

Birds in the Valley of the Suha Reka River (South Dobrudzha, Bulgaria)

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Abstract: The valley of Suha Reka is of interest with its well preserved biodiversity in a highly agricultural region. There are remnants of stony steppe habitat in some places on its slopes. In the valley itself there are pastures with formations of bushes, rock ledges, cornices and storage spots. According to previous data from the last 40 years, besides the data obtained by us, 132 bird species, 98 of which were established as breeding. The Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) and Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*) nest no longer in the valley. The population of the Long-legged Buzzard (*Buteo rufinus*) is now in a good condition. Faunistic and ecological investigations have been carried out in the following biotopes: open areas, low forests and oak forests. Breeding birds in oak forests have a density of 39.7 pairs/10 ha. In the open grass areas the species richness and the population density of the community are lower (8 species with an average density of 4.4 pares/10ha), due to the uniformity of the biotope and the way of its use. The density in low forests is 13.8 pairs/10ha. Dominant species for this type of forest are Blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and Golden Oriole (*Oriolus oriolus*).

Key words: birds, breeding communities, Dobrudzha, Bulgaria