

Project Update: December 2009

In October 2009, 1000 copies of a 2010 calendar that promotes the conservation of the Egyptian vulture were printed.

During October-November 2009, more than 500 copies were distributed in about 110 villages and towns in the distribution range of the species in Bulgaria. Most of the calendars were distributed among the most important target groups: village majors, livestock owners, shops and public pubs, schools, cultural clubs, municipalities, hunting associations, foresters etc. During the activity we always presented and discussed the threats for the species, the danger of its soon extinction from the country and the activities being undertaken. Topics as how everybody can help were also debated.

Besides the educational importance, one of the biggest benefits from the activity is that we discovered local people (mainly shepherds) who know the species very well and are even voluntarily helping it through disposing of animal carcasses on accessible places and through awareness rising. The idea for establishing of local caretakers of every particular nest emerged.

We will continue with this activity in January and February 2010 and we plan to visit additional about 100 villages mainly in the Eastern Rhodopes.

We are looking forward the return of the vultures and the start of the supplementary feeding activity in 2010.

As part of another project for the species tomorrow two of my colleagues and me are heading towards Ethiopia and Djibouti for 20 days to study the reasons for the expected high mortality in the wintering areas of the species.

