

New locality of Eurasian stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* (Linnaeus, 1758) during the breeding season in Northwest Bulgaria

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Abstract. We describe a new locality of Eurasian stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* (Linnaeus, 1758) during breeding season near the town of Berkovitsa, in the SPA BG 0002090 Berkovitsa. The site is new and unknown so far, and is the third site in the Northwestern Bulgaria where the species is registered, and the only one from the interior of North Bulgaria.

Key words: *Burhinus oedicnemus*, new locality, Northwest Bulgaria

The Eurasian stone-curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* (Linnaeus, 1758) is relatively rare species in Bulgaria, included in the Red Data Book with the category vulnerable (VU D1; Michev & Petrov 2011), and in Appendices 1 and 2 of the Biodiversity Act.

On 19.06.2013, at about 02:00 A. M., southeast of town of Berkovitsa, in the SPA BG 0002090 Berkovitsa, we heard two Eurasian Stone-curlews (*B. oedicnemus*) in an area. On the same night, at about 04:00 A. M., in another area, approximately 800 m away from the first one, we heard another bird. All calls could be described as short bisyllabic flight calls. From those observations we conclude that there are two different nesting territories. According to the International scale for nesting probability (Simeonov & Michev 1991), those observations could be classified as Possible Breeding 1 - Species observed during breeding season in suitable nesting habitat.

The area, in which the species is registered, is a large plane grassland at altitude of approximately 400 m a.s.l., mainly former irrigated arable land (15-20 years ago), abandoned for the most part. At present the area is rarely visited by people, the irrigation canals are ruined and as a result some parts are inundated, especially during rains.

Nankinov *et al.* (1997) stated that the Eurasian stone-curlew nests very rarely in North Bulgaria. Nankinov & Dalakchieva (2001) suppose nesting of single pairs in the interior of Danube plain, a conclusion based on observations near Pleven and Razgrad. According to Shurulinkov *et al.* (2005), the species nests between Nikopol and Belene - on 12.07.2000 there are registered two adults and two young birds. One pair is registered at the same place on 24.06.2001. In Northwestern Bulgaria after 1990 the species is registered during breeding season in the region Zlatiyata (Shurulinkov *et al.* 2007). The Eurasian stone-curlew has not been registered in IBA Berkovitsa (Delov 2007). The species is not listed in the Standard data form of SPA Berkovitsa - protected area under Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds (MOSW 2013).

From the analysis of the literature it is clear, that the locality of the Eurasian stone-curlew during the breeding season near Berkovitsa is new and unknown so far. After 1990, this is the third site in the Northwestern Bulgaria where the species is registered, and the only one from the interior of North Bulgaria. The other two sites are located near the Danube River.

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