a suburban section of the Maritsa River near Plovdiv (Fig. 1.), contributing to the current understanding of the river's ichthyofauna (Fig. 2.).

Material and Methods

The present note is based on field observations and an analysis of published

data. Field observations were carried out in a suburban section of the Maritsa River near Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria, during the period 2022–2024.

Field data originate from opportunistic capture during recreational fishing with a rod. The recorded specimen of the genus *Acipenser* was caught in 2022 using spinning fishing with an artificial lure. The study is non-

systematic in nature and was not aimed at quantitative assessment of the fish fauna.

The specimen was identified in situ based on external morphological characters. No ichthyological material was fixed or preserved, and no specimens were deposited in collections. The fish was photographed and released alive immediately after capture.



Fig. 1. Sturgeon specimen caught in the suburban zone of the Maritsa River near Plovdiv, Bulgaria, during fieldwork in 2022. Photo: Personal archive.

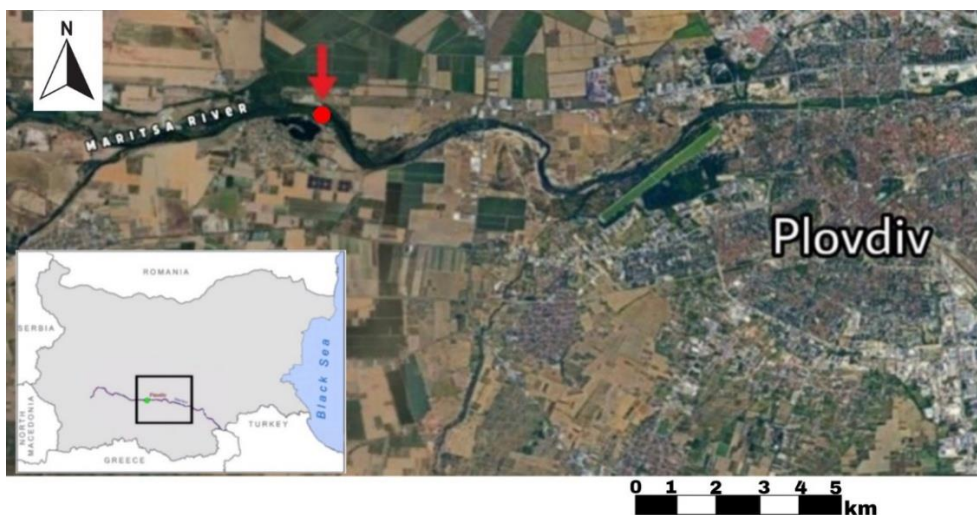


Fig. 2. Exact location of the sturgeon capture along the Maritsa River, marked with a red arrow. The site is situated in the *Benta* locality near the 9th kilometer, west of the city of Plovdiv, Southern Bulgaria.

Species identification was performed using standard ichthyological identification keys (Karapetkova & Zivkov, 1995; Kottelat & Freyhof, 2007). Due to the lack of detailed morphometric data and genetic material, the specimen could not be reliably identified to species level and is therefore referred to as *Acipenser* sp.

Results and Discussion

During the period 2022–2024, the capture of a single specimen belonging to the genus *Acipenser* was documented in a suburban section of the Maritsa River near Plovdiv. The specimen was caught in 2022 during recreational spinning angling. The fish was photographed and released alive, and due to the lack of detailed morphometric and genetic data, reliable identification to species level was not possible. Historical records indicate that sturgeons were present in the river basin in the past, but they have been considered absent since the mid-20th century. In this context, possible explanations for the origin of the recorded specimen include long-distance natural movement within the river system or anthropogenic introduction, for example through escape from aquaculture facilities (Koutrakis & Economidis, 2006; Koutrakis *et al.*, 2011).

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Miscellaneous

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov: Between Wildlife and Living Science – 50 Years Dedicated to Biology, Museums, and Society

Kristiyan B. Vladov*

Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, Hristo G. Danov Str. 34,
BG-4000 Plovdiv, BULGARIA

*E-mail: vladovkristiyan@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-2444-1074>

Abstract. This jubilee article is dedicated to the 50th anniversary of Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov, a biologist, lecturer, and director of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv. It outlines his scientific and professional biography, emphasizing his leadership in the museum, participation in field studies and international expeditions, scientific contributions, and recognitions. The article discusses the significance of his work for contemporary museum practices, environmental education, and popularizing biological sciences in Bulgaria.

Keywords: Ognyan Todorov, Natural History Museum of Plovdiv, invertebrates, museum pedagogy, science communication, biodiversity

Introduction

The personality of Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov (Fig. 1.) embodies the characteristics of a researcher, educator, leader, and public figure, making lasting contributions to modernizing museum practices, integrating science into societal life, and building a cultural dialogue between humans and nature. His professional journey exemplifies the successful combination of academic biology with applied and educational practices aimed at the broader public. His commitment to environmental education and conservation has inspired numerous projects that significantly impacted public awareness and involvement in biodiversity protection initiatives. Due to his dedication and approachable manner, Dr. Todorov has established himself as a well-recognized and influential figure in both the scientific community and wider society. As an educator, he encourages students toward critical thinking and independent scientific projects, fostering curiosity and a passion for research. Museum exhibitions and events created under his guidance have become models for innovation and effective communication of complex scientific topics to a broad audience. Dr. Todorov actively participates in various media appearances and public forums, presenting scientific knowledge in an accessible and engaging manner. His notable public contributions also include mentoring young people, inspiring them to discover a passion for natural sciences and environmental conservation.

Dr. Todorov's personal motto, "*There's always a way,*" underscores his persistent determination and optimism in overcoming challenges throughout his extensive career. This principle has guided his scientific explorations, innovative educational methods, and successful management of various museum and conservation projects.



Fig. 1. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov presenting his monograph „Atlas of Invertebrates“, September 2021. Photo: Personal archive.

Education and Academic Development

Ognyan Todorov was born in 1975 in Plovdiv. He graduated in Biology and Chemistry from the Faculty of Natural Sciences at Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski.” His education was followed by in-depth research in zoology, which led to the successful defense of his doctoral dissertation at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv. His dissertation, entitled “Biodiversity, Distribution, and Economic Importance of Entomophagous Insects of the Family Aphidiidae (Hymenoptera) from Southwestern Bulgaria,” was successfully defended before the then Higher Attestation Commission in 2006.

Teaching and Educational Activities

Dr. Todorov’s professional career includes long-term teaching at Plovdiv University, where he delivers lectures and practical courses in Invertebrate Zoology, General Ecology, Nature Conservation, Hydrobiology, and Museum Studies, Botanical and Zoological Gardens. Known among students for his engaging teaching style and focus on field and practical work, he has trained generations of specialists with a strong focus on conservation and applied science.

Leadership and Transformation of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv

Since 2012, Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov has served as the director of the Regional Natural History Museum – Plovdiv. Under his leadership, the museum has

undergone a remarkable transformation from a traditional institution into a dynamic scientific-educational center of national and international importance (Todorov, 2016).

He executed an ambitious program for the comprehensive renovation of exhibition spaces, created a modern public aquarium, and established the museum as a platform for innovative educational practices, scientific forums, and nature conservation events. His vision and energy significantly expanded the museum's scope, audience, and scientific network.

Additionally, under his guidance, a tropical butterfly hall—one of the few in Europe—was constructed, combining biological attraction with educational value, allowing visitors immersive experiences among numerous tropical butterfly species.

Dr. Todorov developed and implemented the first digital 3D planetarium in Bulgaria, which already enriches astronomical education in the region and complements the multidisciplinary profile of the museum. These achievements have brought wide national and international recognition to the institution, including prestigious awards for innovation in museum practices (Fig. 2.).



Fig. 2. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov receiving the “Museum of the Year” award, 2016.
Photo: Personal archive.

Scientific Expeditions and Field Research

Dr. Todorov's field and expeditionary work has been extensive at both national and international levels. He has participated in numerous scientific trips across Bulgaria, focusing on wetland fauna, karst springs, and mountain lakes, as well as international expeditions to Uganda, the Amazon (Fig. 3.), and Southeast Asia (Fig. 8.), and fieldwork in the Andes (Figs 4 and 5). In 2024, he participated in a research mission to East Africa, documenting the faunal diversity of seven national parks, including gorillas, chimpanzees, rare bird species, and hoofed animals (Figs 6 and 7). The photographs collected during these journeys significantly enhance Dr. Todorov's personal archive and the museum's resources, supporting research, education, and public awareness of biodiversity.



Fig. 3. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov during field research on the Amazon River, 2024. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 4. Field research at Vinicunca (Rainbow Mountain), Andes, Peru, conducted by Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov in 2024. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 5. During field research in the Andes, Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov points to the Inca ruins of Choquequirao, Peru, 2024. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 6. Wild gorillas observed during fieldwork in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, Uganda, 2024, as part of a research expedition led by Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 7. During field research in 2024, Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov observed African elephants along the Nile in Murchison Falls National Park, Uganda. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 8. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov during field research at the historical site of Ayutthaya, Thailand, 2025. Photo: Personal archive.

Scientific Publications and Contributions

Dr. Ognyan Todorov's research encompasses diverse fields, including marine biology, invertebrate zoology, entomology, parasitology, herpetology, science communication, and museum education. He is the author and co-author of over 19 scientific publications indexed in international databases, contributing significantly to biodiversity research and documentation in Bulgaria and the region.

In 2021, Dr. Todorov published the monograph *Atlas of Invertebrates* (Todorov, 2021), featuring over 1700 illustrations, 1164 of which are his original works. The atlas covers systematics, morphology, habitats, and adaptations of major invertebrate groups and is extensively used in educational settings, from university students to specialized conservation and ecology schools.

His notable scientific contributions include entomological studies on the subfamily Aphidiinae (Hymenoptera: Braconidae), aphid parasitoids with new species records for Bulgaria; description of a new parasitoid wasp species (*Boreogalba julianae*, Todorov, 2023) discovered in Osogovo Mountain; herpetological research documenting new amphibian and reptile occurrences in Strandzha Nature Park and the Southern Black Sea Coast; co-authorship in an ornithological catalog of the former "St. Augustine" College collection housed in the museum, detailing 193 bird species from 81 families; parasitological studies of ixodid ticks affecting domestic animals near Plovdiv, with epidemiological importance; and active participation in science popularization through educational exhibitions and nature conservation programs.

Awards and Recognitions

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov has been honored with numerous awards, including:

- "Plovdiv" Honorary Badge for contributions to culture and education;
- Certificate from the Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria for contributions to museum practices;
- Recognition for innovative museum practices by the Bulgarian Museums Association;
- Awards from educational and conservation organizations for contributions to biodiversity protection.

The following photographs (Figs 9 and 10) illustrate some of these recognitions and awards received by Dr. Todorov, showcasing his achievements and the esteem with which he is regarded by cultural and scientific institutions.

Conclusion

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov exemplifies a modern scientist adeptly integrating field and laboratory research, teaching, science communication, leadership, and innovation. He does more than manage a museum—he builds bridges between knowledge and inspiration, academic science, and youthful curiosity about nature. On the occasion of his 50th anniversary, Dr. Todorov deserves recognition from colleagues, students, and the wider public as a figure who has significantly contributed to bridging science, culture, and society.



Fig. 9. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov honored for cultural contributions. Photo: Personal archive.



Fig. 10. Assist. Prof. Dr. Ognyan Todorov with a certificate and plaque recognizing his support and cooperation with the Faculty of Plant Protection and Agroecology. Photo: Personal archive.

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Miscellaneous

Andon Darakchiev (1934-2018) – a prominent worker of Bulgarian ornithology

Zlatozar N. Boev*

National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
1, Blvd. Tsar Osvoboditel, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

*E-mail: boev@nmnhs.com, zlatozarboev@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8049-7509>

Abstract. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Andon Iliev Darakchiev (1934–2018) was a prominent Bulgarian ornithologist whose career at Plovdiv University shaped generations of biologists and contributed substantially to national avifaunal research. He founded the university's ornithological collection, taught key zoological disciplines, and authored widely used textbooks and field guides. His study of the Chernatitsa Ridge remains a landmark work for the Western Rhodopes. Darakchiev published over 100 scientific and popular-science papers, containing valuable data on bird biology, ecology, and distribution. As founder of the university's Ornithology Circle, he supervised numerous theses and inspired future specialists in bird conservation. His contributions also supported the designation of several protected areas. This article provides a biographical overview and the most complete bibliography of his works to date.

Keywords: Andon Darakchiev, avifauna research, bird conservation, Bulgarian ornithology, ornithological bibliography, Plovdiv University



Fig. 1. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Andon Darakchiev (ca. 2010).

Andon Darakchiev (1934-2018) – a prominent worker of Bulgarian ornithology

Andon Iliev Darakchiev (Fig. 1.) was born in 1934 in the village of Malki Tsalim (Blagoevgrad Province, SW Bulgaria). In 1956 he graduated from Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” and all his scientific career passed in the field of ornithology.

The name of Associate Professor Dr. Andon Iliev Darakchiev is inextricably linked to university biology education in Plovdiv. He entered Plovdiv University in 1963 and retired there in 2001.

After the establishment of the Department of Zoology, he created its ornithological collection of total dry-mounted preparations of the most common birds in Bulgaria.

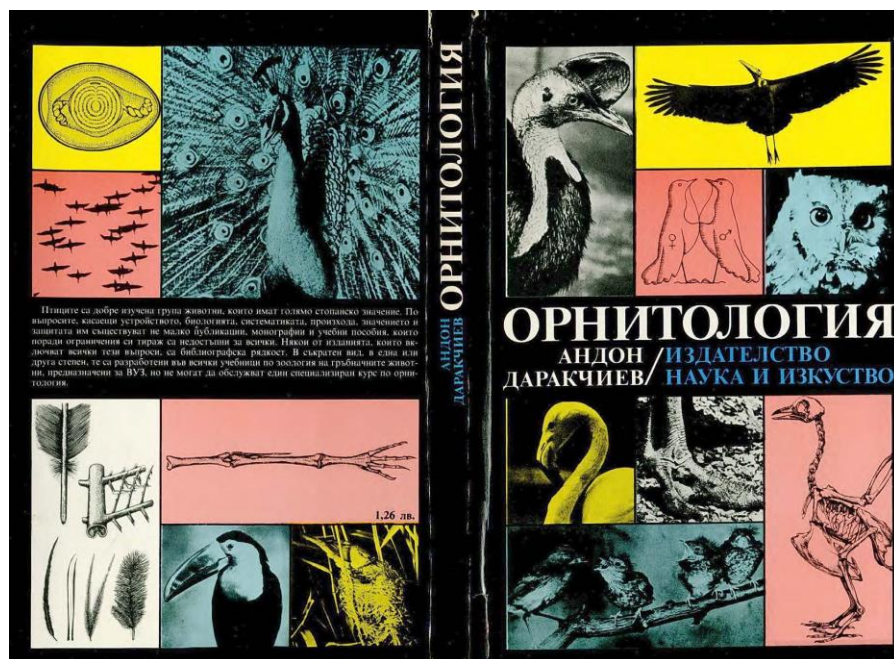


Fig. 2. Covers of the book “Ornithology” (Darakchiev, 1987).

A. Darakchiev has lectured on Vertebrate Zoology, Ornithology, Animal Behavior, Parkland Fauna. He is the author of university textbooks and study guides on ornithology (Figs 2, 3), and coauthor of textbooks for secondary schools. Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev was Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Chemistry and Biology of the university since 1979 to 1987.

In 1970 he obtained his PhD in the Faculty of Biology and since 1979 he is Associate Professor in that faculty. His comprehensive study (Darakchiev, 1970) on the avifauna of the Chernatitsa mountain Ridge in the Western Rhodopes still remains the most thorough and comprehensive study of this large and difficult-to-explore mountainous part of Bulgaria.

In 1993, Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev submitted his manuscript entitled: “Contribution to the abundance, density and reproductive biology of the nesting species of the Hirundinidae family in settlements” to the scientific council of the former Institute of Zoology – BAS for enrollment in doctoral studies for the degree of DSc (“Doctor of Biological Sciences”) – a product of his many years of research, mainly in Southern Bulgaria. Unfortunately, during the discussion of this work in early 1994, he was unable to gather the necessary votes to disclose this procedure.

Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev publishes his scientific works in Bulgarian, German, and French. They have been published in scientific journals in Bulgaria, Germany, and France.

In the present bibliography scientific publications in Bulgarian are cited verbatim according to their summaries in a foreign language. No corrections have been made in the translation, even when there is a discrepancy. It is also important to note that the surname of Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev in his scientific publications is spelled in five different ways: Darakchiev, Daraktchiev, Darakčiev, Daraktschiev, and Daraktschiew. Close colleagues and friends called Andon by the nickname Anilda (Anildata). He probably didn't mind and wasn't offended that "Anilda" seemed feminine.



Fig. 3. Front cover of the book “Guide to fieldwork in ornithology - Identification tables” (Darakchiev, 1983).

In his short biographical article about Assoc. Prof. Andon Darakchiev Bechev (2018) mentions that the number of his published scientific papers is over 80. The present list includes for the first time the complete bibliographic data for almost all 105 scientific and popular science publications of the author. Although most of them were published in regional scientific editions (mainly in the departmental scientific journal "Travaux scientifiques, Université de Plovdiv "Paissi Hilendarski", Biologie"), they contain extremely rich information on various issues of the biology and distribution of birds in Bulgaria. Many of these studies have remained the only ones of their kind or the only ones for the respective regions of the country. Thus, they represent a valuable contribution to ornithological research in Bulgaria.

In addition to being a field scientist and researcher, Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev was a remarkable lecturer at the university. It seemed that his work with students absorbed the main part of his strength and attention. In 1979, he founded an Ornithology Circle at the Faculty of Biology, in which he attracted and ignited the interest in birds of over 40

Andon Darakchiev (1934-2018) – a prominent worker of Bulgarian ornithology

students. Subsequently, they became his graduates and defended their diploma theses in the field of ornithology. Some of them are now prominent specialists and activists in the field of bird and nature conservation. According to Bechev (2018), one doctoral (PhD) and over 200 student diploma theses were successfully defended at the Plovdiv University “Paisiy Hilendarski” under his leadership. Among its graduates is the ornithologist Ventsislav Petkov - former director of the "Ecomuseum with Aquarium" in the city of Ruse and current director of "Plovdiv Zoo".

Assoc. Prof. Darakchiev’s nature conservation activities are mainly expressed in the preparation of scientifically substantiated proposals for the declaration of six new protected natural territories, one of which is the managed nature reserve “Atanasovsko Ezero” near the city of Burgas – one of the most important places for birds in Bulgaria. In 1988 members of the Ornithology Circle founded the Green Balkans Federation - one of the most active and influential environmental organizations in the country at present.



Fig. 4. Front cover of the book “Manual of Ornithology” (Darakchiev, 1988).

In the prime of his life, Assoc. Prof. A. Darakchiev published, albeit a short one, the first "Ornithology" (Fig. 2.) in Bulgarian (Darakchiev, 1987). To this day, it remains the only publication of its kind in the country.

In addition to the books included in this list, in 1989 A. Darakchiev prepared and submitted for publication his popular science book "Where Our Birds Come From and Where They Go". Unfortunately, it remained unpublished. His guides to identifying Bulgarian birds (Darakchiev, 1983, 1988; Figs 3, 4), however, are still used by students and naturalists. At the Plovdiv University he was a valued and respected colleague and lecturer (Figs 5, 6). He was also valued, respected and modest to his fellow ornithologists throughout the country.



Fig. 5. Assoc Prof. Andon Darakchiev (crouching in the middle) with his colleagues from Plovdiv University, Plovdiv, 1986.

Bibliography of scientific and popular-science publications of Andon Darakchiev

As mentioned above, in the present bibliographic list of the works of Assoc. Prof. Andon Darakchiev, scientific publications that have summaries in a foreign language are presented with their titles from the summary. However, their translation is often inconsistent with the original Bulgarian titles.

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1967

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Fig. 6. Assoc Prof. Andon Darakchiev, Stara Zagora, c. 2015.

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Miscellaneous

The importance of political, economic, and cultural factors in explaining fundamental ornithological problems (A case study from Bulgaria)

Part I. The range expansion of the Eurasian collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto* (Frivaldszky, 1838))

Wolfgang Baumgart¹, Zlatozar N. Boev^{2*}

1 - 13435 Berlin, Guhllener Zeile 9A, Germany

wolfgang.baumgart1@freene.de

2 - National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,
1, Blvd. Tsar Osvoboditel, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

*E-mail: boev@nmnhs.com, zlatozarboev@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8049-7509>

Abstract. The process of the range expansion of *Streptopelia decaocto* in Bulgaria, the Balkans, Central and Western Europe and North America is explained by the cultural-religious and economic-political characteristics of the population. The main importance of the place of the Eurasian collared dove in the religious world of Muslims and the technology of collecting, storing and transporting the grain harvest are emphasized. It is assumed that in Europe and North America the process of the spread of the species was subject to the similar regularities.

Keywords: Balkan avifauna, Collared doves, Human impact on bird distribution, Recent birds of Bulgaria, Species range extension

Introduction

Political, economic, and cultural factors, which are almost exclusively anthropogenically determined, are usually given little or no consideration when solving relevant ornithological problems. As a rule, efforts are made to resort to "modern methods" and employ statistical or molecular procedures. They are often ignored due to a lack of prior knowledge.

During the professional development of W.B., he was involved in a variety of fields and was thus able to acquire a wealth of knowledge that is unusual even for a veterinarian. Of particular importance were a previous apprenticeship in the pharmaceutical industry, the study of veterinary medicine in Bulgaria (1960-1965), later activities in the administration and inspection of veterinary medicine, development aid assignments in other cultural circles (Mongolia, Syria), and extensive travel, especially after the fall of communism in 1990. In addition to the primary focus on birds of prey, these activities also involved gathering insights into these problem areas, some of which were not always comprehensible to conventionally minded ornithologists.

This publication breaks new ground, not only for Bulgaria, which inspired W.B. to

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collaborate. Bulgaria has experienced several major upheavals in these areas since the end of the 19th century. This not only provides the key to explaining the expansion of the Eurasian collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto* (Frivaldszky, 1838; Fig. 1.), which was first described based on a type specimen from Plovdiv (Bulgaria). This is the only species of the modern World's avifauna, described from that country (Boev, 2022). However, three subspecies have also been described from Bulgaria, which are today considered invalid: *Phasianus colchicus europaeus* Hachisuka, 1937, *Picus canus caesaris* Steinbacher, 1938 and *Prunella modularis meinertzhageni* Harrison & Patev, 1937 (Mlíkovský & Boev, 2025).

The Eurasian collared dove's expansion from Bulgaria to Central Europe before WW2

The Eurasian collared dove came to Bulgaria with the Ottoman conquest and annexation of large parts of the Balkans.

According to sources found by Boev (1963), as early as the mid-16th century, the species was widespread on some of the Greek islands. According to other sources, by that time it had already been brought to Europe by Dutch sailors from Central Asia. By that time, it had already come under the protection of the Turks in the Ottoman Empire.

Due to the Muslim sympathy for doves, Muhammad, on his flight from Mecca to Medina during the Hijra in 633, hid in a cave at the entrance to which, according to tradition, Allah placed a nesting dove and cobwebs, which deterred his pursuers from searching it. Thus, the Collared Dove was tolerated and protected wherever it settled as part of the "garden ornithological fauna". Like the Laughing Dove (*Spilopelia senegalensis* (Linnaeus, 1766)), it was part of harem culture and, for its food, was highly dependent on the feeding of the ethnic Turkish population, which Boev (1963) describes in further detail.



Fig. 1. Eurasian collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), Lovech (CN Bulgaria), 05.04.2016. Photo: Z. Boev

With the gradual liberation of the Balkans from Turkish rule, the collared dove also disappeared, as feeding ceased after the departure of large parts of the Turkish population. In Bulgaria, this occurred in 1878. Its presence in other states, such as North Macedonia, which only achieved independence in 1912, remained undiminished probably because it did not achieve independence. For a good two decades, it had apparently largely disappeared from Bulgaria (Kasperek, 1996). Reiser (1894) encountered it only in Stara Zagora on his Balkan travels between 1890 and 1893, but retrospectively noted (Reiser, 1939) that it reappeared in many places around 1907. Floericke (1918), on the other hand, does not mention it at all.

More historical data are provided by Boev (1963): *S. decaocto* nested in vicinity of Sofia (1890), in Stara Zagora (1893), Ruse and Vidin along Danube river (about 1899), settlements in Dobrudzha (about 1926) and Varna (1943).

Subfossil finds of *S. decaocto*, proving its subrecent distribution, are extremely scarce. Only four non-anthropogenic localities are known, all with inaccurate dating (Late Holocene) and located in Northeastern Bulgaria (Boev, 2019).

The comeback of the collared dove is, as already explained (Baumgart, 2000; 2001; Fig. 2.), probably primarily a result of the developments that began after the country's liberation. A land and tax reform, which simultaneously marked the transition from the feudal Ottoman agrarian society to an early capitalist industrial society, led to significant increases in yields. The large land holdings of Turkish beys who had left Bulgaria were distributed among local village communities and peasants. The tax reform consisted of a shift from the previously often arbitrarily determined tithe to a land tax. The levies remained constant in relation to land ownership; whatever was harvested above this amount remained available to the peasants for their own use. This created significant incentives for increased yields. The expansion of the transport network facilitated trade in surplus agricultural products, especially grain. The first Bulgarian railway line between Ruse and Varna had already been put into operation in 1866. Since the isolation of the former Ottoman territories from Europe was lifted, trade routes to Central Europe were open, which primarily benefited Austria-Hungary, which soon established bank branches in many places in the Balkans.

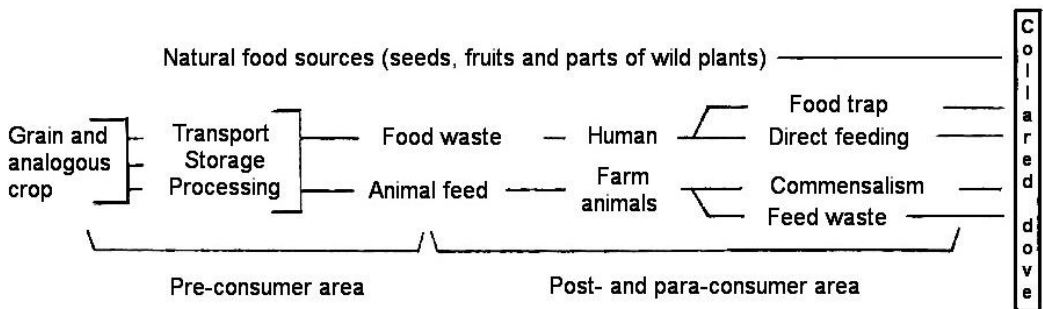


Fig. 2. Scheme of the Human - Eurasian collared dove food interactions: From the Eurasian collared dove to usable resources for food (after Baumgart, 2000)

Grain storage facilities and transshipment points were established along the transport routes, providing the Eurasian collared dove with a rich food supply along the railway lines. This is also where the collared dove's repeatedly postulated niche shift took place, although it has never been fully identified. Previously dependent on grain and similar crops from the post-consumer and para-consumer sectors in the form of human-derived food waste and direct

feeding, as well as feed waste and commensalism in the livestock sector, the collared dove now derived its livelihood primarily from the pre-consumer sector, which included the transport, storage, and processing of grain.

The distribution of the Eurasian collared dove in Europe after WW2

In preparation for World War II, the integration of the Balkans into Hitler's Germany was promoted to ensure the supply of food to the population in the event of war, a supply that had collapsed during World War I. In 1910, only 12% of the already low exports went to Germany, compared to 65.5% in 1939. Many seemingly insignificant factors were taken into account. Since soldiers who lack tobacco become unmotivated, Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) ordered the return of Southern Dobrudzha (7,412 km²), which had been lost to Romania in the Second Balkan War. There was now room here for grain cultivation, while the freed-up areas in the interior of Bulgaria (southern regions of the country) could be used for tobacco cultivation. All this included the expansion of transport links from the Balkans to Central Europe and paved the way for the collared dove to advance northwestward into the local economic and cultural area.

It was first sighted in Vienna in 1943, and in the 1950s, it spread explosively across Germany and neighboring countries, as documented in detail by Glutz & Bauer (1980). The species entered England in 1952, and Scandinavia and the Iberian Peninsula in 1970 (Lever, 2005). Populations declined again in the late 1960s and 1970s, giving rise to a variety of speculations. In our experience (W.B.), however, the main reason lies in the low-loss transition to containerized transport of grain and other similar food and feed products. We were personally involved in this to a certain extent, because in 1972, as a member of the Berlin State Veterinary Medical Examination Institute, W.B. responsible for drafting hygiene regulations for the containerized transport of animal feed products, which included specifications for declaration, sampling, container cleaning, and other procedures.

The previously common, wasteful open shoveling or reloading using blowers was thus eliminated, not only at railway stations, in storage facilities, or production sites. It deprived the collared dove of its food source in many places. However, it persisted in reduced numbers in the post- and para-consumer areas and became dependent again on human-derived food waste and direct feeding, as well as on feed waste and commensalism in the livestock sector. The species persisted primarily in villages where private chicken farming was still practiced. However, since this now mostly takes place in large, isolated facilities, the Eurasian collared dove's livelihood is significantly restricted. The natural food supply available in the environment is apparently insufficient. However, further developments of this flagship species of anthropogenic ecology cannot be ruled out.

Distribution of Eurasian collared dove in North America

In North America, it was introduced to the Bahamas (1970) and reached eastern Florida (1974), from where its rapid spread throughout the Midwestern United States began in the 1990s (Lever, 2005). In Texas and North Carolina *S. decaocto* entered in the early 1990s. It soon reached the Pacific coast and Canada. In the densely forested eastern United States, it is rare or largely absent (Alderfer, 2006).

Due to its explosive spread in some parts of the world, the species is recognized as invasive (Downs & Hart, 2020). In the last decade, it has been recorded apart from the USA and Canada, but also in Mexico, reaching as far south as Central America and even the

northern part of South America (Downs & Hart, 2020).

The maintenance of the northwestward dispersal direction already recorded in Europe could be considered evidence of corresponding genetic fixation (Kasperek, 1996). However, as Fujisaki *et al.* (2010) found, it also follows human-made environmental structures such as transport routes and agricultural land, as well as general geographical trajectories such as coastlines or thermal cliffs.

Conclusions

The importance of political, economic and cultural factors/developments in solving fundamental ornithological problems (one of which is the distribution of the Eurasian collared dove) has so far been unjustifiably underestimated. In this case, this is proven for Bulgaria.

Over the past 150 years, Bulgaria has undergone a variety of political, economic, and cultural upheavals that have had a direct or indirect impact on bird life, offering surprising new solutions to the problems associated with the species mentioned here.

The Eurasian collared dove came to the Balkans with the Ottomans as part of harem culture, earning its keep through direct feeding and food and feed waste in the protected human environment. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the withdrawal of the Turks from Bulgaria (after 1878), the collared dove lost these food sources in the post- and para-consumer sector and disappeared in most regions of the country, where the natural food sources are apparently not sufficient to meet its needs.

Early capitalist development at the turn of the 20th century, with increases in agricultural yields and the expansion of transport routes, now offered it sources of sustenance in the pre-consumer sector (storage, transport, and processing of cereals). On its way to Central Europe, where it arrived in the 1940s, it followed the supply routes expanded by Hitler's Germany in preparation for World War II. The decline that began in the 1960s occurred in parallel with the introduction of low-loss grain transport (containers), which again left it with mainly sources of sustenance in the post- and paraconsumption sectors. When it spread to North America from Florida in 1970, it also followed mainly man-made environmental structures and has reached the Atlantic coast of Canada.

This analysis demonstrates how political, economic, and cultural developments in the Anthropocene are becoming increasingly significant for bird life, and how the framework for scientific research approaches needs to be significantly expanded from this point of view. Bulgaria offers a number of good examples and promising approaches in this regard.

Note

The present manuscript was composed by W.B. in German. Its translation into English, some additions, and its layout were made by Z.B.

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Miscellaneous

The importance of political, economic, and cultural factors in explaining fundamental ornithological problems (A case study from Bulgaria)

Part II. The Old World vultures (Gypaetinae Vieillot, 1816, Aegypiinae Sclater, W. L., 1924 - Accipitriformes Vieillot, 1816)

Wolfgang Baumgart¹, Zlatozar N. Boev^{2*}

1 - 13435 Berlin, Guhllener Zeile 9A, Germany

wolfgang.baumgart1@freene.de

2 - National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences,

1, Blvd. Tsar Osvoboditel, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria

*E-mail: boev@nmnhs.com, zlatozarboev@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8049-7509>

Abstract. The importance of political, economic and cultural factors/developments in explaining fundamental ornithological problems, one of which is the existence of vultures, is analyzed, with a special emphasis on Bulgaria. Over the past 150 years, Bulgaria has undergone a variety of political, economic, and cultural upheavals that have had a direct or indirect impact on birdlife, offering surprising new solutions to the problems associated with the vulture species. The religious characteristics of the population, the organization of veterinary services, changes in animal husbandry, the distribution and extermination of wolves as important factors for the existence of vultures in Bulgaria have been analyzed along with electrocution mortality, poisonings, and mortality during migration.

Keywords: Balkan avifauna, European vultures, Human impact on bird distribution, Recent birds of Bulgaria, Species range decline

Introduction

Over the past few millennia, the vultures' diet has gradually shifted from free-roaming wild animals to farm animals, whose husbandry and care have been subject to increasingly newly defined regulations and even legislative measures, reflecting fundamental social changes, largely abandoning previous practices (Fischer, 1963). Trends such as the transition to indoor husbandry, intensified veterinary prophylaxis to reduce animal losses, and the commercial utilization of carcasses and animal by-products, among others, have gradually reduced the diet of vultures in many countries, including Bulgaria, to a degree that, along with poisoning of predators (wolves), has led to the extinction of their populations. The placement of non-selective poison baits to poison wolves and foxes had a very strong impact on the number of wolves in the

country. This can be successfully counteracted through broad-based management with systematic supplementary feeding. However, due to its ecological positioning as a processor of smaller prey, this is more difficult for the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus* (Linnaeus, 1758)) than for the three major species - cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus* (Linnaeus, 1766)), Eurasian griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) (Hablizl, 1783), and bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus* (Linnaeus, 1758)). It should be added here that the Egyptian vulture is a migratory species and spends half of its life outside Bulgaria. Therefore, it faces unfavorable factors along its migration route and in its wintering areas that we cannot influence (Fig. 1.).

The purpose of this summary is to present the impact of certain socio-cultural circumstances on the status of vulture populations in Bulgaria without delving into the analysis of quantitative data on the impact of specific direct negative factors, which have so far been the subject of numerous and diverse specialized studies.

Vultures and social order

In Europe, Old World vultures (Gypaetinae Vieillot, 1816, Aegypiinae Sclater, W. L., 1924: Accipitridae Vieillot, 1816 - Accipitriformes Vieillot, 1816) are highly dependent on livestock raised outdoors (pasture cattle breeding in the mountains) for their food, the keeping and utilization of which is subject to diverse legal regulations by the state. The declining population of vultures in southern Europe, including Bulgaria, where all four Palearctic species were once widespread in their typical eco-functional positions (Baumgart 2000a), is usually attributed primarily to poisoning of wolves and human persecution. This is thoroughly discussed by Boev & Michev (1981), Boev (1985), Michev (1985a; b; c), Boev (2011), Marin *et al.* (2011), Iankov *et al.* (2011), Kurtev *et al.* (2011), and especially Dobrev *et al.* 2021. One of the first recorded cases of poisoned bearded vultures in Bulgaria (1903, village of Dushintsi in Erulska Mountain) was reported by Anonym. (1903).

In addition, the decreasing food sources are mentioned. Past distribution of vultures in Bulgaria, based on their bone fossil/subfossil bone remains has been examined by Boev (2024).

It is a fortunate circumstance that W.B., as a passionate ornithologist, was given in-depth interdisciplinary insights in the veterinary medicine. Through his studies in Bulgaria, he also gained insights in this regard, which shed more light on this complex of factors and will be briefly presented here. More detailed descriptions can already be found in Baumgart (1989; 2001; 2025). Following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria's attainment of independence in 1878, fundamental changes occurred in many areas, which significantly restricted the living conditions of vultures until the fall of the monarchy (1944) and led to their almost complete extinction in the subsequent socialist period.

Conditions in the Ottoman Empire and vultures

In the vast Ottoman Empire, the existence of vultures was highly secure, as Reiser (1894) vividly describes in his account of his ornithological explorations immediately before the turn of the 20th century. The numerous livestock were mostly kept outdoors year-round, and since the cultivation of forage plants was rare on small farms and contributed little to their livelihood, year-round grazing was the preferred method (Dobrev *et al.*, 2021). This usually involved a seasonal shift between the lowlands and the foothills and mountains near settlements, but also developed supra-regionally within the unlimited empire and, in

Bulgaria, was largely practiced by the Karakatchans (Dimitrov, 2022), a herding ethnic group originating from the Greek Pintos Mountains. In addition, long-distance transhumance existed between the mountains of the Balkans and the Middle East, as far as the Sinai.

Animal losses were high in winter and dry summers, as well as due to a lack of knowledge about the causes of epidemics. Since veterinary services were virtually nonexistent and there were hardly any epidemic control measures, animal diseases such as rinderpest, sheep pox, anthrax, equine snot, and rabies were widespread. Dead livestock were left lying around or dragged to "horse cemeteries" near villages (Özlü, 2012).

For the needs of frequent military campaigns of the Ottoman empire, livestock had to be transported to supply the troops. For example, in 1526, Sultan Suleiman (1494-1566) requisitioned 174,200 sheep from northwestern Bulgaria for his campaign against Hungary (Káldy Nagy, 1975).

Such cattle drives, which also occurred regularly during tax collection, contributed significantly to the spread of animal diseases. In 1886, for example, an epidemic in northeastern Bulgaria, which may have been rinderpest, is said to have killed 200,000 cattle annually (Kalupov *et al.* 1959). During this period, another type of domestic animal was also widespread in Bulgaria, and was used extensively until the end of Ottoman rule, and even in the first decades of the 20th century. These were camels, mainly dromedary, the one-humped camel, *Camelus dromedarius* Linnaeus, which were usually used as draft animals, mainly in the southeastern part of the country. Camel transport was most widespread in Eastern Thrace - Edirne, Burgas, Sliven, Yambol, Haskovo, Kardzhali and Stara Zagora. In these regions, camel breeding as an economic sector existed until 1930 (Primovski, 1958).

The Post-Ottoman Period and vultures

During the process of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire (1878–1918), several nation-states emerged in the Balkans (Albania, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia), each with its own legislation. They sought trade relations with Western Europe to stabilize their economies. This primarily involved agricultural products.

The situation in the Principality of Bulgaria and the later Third Bulgarian Kingdom (until 1944)

Livestock mortality due to disease and improved veterinary care has generally decreased. But even with these changes, there were still large herds of livestock in the mountain pastures, many of which died freely while grazing (Popov, 1989).

Russian army veterinarians laid the foundation for the development of a veterinary system after 1878. For example, Bulgaria sought a veterinary convention with Austria-Hungary in 1887, but the country rejected it due to a lack of sufficient prerequisites.

Important legislative steps in further development were: 1891 – Law on the Export and Import of Livestock and Animal Raw Materials; 1894 – Law on Veterinary Meat Inspection; 1897 – Law on Veterinary Police (now known as State Veterinary Science). A network of inspection stations was established (Kalupov, 1972). The large slaughterhouses built in 1928 in Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Ruse, and Stara Zagora (Emanuilov, 1956) played a significant role in this regard. While previously veterinarians had to travel to Germany, Austria and other countries to study, in 1921 a separate educational institution was established with the founding of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine.

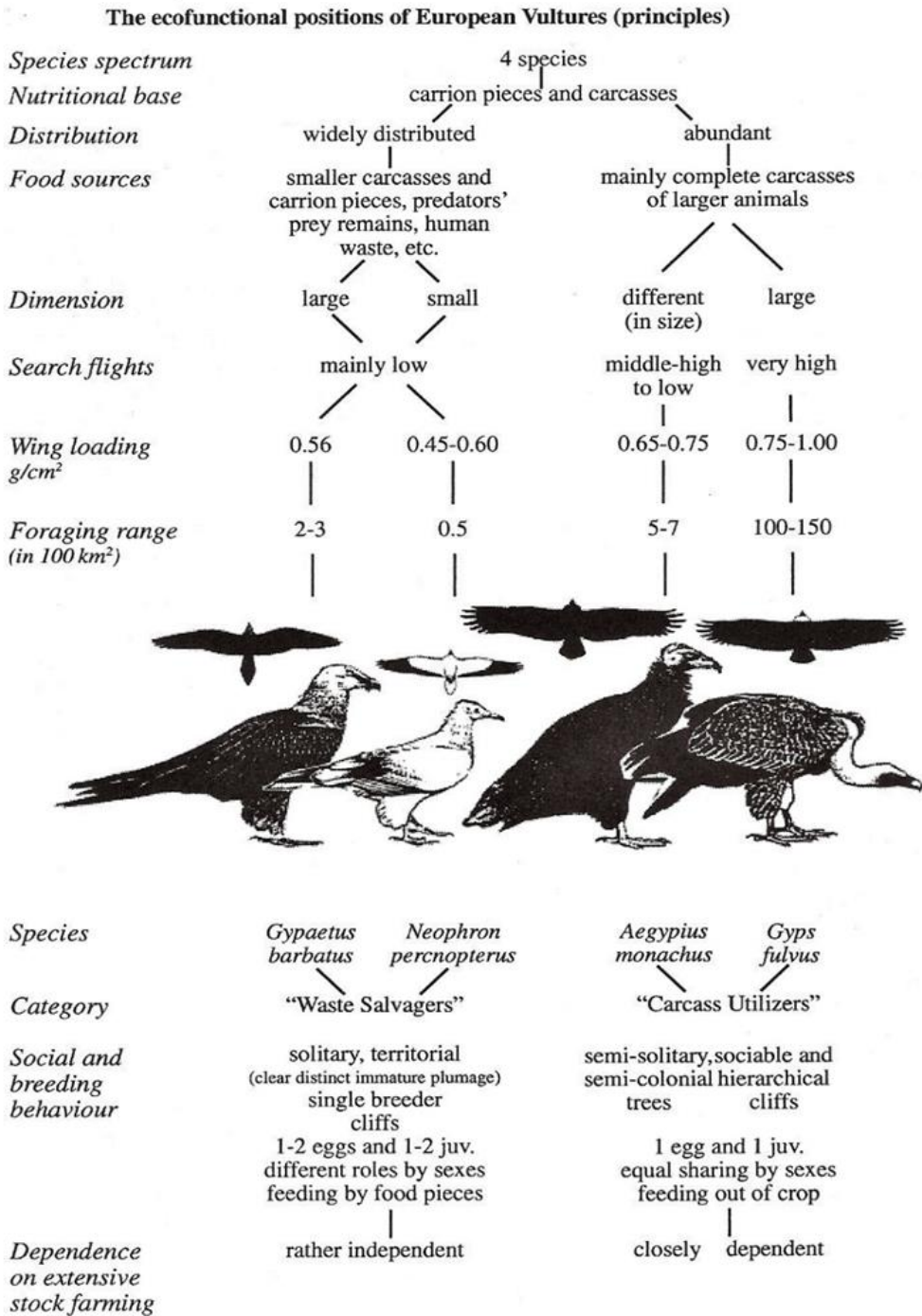


Fig. 1. Ecofunctional positions of European vultures (after Baumgart, 2000a).

While there were 42 veterinarians in the country in 1893, their number rose to 93 by 1915, 150 by 1925, and 250 by 1931 (Iliev, 1957; Kalupov *et al.*, 1959).

Effective organizational structures were created to address the challenges at hand, particularly in the fight against the introduction of animal diseases from Turkey. The system of "Social Veterinary Medicine" combined disease prevention and animal insurance. Farmers were required to join this system, but received free treatment for their animals in case of disease, ensuring an effective reporting system in case of disease outbreaks. In close cooperation with the "Office International des Épidémiologies" in Paris, founded in 1924, Bulgaria became a secure frontline state against epidemics imported from the Orient (Iliev, 1957).

Direct persecution was virtually non-existent because the rural population understood the role of vultures in the natural balance. The only exception was the shooting by foreign military forces during World War I (Gengler, 1920). In 1894, the first documented cases of vultures (bearded vultures *Gypaetus barbatus* (Linnaeus, 1758); Fig. 2.) dying from poison used to control wolves (*Canis lupus* Linnaeus, 1758) and brown bears (*Ursus arctos* Linnaeus, 1758) (Baumgart, 1989), and their numbers steadily increased thereafter. Thus, wolves, which were previously an important part of the accompanying fauna of vultures, became an indirect threat to their conservation.

Livestock attacks by wolves were countered with poison, which also severely decimated vultures.

The annual amount of strychnine used to control predators amounted to approximately 60 kg, and in 1943, the peak number of wolves killed was 521 (Dragoev, 1970). According to data from Boev (1997), 44% of the wolves killed in Bulgaria in 1970 were poisoned with strychnine.



Fig. 2. Bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*). Photograph: Lyubomir Hristov – Lupy.

Subsequent changes in the People's Republic of Bulgaria (1944-1989)

The common raven (*Corvus corax* Linnaeus, 1758), an important sympatric scavenger for vultures, also declined significantly for these reasons. Ravens presence facilitate vultures to finding the locations of some carcasses. All of this reduced vulture populations nationwide, whose occurrence was soon limited to remote, arid and mountainous regions. Several authors reported on this from the 1920s onwards (von Boetticher 1927, Harrison & Pateff 1933, Rensch 1934, Boev & Michev 1981, and Baumgart 1989).

The founding of the People's Republic of Bulgaria following the overthrow of the monarchy on September 9, 1944, also led to fundamental changes in agriculture and veterinary medicine. Collectivization of agriculture was completed by 1958. Among the most important changes relevant to vultures were the decline in sheep farming in the mountains and the transition from coarse-wooled to improved fine-wooled breeds. Barn-keeping in winter became common practice. The Karakachans (also called Sarakatsans) were prohibited from nomadic animal husbandry for reasons of epidemic prevention (Ivanov *et al.*, 1961; Kalupov, 1964), but prosperous industrialization offered them sufficient alternative sources of income, so many abandoned the way of life they had practiced for centuries. When attempts were made to revive mountain pasture farming in the 1970s, they were only rarely willing to move from comfortable lives in residential areas back to the mountains.

The development of a modern veterinary system progressed rapidly. From 2,500 veterinarians in 1963, their number rose to 4,036 by 1985 (Ivanova, 1986). Animal losses due to epidemics were significantly reduced (Wilke, 1967). In addition, animal carcass processing plants were established in all districts. While in 1961 just 1.2% of carcasses were recorded, by 1966, aided by an increasingly developed road network, this figure had risen to 55.1%. To prevent acts of sabotage, dead animals had to be reported within twelve hours, and from 1961 onwards even within one hour, under threat of severe penalties (Kühnast 1986). According to a historical review of meat control and official inspection systems, after World War II, national networks of official inspections for the control of livestock and meat developed, including ante- and post-mortem inspections of animals, as well as regulated control of slaughterhouses to ensure the safety and quality of meat products (Delchev & Mladenov, 1978).

Wolves, which had increased significantly during World War II, were now intensively controlled. While 22,300 head of livestock were killed in 1951, according to relevant reports, this number had fallen to just 1,052 in 1968. During World War II and in the first post-war years, an increase in the number of wolves killed in the country was observed - 500 and 700 individuals per year. A second maximum was reached in 1953/1954, when about 1,000 wolves were shot. The peak number of wolves killed was 1,079 in 1954. In the period 1970 - 1978, about 90 wolves were killed per year (Boev, 1997). After that, their population declined steadily, and by the 1980s, it had reached 150-200 nationwide. They became strictly protected (Dragoev, 1970, Spiridonov & Spasov, 1985).

The extinction of vultures cannot therefore be attributed solely to poisoning and shooting. The increasing food shortage caused by the aforementioned developments appears to be of greatest importance. These suggest that from the 1950s onward, there were virtually no continuously available food sources for large vultures throughout Bulgaria. Only occasional sporadic incursions occurred, especially in border regions. During this period, in the semi-mountainous and mountainous regions of the country, dead domestic animals continued to be thrown out into the open outside the villages.

Large herds continued to graze in the open and dead animals were abandoned in the open. Therefore, it is believed that the lack of food is not the main negative factor in the decline of vulture populations. Poisoning, shooting and incidents of electric shock from the power grid are now at the forefront of their mortality.

Data from the 1960s and 1970s are extremely scarce. Donchev (1974) reported indirect evidence of a pair of *G. fulvus* breeding near the town of Kotel. In Ludogorie (NE Bulgaria) a non-breeding pair was observed around a nest on a rock as early as 1983 (Spiridonov, 1988). As a result, Demerdzhiev *et al.* (2007) and Demerdzhiev *et al.* (2014) suggest that the species in the Eastern Rhodopes did not become extinct in Bulgaria.

Some extremely rare records after 1960: In August 1961, Simeon Dimitrov saw an adult Bearded vulture between the peaks of Chatalka and Kutelka in the Sinite Kamani Nature Park (Eastern Stara Planina; Michev, 1968). In the autumn of 1980, a Bulgarian Red Cross and Red Crescent Society employee found a half-alive young bearded eagle near the village of Vranino, Dobrich Region, poisoned with pesticides through mouse-like rodents that it had been feeding on (Michev, 1982). This juvenile Bearded vulture probably drifted here with the autumn migration of Steppe buzzard (*Buteo buteo vulpinus* (Gloger, C.W.L., 1833)) from the Caucasus, just as young bearded vultures regularly arrive in Central Europe with the spring migration of European honey buzzards (*Pernis apivorus* (Linnaeus, 1758) from the Pyrenees and Alps (Baumgart 2001b). On the other hand, there is an equal probability that this bird originated in the Balkans, since at that time the species was still breeding in neighboring Greece and Macedonia. This may also apply to other immature bearded vultures recorded in the Bulgarian Black Sea coastal region in autumn.



Fig. 3. Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*). Photograph: Georgi Gerdzhikov.

On 13.02.1983, a juvenile *G. barbatus* was observed in the western part of Devnya Lake (Michev, 1983). In the period 1980-1990, 147 observations of Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus* (Linnaeus, 1766); Fig. 3.) were recorded in the country (Iankov *et al.*, 1992). On 13.06.1981, an inhabited nest (occupied by 2 birds and abandoned) of *G. fulvus* (Fedtke, 1984) was discovered near the town of Kardzhali. In 1978, between May 19 and June 20, a total of 9 adults, 4 young birds with transitional plumage and 15 juveniles of *G. fulvus* were observed in the Eastern Rhodopes (Michev *et al.*, 1980). Observations of the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus* (Linnaeus, 1758); Fig. 4.) after 1960, although sharply decreasing, are relatively numerous. In the Bulgarian part of the Strandzha Mountains, the species was last observed on 16.08.2000 by Boev (2008) near the town of Malko Tarnovo.



Fig. 4. Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*). Photograph: Georgi Gerdzhikov.

From the end of the 1990s onward, spontaneous resettlements of the Eurasian griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus* (Hablizl, 1783); Fig. 5.) occurred in the Eastern Rhodopes in connection with populations in Greece, and individual breeding of black vultures was also recorded. This was facilitated by the high proportion of the Muslim population there, who have a positive attitude towards vultures. There is a shortage of veterinarians, and the animal rendering plant in the Kardzhali Province was closed due to lack of profitability (Baumgart, 2025). However, the greatest importance for the restoration of the breeding population of *G. fulvus* and *A. monachus* in Bulgaria was the several large-scale projects of environmental non-governmental organizations, which, through imported (mainly from Spain) birds, managed to breed them in captivity and reintroduce them to their former habitats. managed to breed them in suitable areas (Vrachanski Balkan, Kresna Gorge, Kotlenski Balkan) and through regular

feeding by taking out carrion to the so-called "vulture restaurants" they successfully multiplied them. Thus they gradually occupy some of their former habitats. In Bulgaria there is no captive breeding of Griffons and Cinereous vultures so far. Many of the birds resettled in the country originate from released birds that were bred in captivity in Spain.

Developments after the fall of communism in 1989

After the fall of communism in 1989, which led to a significant population decline and a reduction in livestock numbers, because the livestock was distributed to presumed former owners upon the dissolution of the TKZS, who, no longer able to keep them, then largely slaughtered them. The spectrum of both positive and negative effects is broad. The orientation towards the West modernized nature and species conservation, and vulture projects with international support and funding have led to a considerable increase in the griffon vulture population, and the black vulture has also regained a foothold (Bearded Vulture LIFE, 2024; Baumgart 2025). Preparations for the reintroduction of the bearded vulture are underway. On May 17, 2025, the first 3 young male birds were released in the Sinite Kamani Nature Park, one of which died soon after.



Fig. 5. Eurasian griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*). Photograph: Georgi Gerdzhikov.

In contrast to the larger vultures, the lesser Egyptian vulture remained widespread throughout the country (Michev, 1986; Baumgart, 1991). After 1960, it was still found in several locations where eagle owls were present. It even profited from the remains of their prey. In July 1977, Z.B. observed Egyptian vultures and Eagle owls coexisting on the rocks near the village of Reselet (Pleven Province). The same thing was observed in August of the same year on the rocks near village of Krivnya (Ruse Province) in the Beli Lom Nature

Reserve. Close connections in terms of the feeding of the two species were mentioned by Professor Nikolay Burchak-Abramovich (1902-1997) for the rocks on the hills in the city of Tbilisi in Georgia in the 1950s (oral comm.).

However, it was vital for it that in remote settlements with poor transport links, there was often no connection to the electricity grid, which also meant a lack of refrigeration. This made it impossible to store perishable food in the summer. For the settlers there, a balanced diet included meat once a week, usually provided by a freshly slaughtered chicken. For Egyptian vultures, the esophagus, crop, glandular stomach, intestinal tract, head, and legs were removed, allowing it to easily meet its basic needs within one or more settlements. This insight also provided us with a solution to the question, which our ancestors had been asking at the time: why the Egyptian vulture is missing from Crete. During our explorations in 1994 (Baumgart & Baumgart, 1995), we noticed that grain is scarce on the island and is mostly grown as an undercrop in citrus plantations. This is insufficient for chickens, so their weekly meat needs are met by rabbits. Their slaughterhouse waste, however, offers little to the Egyptian vulture. However, another hypothesis is possible: the rapid decline in the population in recent years is also related to the very high risk of migration to Africa, mainly due to the long flight over the Mediterranean Sea. It is not at all excluded that the species may have bred there in the past. According to data provided by Handrinos (1985), it is possible that this vulture may have bred on the island.

In Bulgaria, it has now become extremely rare. North of the Balkan Mountains, the species is on the verge of extinction, but there are still 5-7 breeding pairs. In the south, it is mainly found in areas with a high Muslim population, such as the Eastern Rhodopes. There, the reintroduction of large vultures is very successful (Stoyanov, 2018; Kmetova-Biro *et al.*, 2021; Stoyanov *et al.*, 2023; Baumgart, 2025) and it benefits locally from the feeding grounds established for them.

Bulgaria's rapprochement with the EU appears to have played a significant role in its decline after 2000. After applying for membership in 1993, Bulgaria became a candidate for accession and received funding even before accession in 2007 (e.g. pre-accession aid for the rehabilitation and expansion of the road network, including electrification). The isolation and thus self-sufficiency of residents in remote villages is significantly reduced, as is waste generation. They are no longer dependent on self-sufficiency. There are now shops, refrigeration systems, and access to the labor market in the wider area. This largely eliminates the livelihood of Egyptian vultures. This may also have contributed to the rapid decline of 32% between 2003 and 2007.

The "National Action Plan for Conservation of the Egyptian Vulture in Bulgaria" (Kurtev *et al.*, 2007) has been in place since 2007. It identifies a multitude of factors responsible for the decline of the Egyptian vulture. These factors are particularly complex because the Egyptian vulture is a migratory bird and can likely suffer significant losses even in its wintering grounds. The effects of poison are considered particularly important in this regard. The "vulture poison" diclofenac has also been speculated about in personal conversations, especially with W.B. However, based on studies in India, a definitive statement can be made on this issue, as it is an event limited primarily to the Hindu cultural sphere, in which "sacred cows" play a special role (Baumgart, 2017).

The widespread use of poisons and its detrimental impact on vultures (and other scavengers) and the lack of good monitoring in Bulgaria has been extensively documented by Kostadinova & Gradinarov (2019). In addition to poisons, the Egyptian vulture suffers greatly from electric shocks from power lines, including in its winter range (Sudan - Angelov *et al.*, 2012; Qaneer & Demerdzhiev, 2023) and during the seasonal

transcontinental migrations (Bounas *et al.*, 2023). During migrations, vultures also die from poisoning, habitat loss, and poaching along the migration route (Peshev *et al.*, 2022).

Egyptian vultures can also visit some of the supported additional feeding stations for vultures on a daily basis, such as the one near the village of Potochnitsa (Kardzhali Province). In recent years, the station in the new aviary for the reintroduction of black vultures has been visited almost daily by different pairs. Up to 30 individuals of this vulture have been counted there.

Maintaining Egyptian vulture populations in southern Europe is so difficult because of their territorial nature. In the worst case scenario, each pair would need its own feeding ground with small portions of carcasses - replenishment several times a week - that would quickly dry out and become unusable. This is easier with larger vultures. One feeding ground, which needs to be replenishment with large carcasses once or twice a week, is sufficient to support a large number of them.

Despite the numerous difficulties arising from the specific biological characteristics of this species of vulture, in recent years conservation efforts have been crowned with positive results, some of which are presented in detail by Arkumarev *et al.* (2020).

Decline of the vulture population in India and Diclofenac and parallels with EU

In connection with the diclofenac disaster in India, which almost completely wiped out the population of *Gyps* vultures (Indian vulture *Gyps indicus* (Scopoli, 1786), slender-billed vulture *G. tenuirostris* Gray, 1844), and Bengal vulture, *G. bengalensis* (Gmelin, 1788)) was almost completely wiped out – according to BirdLife International (2016; 2016b), 99.9% of Bengal vultures died – there was repeated criticism of the approval of this painkiller in the EU. There were fears that this would pose a threat to European vulture populations. However, research conducted on site in India (Baumgart, 2017) showed that this risk is extremely low.

Diclofenac was purchased here from wholesalers by intermediaries (pharmacists, veterinarians, etc.), mostly as bulk goods in large packages, and then sold in bags to livestock owners without any controls, who administered it to their animals with their drinking water when they were ill, especially in cases of mobility disorders. Diclofenac is very stable and accumulates in the digestive tract, especially in the rumen. If a cow dies despite treatment—slaughter is rarely carried out for religious reasons, as cows are sacred—and is left out for vultures, this poses an acute threat, especially to *Gyps* vultures, which consume large amounts of entrails. Due to its high toxicity to vultures, with an LD50 of 0.1-0.2 mg/kg body weight, even an intake of 1.5 mg leads to fatal kidney failure in these birds. The ingestion of just 1.5 mg of this drug by a vulture can lead to death from kidney failure. With a population of 300 million cattle and an assumed annual mortality rate of 10%, 30 million cattle carcasses represent a difficult disposal and hygiene problem. Meloxicam, which is harmless to vultures but significantly more expensive, is recommended as a replacement for diclofenac, which has been banned in India since 1995.

In the EU, diclofenac is approved in some countries for veterinary medicine only as an injectable preparation, but not for oral administration, with controlled dosing. It is rapidly excreted, partially metabolized in the animal body. Consequently, there is little sign of a threat to European vulture populations from this phenomenon, which is limited to the Hindu cultural area.

Conclusions

It turns out that the study of vultures is important for the final assessment of the consequences of political, economic and cultural developments for solving fundamental ornithological problems. This is because it sometimes encompasses these three complex factors in a rather hidden way, and in this way it clarifies what needs to be taken into account for their conservation.

This opens up a previously largely untouched area of action and research that is becoming increasingly important in the Anthropocene. The problems addressed here only became relevant because the relevant knowledge was assigned to other disciplines and thus hardly available to ornithologists. Bulgaria, with its eventful history, offers impressive examples as well as further approaches to solutions. Bulgaria has undergone diverse political, economic, and cultural upheavals over the past 150 years, which have directly or indirectly impacted the bird population and thus offered surprisingly new approaches to solving the problems associated with the species mentioned here.

In southeastern Europe, large vultures (*G. fulvus*, *A. monachus*, and *G. barbatus*) depend almost exclusively on the carcasses of free-range farm animals for food. These animals, in turn, are subject to regulations resulting from husbandry practices (pasture grazing with transhumance or stable housing with feed crops) and veterinary care.

In addition to the control of predatory animals with poison, fundamental developments arose that led to population limitations. From the time of Ottoman rule, through the monarchy, and into the socialist era, these developments led to a steady reduction in the food supply. It may have almost disappeared around the mid-1950s, but since then and to this day, there have always been large dead animals for vultures to eat in the wilds of Bulgaria. Since 1989, projects have ensured the mostly limited, feed-dependent existence of local populations.

However, for the Egyptian vulture, which was still relatively widespread throughout the country but has declined sharply in recent decades, relevant projects are proving more difficult due to a series of infrastructure changes. However, the threat posed by the “vulture poison” diclofenac is negligible for both this species and the others, as it depends on specific conditions in Hindu culture that are irrelevant for Europe.

Over the past decade, vulture mortality has been driven by electrocution, poisoning and migration incidents. These factors have had a decisive impact on vulture populations in Bulgaria and the Balkans.

This analysis shows how political, economic and cultural developments in the Anthropocene are becoming increasingly significant for bird life and how the framework for scientific research approaches needs to be significantly expanded from this perspective. The use of medicines for livestock, the organization of slaughterhouses, rendering plants, the use of poisons in nature, engineering solutions for the country's electricity grid, supporting feeding in nature, the upbringing and education of the population and dozens of other activities turn out to be related to the conservation of vulture populations in the country. Despite the negative experience at times, Bulgaria undoubtedly offers a number of good examples and promising approaches in this regard.

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Miscellaneous

Регионалният природонаучен музей в Пловдив и Националният природонаучен музей в София – 70 години сътрудничество в полза на природознанието

Златозар Н. Боев*

Национален природонаучен музей – БАН

Бул. Цар Освободител, № 1

1000 София

*E-mail: boev@nmnhs.com, zlatozarboev@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8049-7509>

Резюме. Представени са разнообразните форми на сътрудничество между Националния природонаучен музей в София и Регионалния природонаучен музей в Пловдив в различните области на музейното дело (създаване и куриране на музейни фондове, експозиции, научна популяризация, научно-изследователска дейност) от учредяването на Регионалния природонаучен музей в Пловдив (1955) до 2025 г. Изтъкнато е значението на този музей в изграждането и възпитаването на екологически грамотни и природозащитно образовани граждани на съвременното българското общество.

Увод

Музеите, библиотеките и архивите са най-важните институции за съхраняването на националната идентичност във всяка една съвременна държава. Те са хранителите на материалните основи на националната история, нейната уникалност и значимост. Природонаучните музеи имат важната и специфична роля да представят богатството и разнообразието на природата на страната, областта или отделната природна забележителност. В наши дни все повече се осъзнава, че опазването на Родината и природозащитата са неразривно свързани. Без да познаваме и опазваме природата в страната си, не можем да я опазим. Затова защитата на природата е израз на нашия патриотизъм. Опазвайки природата в страната си по същество ние пазим нея самата.

В националната система на природонаучните музеи Националният природонаучен музей при Българската академия на науките в София (НПМ) и Регионалният природонаучният музей в Пловдив (РПНМ - Пловдив; Фиг. 1.) заемат първите две водещи места. Първият, учреден преди 136 години през 1889 г. и вторият – преди 70 години през 1955 г., и до днес са двата най-големи природонаучни музеи в България. В тях се съхраняват почти 2 милиона природни образци – минерали, скали, вкаменелости, гъби (вкл. лишен), растения и животни, произлизащи от всичките седем континенти.

През тези 7 десетилетия двата музея, макар и в състава на различни ведомства, непрестанно са поддържали активни контакти, изразяващи се в изключително разнообразни форми на сътрудничество във всички области на музеологията –

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научноизследователската работа, колекционирането на музейни природни образци и обмен на колекции, работа в съвместни екипи в изпълнението на национални и международни научни и научно-приложни проекти, създаването на музейни експозиции и популяризирането на природонаучни и природозащитни знания сред обществеността.

Настоящият преглед цели да представи в хронологичен ред основните изяви на интензивното междуинституционално сътрудничество на тези два първи и най-големи природонаучни музеи в България.



Фиг. 1. Сградата на Регионалния природонаучен музей – Пловдив след реконструкцията. 05.09.2024. Сн.: З. Боев.

Регионалният природонаучният музей в Пловдив при управлението на Атанас Маринов (1955-1960)

Чрез внушителната природонаучна колекция на закрития през 1948 г. Френски колеж „Св. Августин“ в Пловдив (Collège Frangais „Saint Augustin“, Philippopoli) се полагат основите на съвременните фондове и отчасти – на експозицията на съвременния РПНМ - Пловдив. За рождена дата на музея може да се смята 05.09.1955 г., когато с част от образците на Френския колеж е организирана „Временна изложба на материали за бъдещ природонаучен музей“. За нейн уредник, а след това и за директор е назначен дългогодишният преподавател по естествени науки Атанас Маринов. Впоследствие се изготвят тематико-експозиционни планове от двама изтъкнати зоолози от НПМ - д-р ст.н.с. Нено Атанасов (тогава директор на б. Зоологически институт на БАН) и ст.н.с. Георги Пешев, сътрудник в секция „Музей“ (Тодоров, 2016). В една своя статия Г. Пешев отбелязва, че въпреки допуснатите грешки в наредбата на експозицията, с помощта на сътрудници от музея в София, пловдивският музей придобил една прилична експозиция, на основата богатите си колекции (Пешев, 1956).

**Регионалният природонаучният музей в Пловдив при управлението на проф.
д.б.н. Павел Ангелов (1960-1963)**

Скоро след откриването на музея Ат. Маринов се пенсионира и на местото му е назначен младият ентомолог Павел Ангелов. Създаването и обогатяването на природонаучните сбирки в музея през този период са били първостепенни задачи за неговия все още малоброен научен състав. В това отношение помощ е оказал НПМ чрез предоставяне и обмен на някои образци, представени с по-многобройни екземпляри (Тодоров, 2016). НПМ съдейства и за обогатяването на научна библиотека на РПНМ - Пловдив като му дарява пълен комплект от реномираните „Известия на царските природонаучни институти“, както и друга дублетна научна литература.

**Регионалният природонаучният музей в Пловдив при управлението на доц. д-р
Илко Басамаков (1963–2010)**

След хабилитирането си П. Ангелов напуска РПНМ - Пловдив и за директор е назначен 25-годишният хидробиолог Илко Басамаков (1938-2022). За 47 години с 6000 експоната той организира изграждането на 9 експозиции в РПНМ - Пловдив.

През 60-те и 70-те години на 20 в. сътрудниците на РПНМ - Пловдив. В публикуват научните си трудове (над 30 публикации) в най-реномираното на времето си национално научно зоологично издание „Известия на Зоологическия институт с музей“ на БАН. Обособената научна група от специалисти-естественици (1963-1971 г.) с активна изследователска дейност (основно в Родопите, Тракийската низина, Средна гора, Стара планина, Рила и др. райони; Станев, 1997) впоследствие (от 1970 г.) довежда до учредяването на собствено научно периодично издание на РПНМ - Пловдив – „Известия на Природонаучния музей в Пловдив“ (Станев, Басамаков, 1970).

През 1976-1978 г. специалисти от НПМ участват в изграждането на експозициите на РПНМ - Пловдив и Музея на родопския карст в гр. Чепеларе (Боев, 2023).

Палеонтологът ст.н.с., к.г.-м.н. Иван Николов от НПМ оказва ценна помощ за определянето на множество фосили (кости и зъби) на терциерни бозайници от палеонтологичната колекция на РПНМ - Пловдив. В резултат на работата му се появяват няколко научни публикации съвместно с тогавашния директор на РПНМ - Пловдив – ст.н.с., к.б.н. Илко Басамаков (Басамаков, Николов 1978; Николов, Басамаков 1970; 1979). Учени от НПМ и по-късно определят фосили от едри бозайници от фондовете на РПНМ - Пловдив. Доц. д-р Георги Марков определя колекцията от фосилни хоботни бозайници (*Proboscidea Illiger*, 1811; Марков, 2005; Фиг. 2.).

Дългогодишният служител на РПНМ - Пловдив и бележит български ботаник проф. д.б.н. Стефан Станев има огромен принос за историографията на ботаниката в България. Верен на своите пристрастия той публикува (Станев, 2025) и съставената от него биография на проф. Борис Стефанов – ботаник в Царските природонаучни институти, чийто наследник днес е НПМ. В многобройните си книги той изтъква значението на НПМ като основен национален център за изследване на растителното богатство на страната (Станев, 2008; 2010). През 1978 г. той публикува специална статия за приноса на акад. Иван Буреш (дългогодишен директор на б. „Естественоисторически музей на Царят на всички българи“ в София, чийто наследник е НПМ) за развитието на ботаниката в България. В нея особено значение Ст. Станев отдава на учредяването на Ботаническия отдел в музея (Станев, 1978).

В обобщаващата си монография Станев (2010) включва отделен раздел, озаглавен „Ботанически отдел на Царския естественоисторически музей“. Фактически Ст. Станев се явява и единственият изследовател на историята на този отдел в НПМ и до днес. Той задълбочено анализира и водещата роля на двата музея (НПМ и РПНМ - Пловдив) в цялата система от природонаучни музеи в страната (Станев, Божикова, 1974; Станев, 1978.). С основание през 2006 г. по предложение на доц. А. Попов, тогавашен директор на НПМ, проф. Ст. Станев е удостоен с почетния плакет „Акад. Иван Буреш“. Това отличие НПМ дава на изтъкнати български и чуждестранни учени със значим принос за развитието на музея и науката.

Организираната през 2009 г. от Британския съвет в България и НПМ изложба „Дарвин сега“ (от 16 панела) след София, е показана и в Пловдив и Асеновград.



Фиг. 2. Част от експозицията от фосили на хоботни бозайници в Регионалният природонаучен музей – Пловдив, 08.02.2023. Сн.: З. Боев.

Регионалният природонаучният музей в Пловдив при управлението на гл. ас. д-р Огнян Тодоров (2010-)

През 2018 г. проф. д.б.н. Златозар Боев от НПМ по молба на директора О. Тодоров се заема с определянето на оцелелите тотални сухи монтирани препарати от птици – наследство от Френския колеж. За съжаление оказва се, че цялата документация със съответната съпътстваща информация за тях скоро след закриването на колежа е била безвъзвратно загубена. Въпреки това екземплярите от тази колекция с голяма историческа стойност са определени и информацията за тях е публикувана (Boev & Todorov, 2019). Оказва се, че тя включва 193 вида птици от 81 семейства и 28 разряда, представени чрез 205 екземпляра (1,67 % от съвременната световна орнитофауна). Над 15 процента от видовете имат природозащитен статус по

IUCN (NT до CR). Сред най-ценните ѝ екземпляри са застрашеният сивогръб скорец (~ майна) (*Acridotheres tricolor* (Horsfield, 1821)) и два уязвими вида – маврикийски огърличен (ехо) папагал (*Psittacula eques* (Boddaert, 1783); Фиг. 3.) и северен (тъмногръб) опушен албатрос (*Phoebetria fusca* (Hilsenberg, 1822)). Това е втората по големина колекция от екзотични птици в България.



Фиг. 3. Маврикийски огърличен (ехо) папагал (*Psittacula eques* (Boddaert, 1783)) от колекцията на б. Френски колеж „Св. Августин“ в Пловдив. Сн.: Огнян Тодоров.

През 2014 г. проф. д-р Николай Спасов от НПМ определя част от сборове с фосили от едри бозайници, сред които са находки от алпийски козирог (*Capra ibex* Linnaeus, 1758), тур (*Bos primigenius* Bojanus, 1825), пещерна мечка (*Ursus spelaeus* Rosenmüller, 1794) и др. (Георгиев, 2017).

През 2017 г. със специален договор между НПМ и РПНМ - Пловдив за експозицията на последния в НПМ са препарирани екземпляри от десетина вида едри бозайници, собственост на НПМ, сред които: евроазиатски рис (*Lynx lynx* (Linnaeus, 1758)), леопард (амурски и персийски; *Panthera pardus* (Linnaeus, 1758)), тръстикова котка (*Felis chaus* Schreber, 1777), сервал (*Leptailurus serval* (Schreber, 1776)), ягуар (*Panthera onca* (Linnaeus, 1758)), гребенесто африканско бодливо свинче (*Hystrix cristata* Linnaeus, 1758) и др. По този начин е реализирано едно от най-значимите попълнения на експозицията на РПНМ - Пловдив през последните няколко десетилетия.

Настоящият директор на РПНМ - Пловдив, О. Тодоров (Фиг. 4.) освен отличен организатор на поверената му институция, е и изявен природолюбител и пътешественик. В последното си качество той създава извънредно богат фотоархив от превъзходни фотографии на животни от редица екзотични кътчета на света. За три академични издания на НПМ (Боев, 2025 а; b; c) той предоставя безвъзмездно за първо публикуване 156 свои фотографии на 33 вида неврабчоподобни, 63 вида врабчоподобни птици и 59 вида бозайници.



Фиг. 4. Гл.ас. д-р Огнян Тодоров с Грамота от Министерството на културата за значими приноси в развитието и популяризирането на българските култура и изкуство, София, 05.11.2019. Сн.: З. Боев.

С участието на проф. З. Боев и съставена и публикувана биобиблиография на изтъкнатия наш орнитолог ст.н.с., к.б.н. Цено Петров (Фиг. 5.) – дългогодишен сътрудник на РПНМ - Пловдив и настоящ доайен на българските орнитолози (Demerdzhiev & Petrov, 2023). В нея са събрани данни за 202 публикации, публикувани в периода 1970-2022 г. З. Боев и Д. Демерджиев организираха и тържественото честване на 80-годишнината на ст.н.с. Ц. Петров в РПНМ - Пловдив на 23.06.2023 г.

Учени от НПМ са чести лектори в организираната от ръководството на РПНМ - Пловдив образователна лектория по актуални научни теми, на които присъстват и студенти от Биологическия факултет на Пловдивския университет „Паисий Хилендарски“, както и граждани на Пловдив. Сред лекторите са специалистите от НПМ проф. д.б.н. З. Боев (2011 г.), проф. д-р Стоян Бешков (2021 г.), доц. д-р Латинка Христова (2023 г.), ас. Владимир Николов (2023 г. – 2 лекции), доц. д-р Тихомир Стефанов (2024 г.) и др.

Тези лекции се провеждат в новата лекционна зала, снабдена с необходимата за предназначението ѝ съвременна техника. Специалисти от НПМ в рамките на действащата работилница за палеоарт, освен в НПМ, водят занятия и в РПНМ - Пловдив (ас. Владимир Николов - „Да рисуваме велоцираптор“ - 2023 г.; Фиг. 6.).



Фиг. 5. Доц. д-р Цено Петров в Националния природонаучен музей, 10.10.2018. Сн.: З. Боев.



Фиг. 6. Плакат за палеоарт-работилницата „Да рисуваме велоцираптор“ на Владимир Николов в Регионалния природонаучен музей – Пловдив (2023 г.).

Доц. д-р Марио Лангуров изнася 2 лекции (2022 и 2025 г.) на организираният две издания на „Фестивал на Пеперудите“. Някои от временните изложби, организирани от НПМ са били показвани и на пловдивската общественост в залите на РПНМ - Пловдив. Такива са изложбите „100 години от рождението на Николай Боев“ (2022 г.; Фиг. 7.), „Illustratorium II“ на Деница Пенева (2025 г.) и „Юрски свят“ на Владимир Николов (2025 г.).

Проф. П. Берон и ас. Вл. Николов представят свои новоизлезли книги в РПНМ - Пловдив: „Пет месеца в Нова Гвинея“ (2018 г.), „Сану Батуре“ (2018 г.) и „Панорама на българската зоология“ (2023 г.) – и трите на проф. Петър Берон и "Песента на титаните: история за динозаври" (2023 г.) на ас. Вл. Николов.

Двама от хабилитираните зоолози от НПМ (херпетологът проф. Георги Попгеоргиев и териологът доц. Недко Недялков) започват научната си кариера в РПНМ - Пловдив. За първи път там те се запознават със спецификата на музейната работа като куратори на зоологични колекции. Д-р Светлозара Казанджиева от екипа на РПНМ - Пловдив провежда своята постдокторантска специализация по ентомология в НПМ. Същата е определила ентомологичната колекция на РПНМ - Пловдив от 5 семейства гъбни комари (двукрили насекоми от надсемейство Sciaroidea), представени с 308 екземпляра (Kazandzhieva, 2025).



Фиг. 7. Част от изложбата „100 години от рождението на Николай Боев (1922-2022) в Регионалният природонаучен музей – Пловдив. 09.02.2023. Сн.: З. Боев.

НПМ заедно с РПНМ - Пловдив и още няколко други институции са съорганизатори на Деветата международна конференция „Минералогия и музеи, София' 2021“. Учени от НПМ и РПНМ - Пловдив публикуват съвместно някои от своите изследвания върху видове от националната ни Червена книга (Петров и др. 2011; Мичев и др., 2011).

Още от учредяването на новото научно списание на РПНМ - Пловдив - *Bulletin of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv* през 2016 г. в редакционната му колегия са привлечени и учени от НПМ. Проф. З. Боев е нейн член в продължение на 5 години (2016-2020). Учени от НПМ редовно публикуват резултати от свои научни изследвания в това списание. З. Боев в него е публикувал 33 научни статии.

Проф. Здравко Хубенов от НПМ през 2020 г. рецензира монографичното издание на РПНМ - Пловдив „Атлас на безгръбначните животни“ (Тодоров, 2021). През 2020 г. проф. З. Боев въз основа на огромния му принос за модернизирането и разширяването на РПНМ - Пловдив аргументирано номинира гл. ас. Огнян Тодоров за кандидат за удостояване със Специалната награда „Пловдив“ в областта на изкуството и културата, в категория „12.9. Опазване на културното наследство и съхраняване на паметта“.

През 2019 г. проф. З. Боев рецензира новооткритата експозиция от гръбначни животни в РПНМ - Пловдив – най-впечатляващата и обширно представена в залите на музея. През 2021 г. той рецензира и новооткритата палеонтологичната експозиция „Динозаври“ (Фиг. 8.) от анимирани макети на някои най-популярни видове. През 2025 г. проф. д-р Павел Стоев (директор на НПМ) и проф. З. Боев рецензират изготвения от екип на РПНМ - Пловдив тематико-експозиционен план за реконструкцията на Отдел „Природа“ на Регионалния исторически музей в Благоевград. Рецензиите им съдържат множество конструктивни препоръки, подобряващи плана и заложените в него дейности.



Фиг. 8. Част от експозицията „Динозаври“ в Регионалния природонаучен музей – Пловдив. 08.12.2021. Сн.: З. Боев.

Настоящият преглед, макар и непълен, очертава формите и насоките на тясното сътрудничество на учените от двата музея. Постигнатото с общи усилия е гаранция за успешното им развитие и в бъдеще в името на природонаучната просвета за опознаването и опазването на българската природа.

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The Regional Museum of Natural History in Plovdiv and the National Museum of Natural History in Sofia – 70 years of cooperation for the benefit of natural science

(Summary)

The various forms of cooperation between the National Museum of Natural History in Sofia and the Regional Museum of Natural History in Plovdiv are presented in the various areas of museum work (creation and curation of museum collections, exhibitions, scientific popularization, scientific research activities) from the establishment of the Regional Museum of Natural History in Plovdiv (1955) to 2025. The importance of this museum in the development and education of ecologically literate and nature conservation-educated citizens of modern Bulgarian society is highlighted.

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Miscellaneous

Prof. Dr. Zlatozar Boev DSc, pillar of modern Bulgarian ornithology. Biobibliography on the occasion of his 70th anniversary

Dimitar Demerdzhiev^{1,2*}

- 1 - Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds/BirdLife Bulgaria, 5, Leonardo da Vinci Str.,
4000 Plovdiv, Bulgaria;
- 2 - National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1000 Sofia, Bulgaria;

*E-mail: dimitar.demerdzhev@bspb.org, dimitar.demerdzhev@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7124-4959>

Abstract. This paper honors the 70th anniversary of Professor Zlatozar Boev, DSc, a pillar in modern Bulgarian ornithology. During his 46-year career at the National Museum of Natural History (Sofia, Bulgaria), Prof. Boev pioneered the fields of avian osteology, paleornithology, and archaeornithology in Bulgaria. He founded three new ornithological branches in the country: (1) osteology, (2) exterior morphology and (3) paleo- and archaeo-ornithology. His work includes describing 41 avian taxa new to science and establishing one of the most significant paleornithological collections in Europe. With over 930 scientific and popular science articles, books, and textbooks published in more than 20 countries, he is the most productive author in the history of Bulgarian ornithology.

Keywords: Archaeo-ornithology, Avian Morphology, Biobibliography, Bulgaria, National Museum of Natural History, Paleornithology

Short biographical data

Prof. Zlatozar Nikolaev Boev (Fig. 1) was born on 20.10.1955 in Sofia, in a family of intellectuals. His father Nikolay Boev (1922–1985) was a prominent Bulgarian ornithologist, the founder of modern nature conservation in Bulgaria. His mother, Nadezhda Boeva, was a philologist and teacher of Bulgarian language and literature. Zlatozar Boev's family origins were in the town of Aytos, with one of his great-grandfathers being the volunteer Nikola Boev, a participant in the Battle of Stara Zagora during the Russian-Turkish War of Liberation, and the other - the Bulgarian revolutionary leader Diko Dzhelebov, standard-bearer of the Ilinden- Preobrazhenie Uprising.

He finished his elementary, primary, and secondary education in 15th School (Adam Mickiewicz High School) in Sofia. In 1973-1975 he fulfilled his mandatory military service in the town of Plovdiv. Zlatozar Boev completed his higher education, majoring in "Biology", at the Department of Zoology, Faculty of Biology of "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Prof. Dr. Zlatozar Boev DSc, pillar of modern Bulgarian ornithology...

Sofia University in 1980, under the supervision of Prof. Tsolo Peshev (1922–2009), with a thesis on small mammals from the Ograzhden Mountain, titled “Ecological and faunistic studies of insectivorous mammals and rodents (Insectivora et Rodentia, Mammalia) from the Ograzhden Mountain”.

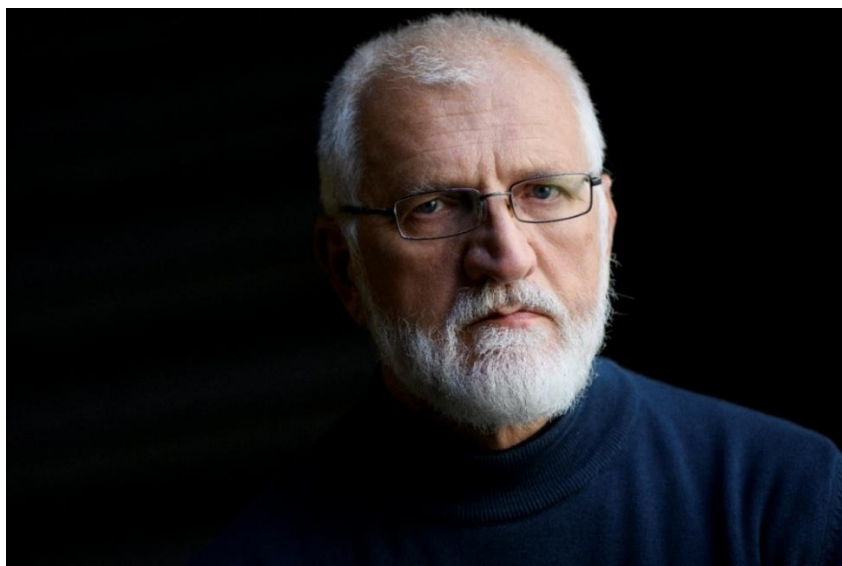


Fig. 1. Prof. Dr. Zlatozar Boev, DSc

He joined the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 1980 and until 1983 worked as a part-time associate at the Zoology Department under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Petar Beron. There, he inventoried, arranged, and restored museum collections of birds, mammals, mollusks (shellfish snails and mussels), corals, etc. (Fig. 2). In the period 1984–1986, he was a full-time PhD student at the National Museum of Natural History at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, where the ornithologist Assoc. Prof. Simeon Simeonov (1935–1991) was his scientific supervisor. In 1986, he defended his PhD thesis on the topic “Comparative morphological studies of herons (family Ardeidae – Aves) from Bulgaria”. Zlatozar Boev defended his DSc dissertation in 1999 titled “Neogene and Quaternary birds (Aves) from Bulgaria” – the first study of the Bulgarian fossil and subfossil avifauna.

Zlatozar Boev was also among the founders of the first nature conservation organization in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds, and served as its first secretary (Fig. 3). He also came up with the idea for the organization's logo, the endangered Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*). Prof. Boev was among the founders of the Bulgarian Ornithological Society and is currently a member of nine international and foreign scientific organizations (Fig. 4).

He has been working at the National Museum of Natural History for forty-six years, holding various positions including head of "Fossil and Recent Birds" Department, head of “Vertebrate Animals” Department, scientific secretary, etc.

In recognition of his contributions to paleontology, the fossil species *Plioperdix boevi* Zelenkov, 2024, described from a Miocene locality in Rostov Oblast, Russia, is named after Prof. Boev.



Fig. 2. Zlatozar Boev as a technical assistant at the Zoology Department of the National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, arranging the collection of grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) skulls. 1982



Fig. 3. Zlatozar Boev (fourth from the left in the 4th row) among the founders of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds in front of the Faculty of Biology of "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University. 03.06.1988

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Zlatozar Boev is also a great admirer of Bulgaria's natural beauty, deeply loving the mountains. Over the last 20 years, he has climbed more than 100 Bulgarian peaks in various mountains, including some of Bulgaria's and Greece's highest peaks (Fig. 5).

Research interests

Palaeornithology; archaeornithology; evolution of birds and palaeoavifaunas; bone and external morphology of birds; disappearance and extinction of avian taxa; history of zoology, ornithology, palaeontology and natural science collections.



Fig. 4. Zlatozar Boev (2nd row, wearing a gray shirt) among the founders of the Bulgarian Ornithological Society at the former Institute of Ecology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia. 08.06.2001.

Main scientific contributions

The contribution of Prof. Zlatozar Boev to the Bulgarian and world science is enormous and encompasses a variety of aspects. His basic scientific contributions to ornithology can be grouped into three main areas:

(1) Paleornithology and Archaeornithology

For 45 years he explored bird remains from 130 localities, turning Bulgaria into one of the best-studied countries in terms of fossil and subfossil avifauna. He found over 410 taxa and 318 species, 120 of which had been extinct in Bulgaria since the late Tertiary and Quaternary periods (Boev, 2023). Prof. Boev discovered and described 41 taxa, 5 genera, 35 species and 1 subspecies of fossil birds that were new to the science (Table 1). He discovered the first fossil remains of ostriches (Boev & Spasov, 2009), peacocks,

hornbills (Boev & Kovachev, 2007), snowy owls, waldrapps and many more in Bulgaria. For the first time in Europe, he discovered the distribution of a new order of birds-the tropical hornbills (Bucerotiformes). Based on his studies, in the 1990s, four Bulgarian localities of fossil avifauna (Varshets, Slivnitsa, Dorkovo and Muselievo) were included in the list of the most significant paleornithological localities in Europe, and the first two were ranked among the most important localities for Plio-Pleistocene avifauna in the entire Palearctic (Mlíkovský, 1996; Tyrberg, 1998).



Fig. 5. Zlatozar Boev on Gotsev peak in the Slavyanka mountain. 26.07.2025.

Table 1. List of avian taxa described by Zlatozar Boev

No	Latin name	English name
Genera		
1.	<i>Balcanas</i> (Boev 1998)	Balkan dabbling duck
2.	<i>Chauvireria</i> (Boev 1997)	Partridge of Cécile Mourer-Chauviré
3.	<i>Dobrosturnus</i> (Boev 2020)	Dobrudzha-starling
4.	<i>Eremarida</i> (Boev 2012)	Rock-steppe lark
5.	<i>Euroceros</i> (Boev, Kovachev 2007)	European ground hornbill

Species		
6.	<i>Actitis balcanica</i> (Boev 1998)	Balkan sandpiper
7.	<i>Alauda xeravensis</i> (Boev 2012)	Dry-field skylark
8.	<i>Aquila kurochkini</i> (Boev 2013)	Eagle of Evgeniy Kurochkin
9.	<i>Balcanas pliocaenica</i> (Boev 1998)	Pliocene Balkan dabbling duck
10.	<i>Branta thessaliensis</i> (Boev, Koufos 2006)	Thessalian black goose
11.	<i>Buteo spassovi</i> (Boev, Kovachev 1998)	Buzzard of Nikolay Spassov
12.	<i>Chauvireria balcanica</i> (Boev 1997)	Balkan Partridge of Cécile Mourer-Chauviré
13.	<i>Chauvireria bulgarica</i> (Boev 2020)	Bulgarian Partridge of Cécile Mourer-Chauviré
14.	<i>Circaetos haemusensis</i> (Boev 2015)	Haemus Snake-eagle
15.	<i>Circaetos rhodopensis</i> (Boev 2012)	Rhodopean Snake-eagle
16.	<i>Coccothraustes balcanicus</i> (Boev 1998)	Balkan Hawfinch
17.	<i>Coccothraustes simeonovi</i> (Boev 1998)	Hawfinch of Simeon Simeonov
18.	<i>Cygnus verae</i> (Boev 2000)	Swan of Vera
19.	<i>Dobrostrurnus kardamensis</i> (Boev 2020)	Kardam Dobrudzha-starling
20.	<i>Eremarida xerophila</i> (Boev 2012)	Dry-loving rock-steppe lark
21.	<i>Eremophila prealpestris</i> (Boev 2012)	Pre-Alpine horned lark
22.	<i>Euroceros bulgaricus</i> (Boev, Kovachev 2007)	Bulgarian European ground hornbill
23.	<i>Falco bakalovi</i> (Boev 1999)	Falcon of Petar Bakalov
24.	<i>Falco bulgaricus</i> (Boev 2011)	Bulgarian falcon
25.	<i>Galerida bulgarica</i> (Boev 2012)	Bulgarian crested lark
26.	<i>Gallinula balcanica</i> (Boev, 1999)	Balkan moorhen
27.	<i>Geronticus balcanicus</i> (Boev, 1998)	Balkan bald ibis
28.	<i>Gyps bochenskii</i> (Boev, 2010)	Griffon of Zygmunt Bocheński
29.	<i>Lagopus balcanicus</i> (Boev, 1995)	Balkan ptarmigan
30.	<i>Loxia patevi</i> (Boev, 1999)	Crossbill of Pavel Patev
31.	<i>Lullula balcanica</i> (Boev 2012)	Balkan woodlark
32.	<i>Lullula slivnicensis</i> (Boev 2012)	Slivnitsa woodlark
33.	<i>Melanocorypha donchevi</i> (Boev 2012)	Black lark of Stefan Donchev
34.	<i>Melanocorypha serdicensis</i> (Boev 2012)	Serdica black lark
35.	<i>Otis hellenica</i> (Boev 2013)	Hellenic bustard
36.	<i>Phasianus bulgaricus</i> (Boev 2020)	Bulgarian pheasant
37.	<i>Pica praepica</i> (Boev 2021)	European pre-magpie
38.	<i>Porzana botunensis</i> (Boev 2015)	Botunya River crane
39.	<i>Regulus bulgaricus</i> (Boev, 1999)	Bulgarian firecrest
40.	<i>Tetrao rhodopensis</i> (Boev, 1998)	Rhodopean capercaillie
Subspecies		
41.	<i>Fulica atra pontica</i> (Boev, Karaivanova 2012)	Pontian Eurasian coot

(2) Morphology and ecology of recent birds

Morphological studies of herons are among the most detailed and elaborate studies ever conducted (Fig. 6.). Zlatozar Boev compiled a complete “Osteological Atlas” and an identification guide on all elements of the skeleton of the representatives of a family of birds, herons (Ardeidae), from the European avifauna, as well as studies on their bone morphological abnormalities (Boev, 1986). He studied the exterior and skeletal morphology of all heron species in Europe and established the related adaptation mechanisms and the evolution trends. He was the first scientist in the world to study the adaptations of this group with regards to their on-land movements and foraging, and established the correlation between their anatomical structure, the type of habitats they use, and the degree of adaptation to ichthyophagy (Boev, 1987 a; b; c).



Fig. 6. Zlatozar Boev with a night heron chick that fell from the nest. Tsibar Island, Danube River. 05.06.1984.

Zlatozar Boev also explored the breeding biology and ecology of rare and endangered species in Bulgaria (Fig. 7). With regard to the oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*), he was the first one to establish an intracontinental extension of the breeding area, reported an unknown new subspecies for the country, *Haematopus ostralegus longipes*, and also discovered new nesting sites (the first nesting of the species along the Danube) (Fig. 8). The survey on the diet of rare and protected diurnal and nocturnal raptors, such as the Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*), the Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), the Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*), the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*), and the Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), carried out by Zlatozar Boev in collaboration with other researchers, was among the most detailed and long-term studies.

(3) Faunistics and zoogeography of recent birds

Zlatozar Boev was the first researcher to identify zoogeographically the entire composition of the modern avifauna of Bulgaria (419 species, 266 breeding). Prof. Boev studied the distribution of several dozens of bird species in Bulgaria, summarizing and

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elaborating the first comprehensive zoogeographical analysis of Bulgaria's contemporary avifauna (Boev, 1997). He implemented the first review and evaluation of bird studies carried out over the last 262 years (1744–2006), the composition of the avifauna of Bulgaria (96 Neogene, 160 Pleistocene, and 399 recent species) and the changes therein in the last 100 years, the importance of the Bulgarian territory for the migration and wintering of birds in Europe, migratory routes, wintering areas and the network of important bird sites, as well as the modern ornithographic regionalization of the country (Boev *et al.*, 2007).



Fig. 7. Zlatozar Boev during ornithological observation in the Chepan Mountain.
24.04.1993.

Besides his ornithological publications, Prof. Boev also published a series of articles on the history of the National Museum of Natural History, which contain a lot of information about the history of ornithology in Bulgaria. It should be mentioned that a significant part of his research has also been related to recent, subfossil and fossil mammals. He is the author of dozens of studies summarizing the past distribution of large mammals in Bulgaria - rhinoceros, tapirs, deer, camels, bear, lynxes, cave hyena, red wolf, leopard, ibexes, badger, the aurochs, beaver, monk seal, etc.

Bulgarian science owes a debt of gratitude to Prof. Boev, for he laid the foundations of Paleornithology in our country. Zlatozar Boev founded three new ornithological branches in Bulgaria: (1) osteology, (2) exterior morphology and (3) paleo- and archaeo-ornithology. In addition to Bulgaria, he has studied modern and fossil birds from Azerbaijan, Brazil, Vietnam, Greece, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Serbia and Türkiye. For Greece, he reported for the first time 15 species unknown in the fossil record of the country. The description of the world's first fossil goose, the Thessalian goose (*Branta thessaliensis*) from Greece, proved the ancient origin (Miocene) of the genus differentiation.



Fig. 8. Zlatozar Boev during ornithological observation in the "Ibisha" nature reserve on the island of Tsibar in the Danube River. 22-28.05.1989.

Zlatozar Boev built the richest collections of fossil (Neogene and Pleistocene) and subfossil birds on the Balkan Peninsula and in Southeast Europe, a comparative osteological collection of recent birds and a scientific library (over 15,000 publications) on paleornithology and bird evolution (Fig. 9.). He created two new collections: (1) the osteological and (2) the paleo- and archaeo-ornithological collections (Boev, 2024).

Prof. Boev has participated with over 100 reports in national and international forums (Fig. 10.). He has also been part of dozens of field expeditions and research projects (Fig. 11.). Prof. Boev authored essays on a number of bird species for the second edition of the Bulgarian Red Data Book (Golemansky *et al.*, 2011) and the Atlas of breeding birds in Bulgaria (Iankov, 2007).

Prof. Boev's contributions to paleornithology are world-renowned, ranking him among the world's most respected specialists in this field. He is the author of over 930 scientific and popular science articles, books and textbooks, printed in more than 20 countries in Europe, Asia and North America, which makes him the most productive author in Bulgaria's ornithology.



Fig. 9. Zlatozar Boev and Prof. Nikolay Spasov before the presentation of their scientific work at the National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, to foreign experts for international evaluation by the European Science Foundation and the European Federation of National Academies of Sciences. 09.07.2009.

Educational activity

Prof. Zlatozar Boev is also a leader in developing the scientific and educational capacity of the Bulgarian ornithological community. He was the supervisor of ten PhD students and four master students who developed their theses on different ornithological topics. Prof. Boev also participated in the training and evaluation of scientific personnel in paleornithology in Greece, Russia, Serbia, and Ukraine.

Zlatozar Boev has translated into Bulgarian and edited over 160 popular science books and 282 films (Fig. 12). He regularly contributes to two of Bulgaria's oldest journals: "The Fossil Record" in "Priroda" ("Nature"), published by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (since 2012) and "Game in the past on our lands" in "Lov i ribolov" (since 2022). In 2016, he was awarded the Prize of the Union of Translators in Bulgaria for his overall activity in the field of translation (specialized translation and editing of scientific and popular science literature from English).



Fig. 10. Zlatozar Boev (to the right of the tallest one in front of the entrance) among the participants in the Third International Symposium of the Society for Avian Paleontology and Evolution (SAPE) at the Senckenberg Natural History Institute and Museum in Frankfurt am Main. 21.06.1992.



Fig. 11. Zlatozar Boev (wearing a black shirt on the 2nd row) among participants in the Bulgarian-British archaeological expedition to the Roman city of Nicopolis ad Istrum at the village of Nikyup (Veliko Tarnovo Region). 1988 year.

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On the occasion of his 70th anniversary, the Scientific Council of NMNHS-BAS awarded him the “Academician Ivan Buresh” award in 2025 for his significant scientific contribution in the fields of ornithology, paleontology and archaeozoology, as well as for his contribution to the development of the museum. The Regional Museum of Natural History in Plovdiv awarded him the “70 Years of the Regional Museum of Natural History Plovdiv” award in the same year for his contribution to the cooperation between the two museums.



Fig. 12. Zlatozar Boev with Prof. Petar Beron at the presentation of the Bulgarian edition of the book "Animals. Illustrated Encyclopedia" (Bulgarian translation by Zlatozar Boev) at the National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. 28.09.2009.

His promotion activity is extensive. Prof. Boev has had more than 70 interviews on radio, TV, and social media, and has written hundreds of popular science articles and books for children and older birders (Fig. 13). Zlatozar Boev has participated in dozens of scientific juries in procedures for academic scientific positions and scientists' degrees in the fields of zoology, paleontology, ecology, and hunting. He has reviewed hundreds of scientific publications in over 30 international, foreign and national specialized journals. He was a member of the editorial boards of Bulletin of the Natural History Museum – Plovdiv, Online ISSN 2534-9635; Print ISSN 2534-9627; ZooNotes — “Paisiy Hilendarsky” Plovdiv Univer, ISSN 1313-9916 and Natural Science and Advanced Technology Education / Education in Natural Sciences and High Technologies, ISSN 2738-7135 (print), ISSN 2738-7143 (online) AzBuki — Ministry of Education and Science.

Zlatozar Boev compiled the first Bulgarian-language dictionaries of the scientific names of all species of birds and mammals in the world (Boev, 2025 a; b; c).

It is difficult to briefly cover all the activities and contributions of this dedicated and tireless ornithologist. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he is the pillar of modern Bulgarian ornithology! May we wish him good health and many more great achievements in the second half of his life journey!



Fig. 13. Zlatozar Boev shows some of the emblematic exhibits at the National Museum of Natural History, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to Prime Minister Simeon Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and the Minister of Education and Science, Assoc. Prof. Daniel Valchev. 29.04.2009.

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The authors of articles that are based on experiments that caused injuries or death of animals should explain and justify the grounds of the study and state that the scientific results of the study is at least in trade-off with the sufferings caused. In the Materials and Methods section of the manuscript, the authors should detail as precisely the conditions of maintenance, transport, anesthesia, and marking of animals. When available, references should be added to justify that the techniques used were not invasive. When alternative non-harming techniques exist, but were not used, the manuscripts may not be considered for publication.

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