

Project Update: June 2018

***Zeus olympius* - an extremely rare species found in Kosovo**

During the spring season, fungi collection was conducted in Kosovo Mountains, particularly in the area with undisturbed natural forest of Bosnian pine (*Pinus leucodermis*). Our purpose was searching for certain distinctive species affiliated with this Balkan endemic pine.

One of the pivotal finds was the cup fungus *Zeus olympius*, known only from the type locality in Greece (Mt Olympus) and Bulgaria; ours is only its third locality in the world. The species was observed only in Prevala (Sharr Mt National Park), at approximately 1,600 m. The fruit bodies grow scattered or in small groups on dead portions of twigs and small branches of Bosnian pine still living towards their base. The species is part of the Global Fungal Red List Initiative, assessed as "potentially Critically Endangered". The identified population is very small.

Our data has been input into the Global Fungal Red List Initiative (http://iucn.ekoo.se/iucn/species_view/129118/) and the project-related webpage (<http://macfungi.webs.com/fungi-of-kosovo>).



Zeus olympius - on a dry branch of Bosnian pine.