

## **Summary of the results from the monitored areas for Saker during the breeding season in NE Bulgaria**

The emphasis of the survey efforts was on the Saker Falcon breeding status. During all years of the project thorough surveys were done at all possible breeding areas within the project territory. All potential breeding sites (cliffs, rocks, tree patches and tree belts, woodland areas, power lines, etc.) were inspected and checked for presence of nests. In 2013 the coastal cliff at the eastern boundary of Dobrudzha Plateau was surveyed from a boat from the sea. In addition to the special expeditions, local volunteers and collaborators were engaged to make observations and surveys during the breeding season.

Main attention was paid to the project SPAs (Batova, Suha Reka, Harsovska Reka, Kaliakra, Shabla Lake Complex, Durankulak Lake) and they were surveyed on their entire territory every breeding season. In addition, SPA Chairya (BG 0002085) was surveyed after Saker Falcons were observed there.

2011

During the breeding period of 2011 one pair of Saker (*Falco cherrug*) has been observed hunting in suitable habitat at Harsovska Reka SPA, but no occupied nest was located. Large and inaccessible forest area there allows an assumption of possible existence of nest in tree. In total 3 observations of the species during the breeding season were done during the year in the project territory (2 at Batova SPA and one at Harsovska Reka SPA).

2012

More attention was paid to the area of Batova SPA and this resulted in 13 observations of Sakers during the breeding season, but regardless of the efforts, no occupied nest was found, though in two of the cases pairs of Sakers were seen. Three observations of the species were done in the Chairya SPA and one Saker was seen at Kaliakra SPA. In total 17 records of the Saker in 2012 were collected.

2013

In total just four observations of Sakers during the breeding season were obtained, in spite of the same level of efforts as the previous years. More thorough investigation of the entire sea cliff between Kaliakra SPA and Shabla Lake Complex SPA did not produce positive results despite the abundance of suitable niches for breeding. The four records are from Chairya SPA, Shabla Lake Complex SPA, Durankulak Lake SPA and from Provadiysko-Royaksko Plateau SPA.

2014

Three observations of Saker Falcons were done during the breeding season of 2014 in NE Bulgaria. One of them was from an area North-East from Dobrich, and the second and third were from the area of Chairya SPA. All possible breeding sites there were investigated, but no occupied Saker nest was found (there were found occupied nests of Common Buzzard, Goshawk, Hobby, Common Kestrel).