

Detailed Final Report

Monday, 17th May 2004

Abigel Szodoray received a continuation grant in May 2004. Her team is going to start a programme of nationwide, long term protection of bats in Romania. In order to achieve this they will monitor the key bat species and develop the human resource element by building a network of NGOs which will all deal with bat protection. The group is going to organise camps, presentations, prepare leaflets and monitor key underground habitats of bats. They also hope to help local bat worker groups to become self-sustainable

Monday 5th January 2004

The project objective was to involve and to train volunteers for bat protection and to begin the monitoring of 4 bat species that were involved in the National Bat Monitoring Programme. We achieved the project objectives through the following activities:

- education - involving volunteers in bat protection and monitoring- by organising two workshops for 36 participants, assuring them basic knowledge (about identification of species, ultrasounds, bat detectors, protection and monitoring) in order to be involved in the National Bat Monitoring Programme. Every participant received training materials. They have a mailing list where problems concerning the bats can be discussed. The list assures the continuous communication between the participants.
- public awareness - via media - raising public awareness on high human disturbance of bats- different TV stations (local, national TVs) were present in the second workshop, and they produced a short interview that was presented for the public. 6 articles in local and national newspapers were published about the results of the project.
- survey and monitoring - to protect the bats we need to know where the main hibernation and summer roosts are. Also is very important to have information about the level of populational changes that can be measured by monitoring. During the project the RBPA staff and the new volunteers checked the underground habitats of the 4 targeted species: the greater horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), the lesser horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), the long winged bat (*Miniopterus schreibersii*) and the mouse eared bat (*Myotis myotis/ Myotis blythii*). The results of the project "Volunteer Involvement in the National Bat Monitoring Programme" was presented in an international workshop organised in Romania for Romanian researchers and experts from Germany, Slovenia, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Ukraine, also in the frame of a National Bat Conference held in York (UK), and in the National Bat Conference in Hungary.

Longer term we would like to:

- to work out the results of a 5 year monitoring of different bat species and to use these data for lobbying in governmental level; and
- to make effective protection measures of the underground habitats and other known roosts which are distributed by humans: preparing and putting out warning boards on the cave entrance, preparing the management plan of these caves, and in special case asking to be closed in bats friendly way from the public.

In March 2003 we started a project “Sustainable Bat Conservation in Romania” in order to implement the strategy of Bat Monitoring Programme that was worked out recently by bat workers from Romania. During this summer we are going to recruit volunteers from Romania who are interesting in bats and their protection.

In this way we have done the following activities:

- In the beginning of March the project team met to discuss the time schedule of the project. During March, many NGOs (such as Aquaterra Bucharest from Iasi, Amonit of Piatra Neamt, EKE from Satu Mare, and Ecotur of Sibiu) and Universities like Ecological Department from the University of Sibiu, University of Bucharest’s Biology Department, University of Iasi, Biology and the Ecological Department from Babes-Bolyai University were contacted. A letter of invitation was sent to them to invite possible participants in our workshops. In April and May the project team introduces the data about the applicants, works out the selection criteria, and makes survey of bats in Bihor Mountains.
- Recently the local and regional media was announced about the project in order to make public awareness about the topic of the project.