



Miscellaneous

History of the Red Data Book of Bulgaria

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Abstract. The emergence of the idea for a Red Data Book of Bulgaria in the 1970s and the stages in its implementation are presented. The contribution of the ornithologist and conservationist Nikolay Boev to the creation of the first edition (1984-1985) is highlighted, as well as that of the authors and illustrators of the edition. A lot of data is also presented for the second edition (2015). The two editions are compared and some of their advantages and disadvantages are indicated. A review of some changes that have occurred in the animal world of Bulgaria in recent years is made. The need to begin work on creating a third edition, which would be free from some of the shortcomings of the first two, is highlighted.

Keywords: biodiversity conservation, flora and fauna, nature protection, natural heritage, sustainable environment

Introduction

After the end of World War II (1945), the world was divided into two opposing blocs with opposing ideologies and doctrines. This triggered a long-term arms race. Colossal natural resources were consumed and vast territories and water areas were turned into military (including nuclear) testing grounds, where the natural environment and surrounding areas underwent unprecedented degradation. For a large part of the natural science community, the negative changes in the animal and plant world did not go unnoticed. The information gradually accumulated in different parts of the world on the state of biological diversity (mainly of animal, first of all birds and mammals, but also of plant populations) was consolidated in the first Red Data Book. It was published in 1964. In fact, it was not a book, but a list. It was published as the “IUCN Red List of Threatened Species” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, headquartered in Gland, Switzerland.

In the so-called Eastern Bloc (or socialist camp), the first Red Data Book was published in the former Soviet Union in 1978 (Borodin et al., 1978; Fig. 1), but the committee for its creation was established as early as 1974. Bulgaria is one of the first European countries (second after Czechoslovakia at the time) to publish its national Red Data Book. Among the former Warsaw Pact and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance countries, Bulgaria ranked first in terms of the richness of its biological diversity (relative to its territory), probably with the exception of the former Socialist Republic of Vietnam. With mountain, sea, river (on the Danube River) and hunting tourism, the diversity of Bulgarian nature was popular far beyond the country's borders.

Bulgaria is also the first country in the Balkans with its own Red Data Book (Golemanski, 2014). Work on this large-scale pioneering scientific research project, unprecedented for its time for Bulgaria, began in the late 1970s on the initiative and with the active participation of Nikolay Boev (1922-1985; Fig. 2), a prominent ornithologist and environmentalist, considered the founder of modern environmental protection in Bulgaria.

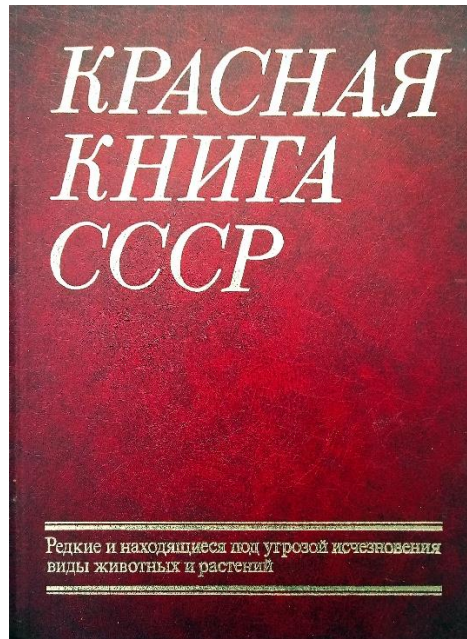


Fig. 1. Front cover of the first edition of the Red Book of the Soviet Union (1978).



Fig. 2. Nikolay Boev (1922-1985).

First edition – “Red Data Book of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria”

In the 1970s, N. Boev undertook an active personal campaign through state and scientific institutions in Bulgaria and among the public to popularize the idea and the importance of creating a first-of-its-kind national Red Data Book for rare and endangered species of plants and animals in need of urgent legislative protection. In dozens of popular science publications in Bulgarian periodicals, as well as abroad, N. Boev successfully promoted this idea, found supporters and ultimately it was implemented.

The Nature Protection Act (drafted with his participation) (SG, 1967) and the Regulations for the Implementation of the Nature Protection Act (SG, 1969) adopted in 1967 in many ways contributed to the consolidation of ideas about the state of living and non-living nature in the People’s Republic of Bulgaria. However, they do not contain criteria for determining the levels of threat of individual species. The lists of protected species include plant and animal species with completely different conservation statuses. Among them are highly endangered, nearly extinct or extinct species such as vultures, for example. However, a number of species whose populations were not at all in danger at the time are also included. This second group of species was protected for purely utilitarian reasons, given their importance for the country's agriculture and forestry. This is precisely where the fundamental difference between "protected species" and "red list species" (i.e. endangered species to varying degrees) lies. Examples of the protected species included as useful, but not rare or endangered, under this law are: Least Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*), Northern White-breasted Hedgehog (*Erinaceus roumanicus*), Common Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), European Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), Eurasian Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*), Eurasian Blackbird (*Turdus merula*), Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), etc. For 6 decades now, they have not been included in either the first or second edition of our Red Data Books. This is quite justified, because the principle of compiling the two types of lists is fundamentally different. One is conservation, and the other is utilitarian (or conservation-utilitarian).

In the 1970s, the sharp decline in biodiversity became quite noticeable. Due to extensive industrialization and pollution of nature, intensive agriculture and forestry, the destruction of natural habitats (forests, wetlands, pastures, steppes, etc.), many plant and animal species began to disappear, reduce their distribution and greatly reduce their numbers. This led to the increasingly recognized need for the creation of a Red Data Book of Bulgaria. Against this background, there was another very important reason: until then, the country lacked systematized information about species that would allow the identification of their conservation status.

The national Red Data Books, which began to appear during these decades, serve as a scientific basis for the establishing of protected natural areas, as a basis for nature conservation legislation, for restrictive measures for hunting, gathering, agriculture, construction, etc. Red Data Books are a powerful tool for raising public awareness about the state of biological diversity in the countries. In doing so, they also fulfill a kind of educational role by explaining to the public which species are in danger and why and how they should be protected. Because of all this, in the late 1970s, the need for the Red Data Book of Bulgaria was realized. The need to identify endangered species and take measures for their conservation was increasingly obvious, in response to the growing impact of human activity on the living and non-living nature of Bulgaria. Initially, in the most renowned East German (former German Democratic Republic) ornithological journal “Der Falke” Bojew & Mitschew (1980) published the first red list of Bulgarian birds. At that time, birds were

the best-studied vertebrates. The following year, in another German journal ("Urania"), Boev (1981) published a review article on the future "Red Data Book of the People's Republic of Bulgaria". In one of his articles from the spring of 1977, he even wrote that "The time has long passed when every district [present provinces - ZB] in our country had to have its own "Red" register for species whose descendants can be counted on the fingers." (Boev, 1977). This idea was also ahead of its time. The first regional Red Data Book appeared only in 1994 (Beshkov et al., 1994). Unfortunately, it remains the only one of its kind to this day.

On 16.05.1979, the Presidium of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences approved the work program for the compilation of the Red Data Book presented by the Scientific Coordination Center for the Protection and Reproduction of the Environment (SCCPRE) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and decided to dedicate the publication to the 1300th anniversary of the establishment (681) of the Bulgarian State. At the same meeting, the Presidium of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences determined the main editorial board and the working groups. The deadline for submitting the manuscripts was also set - 15.05.1980. Eight scientific institutions were designated as implementers of this project - the former Institute of Zoology, Institute of Botany, Institute of Forestry, the SCCPRE, the Departments of Zoology, Botany and Ecology of the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, and the National Museum of Natural History. Thus, most of the natural history research institutions in Bulgaria were involved in the creation of the Red Data Book.

On 12.07.1979, a meeting was held at the Zoological Institute of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences to discuss and adopt the draft of the "Red Data Book of Threatened and Endangered Species of Plants and Animals in the People's Republic of Bulgaria", after which work on it began. In the next 2-3 years, scientists involved in this publication began to collect information, both published in old sources and new up-to-date data from the field, in order to acquire a modern and as complete a picture as possible of the distribution of many species, for which until then data had been very scarce. Simultaneously, the work of the teams on compiling the volume on plants was also progressing, the leading role in which was played by the then Institute of Botany and the Institute of Forestry of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Initially, in a highly popularized form for almost three years, information on dozens of species included in the future edition of the Red Data Book appeared on the pages of the now defunct daily "Otechestven Front" ("Fatherland Front", closed in 1990). In its large 36-page Friday issues every other week, one page is dedicated specifically to his environmental protection column on this topic, entitled "Red Data Book of the Fatherland Front " (Fig. 3). The column is published with the assistance of the then All-People's Committee for Nature Protection under the National Council of the Fatherland Front. It began with a large editorial in the first issue of 25.02.1983.

In this column, N. Boev published articles about the Northern Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*; Boev, 1983a), the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*; Boev, 1983b), the Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*; Boev, 1984a), the Eurasian Beaver (*Castor fiber*; Boev, 1985a), the Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*; Boev, 1985b), the Marbled Polecat (*Vormela peregusna*; Boev, 1984b) etc. Dozens of articles were also published by scientists from the former Institute of Zoology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Ivanov, 1983; Beshkov, 1985), the former Institute of Botany at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (Markova, 1985), the Faculty of Biology of Sofia University (Simeonov, 1985), the Natural History Museum in Plovdiv (Stanev, 1983; Petrov, 1984), etc. All these species are

included in both the first (Fig. 4) and the second (Fig. 5) editions of our Red Data Book. The illustrations (black and white line drawings) of the animals in these first “Red Data Book” articles are the work of the young and then novice animal artist Georgi Pchelarov (today chairman of the Society of Animalists, Florists and Scientific Illustrators, SAFSI). In each of these sections, one article was published for an animal species, and one for a plant species. The plants were illustrated by the artists Dimitar Vlaev (1938-2021) and Nevena Karamalakova (1920-2013), also with line drawings. At that time, the "Otechestven Front" was published in a circulation of about 500,000 copies. This section was the first to popularize in such a huge circulation the nature conservation knowledge about the rarest and most endangered species of plants and animals in the Bulgarian nature.



Fig. 3. The logo of the column "Red Book of the Otechestven Front" from 1983-1985 with the drawing of a bearded vulture by artist Georgi Pchelarov.

The national nature conservation scientific institution at that time was SCCPRE at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, whose director was the forester, Dr. Agric. Sc. Prof. Simeon Nedyalkov (1918-2007). The head of the "Protected Natural Areas and Protected Genetic Fund" section of the SCCPRE was the ornithologist, Assoc. Prof. Nikolay Boev. Among the collaborators at the center at that time were the ornithologist Tanyo Michev (1939-2018), the lawyer Zheko Spiridonov (1936-2023), the hydrobiologist Vladimir Pomakov (1943-2025), the botanist Vladimir Velevev, etc. They became some of the main supporters of the idea, and subsequently the authors of articles in the first (and some in the second) edition of the Red Data Book (e.g. Velevev, 1983a, b; Spiridonov, 1983). Along with many of their conservation articles, a special role in popularizing the idea of preserving

plant diversity in the country was played by the botanist Stefan Stanev from the Natural History Museum in Plovdiv. We can assume that to this day in Bulgaria there is no more active researcher and popularizer of the need to protect rare and endangered plants of the Bulgarian flora. A model in this regard are the five editions of his unique book "Stars are going out in the mountain", the first edition of which appeared during this period (Stanev, 1975). Shortly before that, N. Boev published his nature conservation essays in "While the Larks Sing" (Boev, 1971), and Nikolay Haitov – his "The Thorny Rose" (Haitov, 1976). It should be noted that all three books were innovative in character – they are collections of heartfelt nature conservation essays and are the first of their kind in Bulgarian publishing. However, they in no way can be considered predecessors or prototypes of the Red Data Books. The latter are scientific publications, whereas the aforementioned works are scientific-artistic.

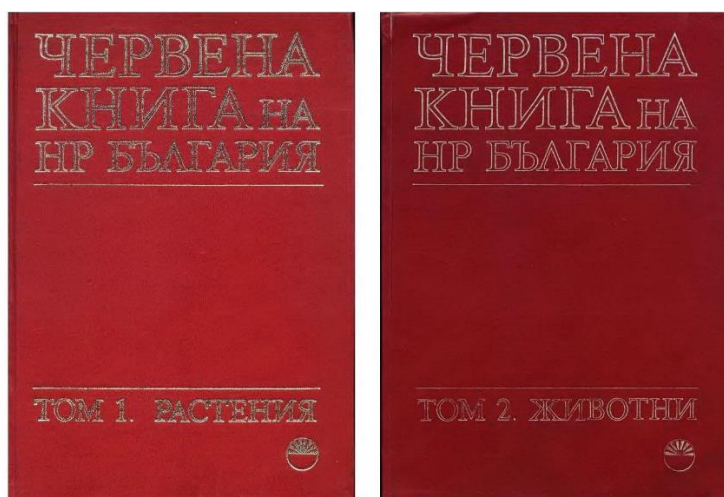


Fig. 4. Front covers of vol. 1 (1984) - left and vol. 2 (1985) - right of the first edition of the Red Book of Bulgaria.



Fig. 5. Front covers of the three volumes of the second edition of the Red Book of Bulgaria (2011).

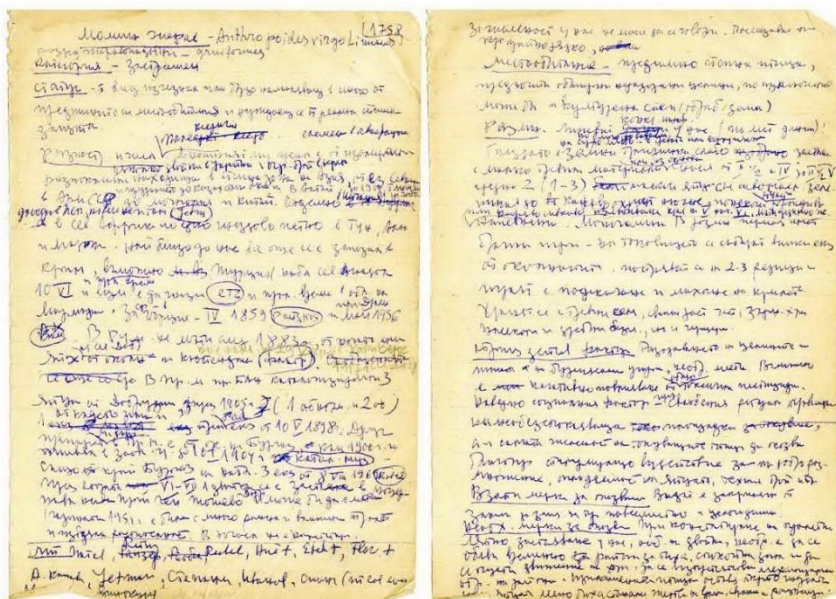
A little later, a popular-scientific book on birds appeared (Michev & Raykov, 1980). In the same year, a departmental publication on protected plants and animals in Bulgaria was also published (Rizov, 1980). Although they direct readers' attention to the importance of protecting plant and animal species, these books, too, cannot be considered predecessors of the Red Data Books. They contain artistic or scientifically popular essays about plant and animal species in need of protection. Popular publications are increasingly appearing in the periodical press, promoting the environmental idea of preserving our national biodiversity.

The first edition of the Red Data Book was carried out by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) under the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. The first volume ("Plants"; Velchev, 1984.) was submitted for publication on 15.11.1983. This is a huge delay, especially considering that the original idea, which was also supported by the Council of Ministers of the country, was to publish this collective work on the eve of the celebration of the 1300th anniversary of the establishment of the Bulgarian state, which was officially celebrated on 28.10.1981. However, the volume was published on 20.07.1984. The second volume ("Animals"; Botev & Peshev, 1985), although submitted to the BAS Publishing House before the first (on 31.03.1983), was published after it on 30.11.1985. This is 18 days after the death of its creator - Nikolay Boev (08.05.1922-12.11.1985). He is the co-editor of the volume, reviewer of all articles on birds (101 species) and author of articles on 16 species of birds (Fig. 6). Both volumes were printed in a rather large circulation of 10,000 copies for their time. The volume on plants includes a total of 763 species - 31 extinct, 158 endangered and 574 rare. The volume on animals includes a total of 157 species - 16 extinct, 89 endangered and 52 rare. This first general overview of the state of biodiversity in Bulgaria is more than alarming. However, it is the first serious signal about the state of wildlife in our country. The articles on animals are illustrated with black and white line drawings, and a small part of them - also in color. They are the work of artists Nevena Karamalakova, Elena Padareva and Svetoslav Tsekov. The entire volume of vegetation is illustrated by only one artist - Dimitar Vlaev.

The three categories used in this edition (Extinct, Threatened and Rare) do not correspond to the categories already approved by the IUCN and generally accepted (see below). However, they were convenient for their time, because they corresponded to the level of completeness of the data that the specialists had.

The international conservation journal *Oryx* (Cambridge University Press) in a review of the Bulgarian Red Data Book wrote: "These two volumes together provide a comprehensive and well-illustrated account of Bulgaria's threatened flora and fauna. The production is of high quality, with numerous illustrations, maps and colour plates. It represents a significant contribution to the documentation and conservation of Bulgaria's biodiversity." (Boswall, 1987). One of the most prestigious natural science journals, *Nature* (Springer Nature), had defined its creation as "the greatest achievement of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences" (Spasov, 1997).

The creation of the Red Data Book of Bulgaria is the result of the interaction of scientific and government experts and institutions. The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is one of the scientific ones, and the government one is the CEP under the Council of Ministers. It was established on 19.06.1976 as a central body responsible for the state policy on environmental protection. Towards the end of 1989, the CEP became the State Committee for Environmental Protection. It existed for less than a year and in 1990 was closed as an independent state body. Its functions were taken over by the newly established Ministry of Environment. In turn, in 1997, it was transformed into the Ministry of Environment and Water (MEW), which subsequently co-published the second edition of the Red Data Book.



МОМИН ЖЕРАВ

Anthropoides virgo (L., 1758) (*Grus virgo* — Reiser, 1894 и Klayn, 1909)

Родер Жеравица

(Gruiformes)

Семейство Жерани

(Gruidae)



Състояние на застрашеност. Изчезнал вид, включен в "Застрашени птици в Европа" и в "Червена книга на Украйна СССР" с категория рядък.

Разпространение. През размножителния период установен в Южна Добружа и Югоизточна България (през юни—юли 1951 г. двойка е пребивавала в района на Генерал Тошево [1]; един екземпляр, уловен край Бургас, е живал в Зоологическата градина в София до 16 в. 1964 г. [2]); по време на прелета — по Южното Черноморско крайбрежие малобройни прелетници итали единични птици (при солоните край Бургас наблюдавани 3 бр. на 8 авг. 1969 г. [3], 12 бр. — на 20 окт. 1958 г., 8 бр. — на 19 март 1959 г. край града [4] и десетки — на 7 авг. 1982 г. край Поморие, Вл. Стефанов — лич. съобщ.). От следните страни в Румелия е гневил предимно в Северна Добружа (колекционирано яше от Кюстенджа през 1888 г.); през лятото на 1917 г. наблюдаван край селището Капа Верде [5] и през 1973 г. в дельтата на р. Дунав [6]. В Югославия (республиките Сърбия и Македония) не е установен до 1950 г. В Гърция по-рано е намаран в Егейска Тракия (край Драма и Сяр) [9], а през размножителния период и на Цикладските острови; Турция [10, 11] — по време на прелета в Северен Анадола, Босфора и Дарданелите. Най-близкото сегашно гнездово находище на 20–30 двойки е в Керченския полуостров. От западноевропейските страни прелети се е срещал само в Южна Испания. Сета ареалът на вида се простира в Северна Африка, Турция, Армения СССР, Казахсия СССР, Монголия, Непал, Китай и др. [13, 14, 15, 16].

Численост. У нас неупроучена. Срещат се единични птици или малобройни (8–12 екз.) ита по време на прелета — вероятно прелетници от малобройната крымска популация. Най-складие в европейските части на ареала бързо намалява.

Местообитаване. Предимно равнинни и планински степи (пата) както затревани (на места с красти), така и по-сладки и глинести, бивши солонци (тузи) до каменисти полупустини; предпочита степи с дин житни растения — козла, класата, а също дин пелии и пр. но разнообразни с тузи [13, 14]. Вторично гнезди накрая и в посели (змиинци и др.). Понякога се засели и в близост до обитавани постройки [13], които е пасищна добитка в лова подпаланието от него насокми. В Средна Азия временно пребивавал и в солонци [17]. В зоопарковите лесно свиква и живее добре на затворено състояние с други видове птици.

Размножаване. У нас неупроучено. В други части на ареала местата за размножаване са близо до бреговете на реки или блата, където всеквденно отива на водонери. Пролетно време има предбрачни игри (токуване), при които 10–20 птици заедно изпълняват своеобразни танци. Гнездото е в тревичка или на лота равна земя, оросяването и подпалването на селскостопанските площи. Виста мерка за опазване. Видът е защитен ЗЗП/1962 г., като е предпазено и обществено 300 лв. за убит, наранен или уловен екземпляр.

Необходими мерки за опазване. Подробно проучване на биологията на вида в свободната природа и на затворено. Установяване и контролирано обесквдане на местата за стационариране по време на прелета и създаване на спокойни тихи зони около тях. Организиране на полусвободно парково отглеждане, като се използват опити при подобно развъждане на други видове жерани. Съществува вероятност отглежданите птици с прелетите се заведи да отскочат по време на прелета някои преминаващи ита момини жерани и те да се задържат в състояние, а и да гнездят. Експериментирание за волнерно-парково отглеждане и размножаване у нас.

Източници: 1. В. Петров, С. Златанов, 1955; 2. Е. Кляйн, 1903; 3. Ребер, 1894; 4. А. Простов, 1964; 5. Д. А. Циян, 1955; 6. G. D. Vasilov, C. Sova, 1968; 7. M. Talpaleva, M. Razafelova, 1975; 8. K. Floricke, 1918; 9. W. Bauer et al., 1969; 10. M. Beaman, 1975; 11. H. Kallio, 1961; 12. Червената книга на Украйна (РСР), 1980; 13. Г. П. Деметев и др., 1951; 14. А. И. Иванов и др., 1951; 15. А. И. Иванов, 1976; 16. Л. С. Степанова, 1975; 17. Красная книга Казахской ССР, 1978; 18. Д. Н. Чемянов, 1960.

Fig. 6. Handwritten notes by N. Boev (above) and the printed article (below) about the Demoiselle crane (*Grus virgo*) in the first edition of the Red Book.

Second edition – “Red Book of the Republic of Bulgaria”

Almost three decades have passed. The changed economic and political life in the country after 1989 has led to rapid (and negative) changes in the state of living and non-living nature in our country. The data from the first edition of the Red Book are already irretrievably outdated and a new Red Data Book needs to be published.

For birds, which are the best-studied group among vertebrates, Michev et al. (2011) published the “Red List of Birds in Bulgaria”, which reflects the changes in the conservation status of species. It includes 155 species: regionally extinct (REX) - 10; critically endangered (CR) - 32; endangered (EN) - 45; vulnerable (VU) - 53; near threatened (NT) - 2; least concerned (LC) - 7; with insufficient data (DD) - 6.

A similar in scope, but much more detailed edition for mammals was published by Popov et al. (2007). It includes detailed species descriptions of 49 species of mammals (almost half of the recent Bulgarian mammalian fauna) with high conservation status: two species of Eulipotyphla, 17 species of Chiroptera, 15 of Rodentia, 11 of Carnivora, one of Artiodactyla, and three of Cetacea.

The second edition of the Red Data Book of Bulgaria was also carried out by the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, but the Ministry of Environment and Water also participated in it as a co-publisher. It is published in three volumes: vol. 1. "Plants and Mushrooms" with over 200 authors of the species descriptions (Peev, 2015); vol. 2. "Animals" with 120 authors (Golemanski, 2015); vol. 3. "Natural Habitats" with 32 authors (Biserkov, 2015). In this edition, all species for which articles have been written are illustrated with color drawings specially prepared for it. The authors of the illustrations are some of the best illustrators-naturalists such as Assen Ignatov, Attila Sedefchev, Georgi Pchelarov, Stoyan Nikolov, Velizar Simeonovski and Viktor Vassilev. The habitats are illustrated with carefully selected representative color photographs.

The scientific work on collecting the data and summarizing them was completed by June 2006. The three volumes were paginated and ready for printing in October 2011. As with the publication of the first edition, so with the second, due to a number of unforeseen reasons, publication of the volumes was delayed by four years. Fig. 7 presents the facsimiles of the original title page and its back page, with the year of publication 2011.

In the second edition, compared to the first, five significant changes have been made:

(1) The conservation status of the species has been brought into line with international standards. Unlike the first edition, the second edition is in line with the modern international criteria for assessing the threat of species adopted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). According to these criteria, there are nine categories of threat: Extinct (EX) or Probably Extinct (?EX); Extinct in the Wild (EW); Critically Endangered (CR); Endangered (EN); Vulnerable (VU); Near Threatened (NT); Least Concern (LC); Data Deficient (DD); and Not Evaluated (NE).

(2) The species included are presented by threat category, rather than in systematic order as in the first edition (e.g. Cyclostomata, Osteichthyes, Amphibia, Reptilia, Aves, Mammalia).

(3) Invertebrates (including cave animals) are included for the first time in this edition.

(4) A separate volume is devoted to habitat conservation. It includes 166 habitats, of which 28 are critically endangered (CR), 71 are endangered (EN), 47 are vulnerable (VU), and 20 are potentially endangered (NT).

(5) For some of the species (over 100), no separate articles have been developed, but only their names are included in an additional table indicating their conservation status.

Even this alone (and it is not the only one) is sufficient reason to plan the publication of a new third edition of the Red Book of Bulgaria.

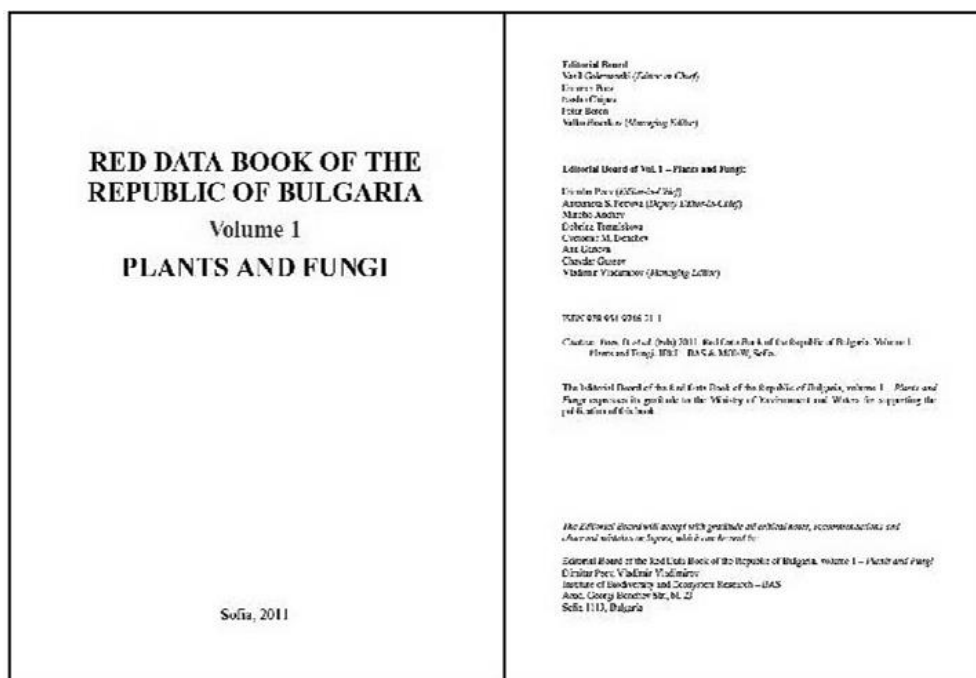


Fig. 7. Title page and its back of Volume 1 of the second edition of the Red Data Book of Bulgaria with the original designation of the year 2011.

Conclusion

Compared to the first edition (1984-1985), the second edition (2015) is larger in volume, with more precise maps of the distribution of species, but with less textual information about them. The latter should be avoided in a possible third edition of the book. It should include articles on all species with conservation status. In the event of a shortage of financial resources, the publication could be illustrated with black and white illustrations, or even without illustrations. The latter would reduce its educational value for non-specialists, but on the other hand it would allow for an emphasis on the completeness of scientific information about individual species, the number of which would already be significantly increased. On the other side, the Red Data Books do not have the function of field guides or albums of wild animals and plants. Their meaning is to present accurate and up-to-date information on the state of biodiversity on the territory of the country and to propose specific measures for the conservation of each species.

In 2032, we will celebrate the 1400th anniversary of the establishment of the Bulgarian state. If we follow the tradition of creating our first Red Book (1984, 1985), now is the right time to consider starting work on the third edition of the "Red Book of the Republic of Bulgaria".

The Black Sea monk (*Monachus monachus*) seal was included in the first, and due to its disappearance in our country, excluded from the second edition. It is hoped that future recovery of the species in Bulgarian waters may justify its inclusion in a future edition

The Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*), Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and European Bison (Wisent, *Bos bison*) should also be included in the new edition. The beaver is now rapidly returning to many of its former territories. The beaver is not included in either edition at all, but is an autochthonous species for Bulgaria, surviving in our nature until 1750-1850 (Boev & Spassov, 2019).

There are already two free-living herds of wisent with 30-40 semi-wild/reintroduced individuals in the Eastern Rhodopes near the Studen Kladenets reservoir and the area of the village of Zhenda. The Wisent is an autochthonous species for the nature of Bulgaria and disappeared from the country in the late Middle Ages until the 16th-17th centuries (Boev, 2022).

The same is true of the black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), which is included in both editions as an extinct species, but in 2026, 18 pairs were nesting in 4 places in the country (Sliven - Kotel, Vrachanski Balkan - Ponor, Eastern Rhodopes and Sakar). The nesting population of the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*), the white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) and the Imperial eagle (*Aquila heliaca*) has also stabilized. The successful recovery of the Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) and the Lesser Kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) has begun. The Common Crane (*Grus grus*) has started nesting in Bulgaria again (in the Dragoman Marsh) after an almost 60-year hiatus. For two years, 30-35 pairs of Greater flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) have been nesting in Atanasovsko Lake (Iankov & Boev, 2024). The species was included in the first and excluded from the second edition of the Red Book. In Bulgaria there are already 7 species of newts, 2 species of tree frog (*Hyla*), 2 species of slow worm (*Anguis*), 3-5 species of geckos etc. For these and many other species, a review of their conservation status is necessary.

The data for the second edition were collected until 2005. Over the past 2 decades, the mentioned and many other changes clearly show that we already need a third edition of the Bulgarian Red Data Book.

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