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THE OBSERVATION OF THE EURASIAN DOTTEREL (*EUDROMIAS MORINELLUS*) IN CHORNOGORA MOUNTAIN RIDGE (THE UKRAINIAN CARPATHIANS)

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Abstract. We have observed one individual of the Eurasian Dotterel on 15 July 2019 near Petros peak in the Chornogora massif of the Ukrainian Carpathians. It reacted to human's presence and tried to avoid us, but did not attempt to fly away. In contrast to previous observations in Ukraine which happened mainly in periods from late August to late September, our observation is atypical.

Key words: fauna, distribution, rare species, West Ukraine.

Спостереження хрустана (*Eudromias morinellus*) на Чорногірському хребті (Українські Карпати). - О. Дубовик, Р. Стефанишин. - Беркут. 28 (1-2). 2019. - Ми зареєстрували одну особину хрустана 15 липня 2019 року поблизу г. Петрос Чорногірського гірського хребта в Українських Карпатах. Ця особина реагувала на присутність людей і намагалася уникати контакту, проте не злітала. Оскільки попередні відомі за останні роки реєстрації цього виду відбувалися в періоди осінніх міграцій (кінець серпня – кінець вересня), наше спостереження є нетиповим.

Ключові слова: фауна, поширення, рідкісний вид, Західна Україна.

The Eurasian Dotterel (*Eudromias morinellus*) is a relatively rare wader species. Total number of breeding pairs in Europe is expected to equal 18–39 thousands (Hable, Saari, 1997) or 13–48 thousands (Young et al., 2017). Total population size seems to be unknown; some authors claim it to be c. 50,000–220,000 individuals (BirdLife International, 2016). This can be mainly related to the distribution of the species: it inhabits flat open uplands, mountain ridges plateaus, coastal and inland Arctic tundra during the breeding season (Hayman et al., 1986; del Hoyo et al., 1996). The winter range is confined to a narrow zone between Morocco and Iran (Hable, Saari, 1997). The number of individuals declines both in Europe and generally (Sackl, 1993; Saari, 1995; Young et al., 2017). Wind farms are concerned to be one of the risk factors for this species in Central and Southern Europe (Dietzen et al., 2008). Notwithstanding, this species does not have any conservation status in SPEC categories (Young et al., 2017), IUCN Red List (LC), CITES, Red Book of Ukraine. It is protected, on the contrary, by the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Appendix II) and Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

Despite the fact that the breeding European population is concentrated mainly in Northern Russia, Fennoscandia and Great Britain, there are small populations on some Southern and Central European mountains; also, occasional breeding facts were documented on lowlands along the Western European migration routes (Hable, Saari, 1997).

The migration process (at least, spring migration) of the Dotterel is thought to be continuous: there are several traditional spring resting sites (the Netherlands, Denmark), but in other sites this species is observed only during bad weather conditions (Maumary, Duflon, 1989; Hable, Saari, 1997). During autumn the main concentration occurs on the Hungarian steppes, also – rarely – on the coasts of North Europe.

Terms of migration vary among the breeding area. For instance, a geo-logging research of migration of Dotterels which breed in alpine Fennoscandia have shown that the autumn migration lasts from late August to mid-October and the spring migration lasts from late March to mid-May (Aarvak et al., 2019). Actually, the breeding happens during late May, June, July; July and August is a time for females flocking (this species is an example of polyandry and sex-role inversion, for further information see Owens et al., 1995) and juveniles moult (Kålås, Byrkjedal, 1984).

According to the EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds (Hable, Saari, 1997) there are probable or confirmed isolated breeding sites in the Romanian, Polish and Slovakian Carpathians and the Alps and their adjacencies (see also Dietzen et al., 2008; Bassi et al., 2014). There are probably less than 5 breeding pairs of the Dotterel in the Carpathians – it is assumed that all the cases are concentrated in the Southern Carpathians (Romania) and no breeding cases in Slovakia or Poland (Valle, Scarton, 1999).

In the last years there are few observations of the Dotterel in the Ukrainian Carpathians: 28 August, 2009 (Kish, 2017); 27 August, 2018 (V. Yagodzinskiy, pers. comm.) – both were made in the Polonyna Borzhava mountain ridge; 20 September, 2018 (I. Gvozdetskiy, pers. comm. about 4 individuals) in the Chornogora mountain ridge; 30 September 2018 (V. Rizun, pers. comm.) in the Pishkonja mountain ridge. Note that all these observations concern only the migration period.

In contrast, we have observed one individual of the Eurasian Dotterel (photo 1–2) on 15 July 2019 near the Petros peak (2020 m a.s.l.) in the Chornogora massif of the Ukrainian Carpathians (48.17052° N, 24.41943° E, 1970 m a.s.l.). The bird was much more timid that was reported by V. Yagodzinskiy and V. Rizun about their experience: the Dotterel observed by us was notably afraid and tried to avoid contact. In fact, it did not let us to get closer than 15 m. Despite this fact, it



Photos 1–2. Eurasian Dotterel near Mount Petros. 15 July, 2019.
Фото 1–2. Хрустан поблизу гори Петрос.

All the photos by O. Dubovyk.

did not try to fly away. We did not want to disturb the bird and, therefore, we went away from it; due to terrain features, the bird was invisible to us after we did it. We also assumed that the bird was feeding when we spotted it. The place of the observation is a typical biotope of peak of the Chornogora mountain ridge (photo 3).

We are not sure about the status of this bird because mid-July is too early for the autumn migration and, a fortiori, too late for the spring migration. In any case, we do not have any evidences to assume that the Eurasian Dotterel can acquire the breeding status in Ukraine, but this hypothesis could not be rejected.

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Photo 3. A typical biotope of the slopes of Mount Petros where the Dotterel was found. 15 July, 2019.

Фото 3. Типовий біотоп схилів гори Петрос, де був знайдений хрустан.