

## BREEDING OF THE STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* IN THE FORESTS OF PETROVA GORA

*Gniježđenje goluba dupljaša *Columba oenas* u šumama Petrove gore*

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The Stock Dove *Columba oenas* is a species whose breeding population in Croatia is classified as vulnerable (TUTIŠ *et al.* 2013) and is therefore a nationally important target species for defining SPAs (DUPLIĆ *et al.* 2012). Its total breeding population in Croatia is currently estimated at 300-600 breeding pairs, with a substantial part of those being situated in the forests of the Papuk Nature Park. There, its estimated breeding population density varies from 0.25 breeding pairs per km<sup>2</sup> in young oak forests to 1.74 bp/km<sup>2</sup> in old beech forests (DUMBOVIĆ 2007). According to BWPI (2006), their abundance is largely dependent on the availability of suitable nest-sites.

Ornithological field research was conducted using the point transect count method in the forests of Petrova gora during the first halves of April, May and June 2016. In total, 54 points were surveyed. Ten minutes of counting time was spent on each point, and the birds were recorded in two counting bands: the inner band with a radius of 100 m from the counting point and the outer band from 100 m to infinity. Stock Dove presence was recorded during all three months, with estimated 6-9 breeding pairs in the area covered by transects. An estimate of their breeding population density in the forests of Petrova gora was made using the formula described in BIBBY *et al.* (1992), which includes both inner and outer counting bands. The most conservative density estimate thus obtained is approximately 2.5 pairs per km<sup>2</sup>, which is twice as high as previously recorded on Papuk. If the Stock Dove had a similar density across the entire Petrova gora area, its estimated population would range from 75 pairs in the area of the “Petrova gora – Biljeg” significant landscape to 250 pairs in the whole Petrova gora area. This estimated population of the “Petrova gora – Biljeg” significant landscape area would constitute 12.5-25% of the total Croatian breeding population, whereas the estimated population of the whole Petrova gora area would constitute as much as 40-80% of the total breeding population of Croatia.

These preliminary results indicate a need for further research of Stock Dove abundance and distribution in the Petrova gora area, as well as in other upland

areas of continental Croatia, in order to revise the estimate of their Croatian breeding population. Such research would also provide a useful base for determining the possible inclusion of the Petrova gora area in the National Ecological Network.

### Literatura

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### SAŽETAK

Golub dupljaš je osjetljiva nacionalno važna ciljna vrsta za određivanje Područja posebne zaštite (SPA) u Hrvatskoj. 6-9 gnijezdećih parova ove vrste zabilježeno je u šumama Petrove gore kroz proljeće 2016. Procijenjena gustoća njihove populacije na području Petrove gore upućuje na potrebu za daljnjim istraživanjima njihove brojnosti i rasprostranjenosti na području kontinentalne Hrvatske kako bi se ponovo procijenio status njihove gnijezdeće populacije u Hrvatskoj.