

MONITORING OF THE GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER'S *Dendrocopos major* NESTING

Praćenje gniježdenja velikog djetlića Dendrocopos major

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The most numerous species of woodpeckers in Croatia is the Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, a species which is nesting across the entire Palearctic area. Its nesting season begins at the end of April, almost always in a freshly hollowed out nesting hole which is usually positioned between 3 and 5 meters in height. Its diameter is 5x6 cm. The Great Spotted Woodpecker inhabits various types of forested areas, orchards, and city parks (SNOW *et al.* 1998).

The monitored nesting period commenced on 15 March 2019, when a nesting hole was discovered in Kloštar Ivanić in a sour cherry tree *Prunus cerasus*. The hole's diameter was 5x5 cm, the diameter of the tree at its base was 102 cm, while at the height of the hole, the diameter of the tree was 73 cm. The nesting hole itself was positioned at a height of 166 cm. The male had ended the extraction of kindling on 3 April. On the 4 April it was noted that the female had begun spending most of the day in the hole. A Bushnell Trail camera which was utilised for monitoring the nesting process was set up approximately two metres from the tree. Monitoring ended on 26 April, due to the camera being stolen.

Six white eggs were observed during a short investigation with the help of an endoscope on 13 April. It was noted that the male incubated the eggs throughout the night, while the shift change would usually take place around 5:30 a.m. and 19:00 p.m. In all woodpecker species, it is known that only males incubate by night (BWPi 2006). Female would leave the nesting hole on a few occasions during the day. The female's absence from the hole usually lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The camera has recorded that the following species checking the nesting hole during the incubation period: the domestic cat, Beech Marten *Martes foina*, Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*, and Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*. None of these animals have caused any damage to the clutch. Feeding of the offspring began on 20 April, and it was undertaken by both male and female birds, mostly between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Feeding occurred on average 74.5 (SD = 12.0, range 69 - 82) times per day, with the male carrying food more often than the female

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(male: 40.8 ± 7.7 , range 31-51, female: 33.7 ± 4.3 , range 26- 39, Fig. 1). Equal share in nestling provisioning or somewhat greater provisioning rate by males in later nestling period is common in this species (BWPi 2006). After bringing food, the female would usually stay in the nesting hole for about 10 minutes. She would also groom quite frequently after delivering the food. Both would remain in the hole afterwards for a few minutes. It was noted with the endoscope that the hole was abandoned on 12 May 2019, without any information if the nesting process resulted in success.

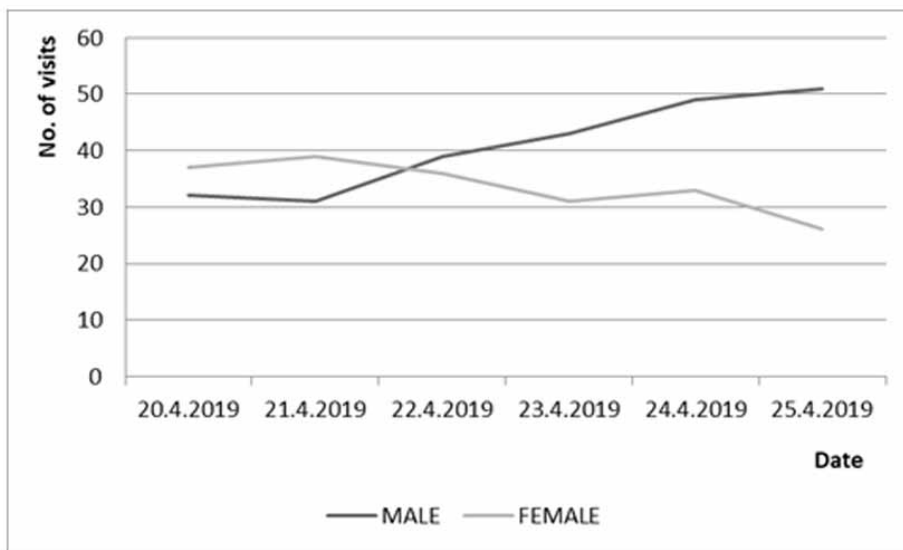


Figure 1. Frequencies of providing food in male and female Great Spotted Woodpecker observed at one nest between 20 and 25 April 2019.

Slika 1. Učestalost donošenja hrane od strane mužjaka i ženke velikog djetića zabilježena na jednom gnijezdu između 20. i 25. travnja 2019.

References

- BWPi (2006): BWPi 2.0.1. Birds of the Western Palearctic Interactive DVD ROM, Oxford University Press & BirdGuides Ltd.
- SNOW, D.W., C.M. PERRINS, R. GILLMOR, B. HILLCOAT, C. ROSELAAR, D. VINCENT, D. WALLACE, M. WILSON. (1998): The Birds of the Western Palearctic. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

SAŽETAK

Gniježđenje velikog djetlića *Dendrocopos major* praćeno je u proljeće 2019. u Kloštar Ivaniću. Gnijezdo je bilo smješteno u duplji u višnji *Prunus cerasus*, na visini od 166 cm. Mužjak je završio s izbacivanjem triješća 3. travnja, a od 4. travnja ženka je veći dio dana provodila u duplji. U duplji je 13. travnja endoskopom utvrđena prisutnost 6 jaja. Aktivnost na gnijezdu je praćena Bushnell Trail kamerom od 16. travnja do 26. travnja, kada je kamera ukradena. Mužjak je inkubirao noću, od oko 19:00 do oko 5:30 sati, a ženka danju, uz nekoliko kraćih izbivanja od 30-45 minuta. Kamera je zabilježila provjeravanje duplje za vrijeme inkubacije od strane domaće mačke, kune bjelice *Martes foina*, zelene žune *Picus viridis* i vijoglava *Jynx torquilla*, ali bez ikakve štete. Hranjenje mladih je započelo 20. travnja, a hranu donose oba roditelja, od 6:00 do 19:00 sati. Hranu donose u prosjeku 74.5 (SD = 12.0, raspon 69 - 82) puta dnevno, mužjak češće od ženke (mužjak: 40.8 ± 7.7, raspon 31-51, ženka: 33.7 ± 4.3, raspon 26-39). Endoskopom je 12. svibnja 2019. utvrđeno da je duplja prazna, a uspješnost gniježđenja nije bila poznata.