March 23rd 1899, and he estimated the population at 8 nests with eggs and chicks. They were in pairs as early as on birds called @dralovac blato, i.e. Crane Mire) he even found (which is owing to the clearly constant presence of these 1896, 1899 and 1904. In the northern part of the field pairs of breeding Common Cranes at Livanjsko polje in T eilen von Serbien und Dalmatien, Wien einer Ornis Balcanica, I. Bosnien und Herzegowina nebst the Biokovo Mts. towards Sinjsko polje, Croatia (UTM YJ44)

Ruddy Kingfisher Alcedo atthis (1988) – the breeding of Common Kingfishers was first observed at the Hutovo blato in 1981 (Kraček, 1981), but biannual records of breeding pairs were not confirmed until 1987 (Kraček & Kralj, 1987). In the entire period of study from 1987 to 1999, a total of 22 pairs of Common Kingfishers were observed in the field. The number of breeding pairs has fluctuated over the years, reaching a peak of 11 pairs in 1991.

Common Crane Grus grus – on March 12th and 9th 2002, the first migrating Cranes were observed at Hutovo blato. A flock of some 20 birds was seen flying under and around the bridge on the Adriatic river, and later on, three pairs of Cranes were seen beside the bridge. On April 10th, a pair of migrating Cranes was observed in the fields near Karaotok, while on May 2nd, two pairs of Cranes were seen in the meadows along the Neretva river. On May 18th, a pair of Cranes was observed in the village of Bradina near Konjic. The place of the last observation lies in the heart of Bosnia, where the impact of the Adriatic thoroughfare just before the centre of Neum. Here the pair clearly bred, for I observed, in the very same place, few more swallows – most probably a family with fledged young – a month later, i.e. on July 12th 2002. Pairs of Red-rumped Swallows were also seen along the Mostar-Sarajevo road running through the narrow Neretva canyon, I observed pairs and families deeper in the interior of the country as well, i.e. at the bridges crossing the river: 2 pairs near the Grabovica hydroelectric power plant in the vicinity of Jablanica, 1 family near Ostrožac, and 1 family near the bridge over the right tributary of the Neretva river some 3 km south of the village of Bradina near Konjic. The place of the last observation lies in the heart of Bosnia, where the impact of the Mediterranean climate along the Neretva valley is almost entirely lost.

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The Red-rumped Swallow Hirundo daurica

The Red-rumped Swallow is Eumediterranean species breeding in dry and warm habitats, particularly in river valleys and canyons (Cramp, S., ed. (1988): The Birds of the Western Palearctic, Vol. 5, Oxford). Similar as the Cetti’s Warbler Cettia cetti, Syrian Woodpecker Dendrocopos syriacus and Spanish Sparrow Passer hispaniolensis, it spreads from Asia Minor along the Balkan Peninsula and the Adriatic coast towards the north and northwest (Cramp 1988). As far as Croatia is concerned, the bird has been until 1980 known to occur only in Southern Dalmatia, while more recently it has also colonised central and northern Dalmatia, the Kvarner and Istra [Strtćević, M. (1988): Daurسكa lastovcka, Hirundo daurica rufula Temminck 1835; novi podaci o gnezdenju u Hrvatskoj (Yugoslavija). Ornitollogija u Hrvatskoj, JAZU, Zagreb] and as a breeder occurs even in Slovenia [Mihelić, T. (2000): Prva potrjena gneditev redce lastovke Hirundo daurica v Sloveniji (Kraški rob, JZ, Slovenija). Acrocephalus 21 (102-103): 261-263]. In Herzegovina, it was for the first time recorded as late as in 1976 at Hutovo blato. Later on, its nest-sites were discovered at Popovo polje (1978), in the Neretva canyon up to Jablanica (1979), and in the Bregava valley (1980) [Obratnić (1976 & 1980): In: Strtćević, M. & G. Lukoč (1991): Survey of spreading and breeding range changes of the Red-rumped Swallow (Hirundo daurica) in Yugoslav territory. Larus 43: 37-49]. In Herzegovina, I observed it for the first time on June 12th 2002. A pair was seen flying under and around the bridge on the Adriatic thoroughfare just before the centre of Neum. Here the pair clearly bred, for I observed, in the very same place, few more swallows – most probably a family with fledged young – a month later, i.e. on July 12th 2002. Pairs of Red-rumped Swallows were also seen along the Mostar-Sarajevo road running through the narrow Neretva canyon, I observed pairs and families deeper in the interior of the country as well, i.e. at the bridges crossing the river: 2 pairs near the Grabovica hydroelectric power plant in the vicinity of Jablanica, 1 family near Ostrožac, and 1 family near the bridge over the right tributary of the Neretva river some 3 km south of the village of Bradina near Konjic. The place of the last observation lies in the heart of Bosnia, where the impact of the Mediterranean climate along the Neretva valley is almost entirely lost.

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