

YELLOW LEGGED GULL *LARUS CACHINNANS* (*LARUS ARGENTATUS MICHAHELLIS* NAUMANN, 1840) BUILD NEST IN ULCINJ SALTPAN BASINS

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ABSTRACT

In basin saltpan "Bajo Sekulić" in Ulcinj and next to basin of first evaporation, in swamp called Žara Sutjelska, a new colony of Yellow legged gull *Larus cachinnans* (*Larus argentatus michahellis* Naumann, 1840) was discovered. In swamp Žara Sutjelska, on 19 April 2000, four nests were found and few in phase of building, while in basin its number could not be numbered because nests were unreachable. About 25 abandoned nests were found in further research. Beside Gull Island and Grmozur on Skadar Lake, and Mamula island in Boka Kotorska, new "live" colony of this gull in Montenegro.

Key words: Yellow legged gull, saltpans, nests, colony

SREBRNASTI GALEB, *LARUS CACHINNANS* (*LARUS ARGENTATUS MICHAHELLIS* NAUMANN, 1840) GNIJEZDI NA BAZENIMA ULCINJSKE SOLANE

REZIME

U knetama i Stojskom bazenu Solane "Bajo Sekulić" u Ulcinju i neposredno uz bazene prvog isparenja, u bari zvanj Žara Sutjelska, otkrivena je nova kolonija srebrnastog galeba *Larus cachinnans* (*Larus argentatus michahellis* Naumann, 1840). U Žari sutjelskoj 19.aprila 2000. godine nađena su svega četiri gnijezda i nekoliko u izgradnji, dok u knetama njihov broj nije mogao biti utvrđen jer su gnijezda bila nedostupna. Tek je kasnijim istraživanjima utvrđeno prisustvo oko 25 već napuštenih gnijezda. Ovo je, pored Golubovog ostrva i Grmozura na Skadarskom jezeru, kao i ostrva Mamula u Boki Kotorskoj, nova, "živa" kolonija ovog galeba u Crnoj Gori.

Ključne riječi: srebrnasti galeb, solane, gnijezda, kolonija

INTRODUCTION

Firer (1985) first mentioned the presence of herring gull on the area of Ulcinj. In one-year time research through Montenegro (1894) he assumed that the Yellow legged gulls built the nests on the Skadar Lake, he had seen them regularly on Morača river, Vraka and Rijola (1901) but the building of the nest on this area he has not confirmed. With Reiser (1896) he described the first colony on Ada Bojana, which consisted of only six pairs of already grown up young. Later, Lodge (1908) found the eggs on the island (Vasić 1979). Vasić, Šoti and Pelle (1977) have not registered this colony. The same happened when Vasić continued researches. Vizi (1980) discovered the colony of four nests on Grmožur, on the Skadar Lake. The Yellow legged gull in the middle of eighties moved from Grmožur to Golubovo ostrvo where still today builds their nests. (From the complex of *Larus argentatus*, *Larus cachinnans* is the only one who build the nest on the Adriatic area (Rucner, 1998)).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

By the ornithological researches of Ulcinj's saltpan in the period from 18-20th April and from 28-31st May 2000, a new colony of *Larus cachinnans* (*Larus argentatus Michahelliss N a u m a n*) had been discovered. In April several nests were noticed in the basin of saltpan as well as in the marsh Žara Sutjelska situated on the very east of the saltpan next to the basin of first evaporation. Due to personal security, for as one wants to go to kneta's basin, he has to pass through quick mud, the author could only reach Žara Sutjelska. The approximate depth of the marsh is 50 cm. In the clod of *Juncus gerardi* Lois I found two nests each with two eggs (Fig. 1), third nest with one egg and fourth with one broken egg. The presence of this gull in the kneta's basin was constant (about 15 pairs) but the building of the nests has not been confirmed. Going around this lair in May I noticed the colony but because of inaccessibility of the terrain and the absence of the adequate terrain equipment I wasn't able to establish the exact number of nests. There were about 30 gulls landing on the little clod islands *Juncus gerardi* Lois. They were in the highest

Yellow legged gull



Figure 1. The nest of Yellow legged gull, *Larus cachinnans*.

number in the kneta 3, 5, 8 and 9. Later with a group of the ornithologists from Denmark, Hungary and Serbia I went around the nesting place and we confirmed my previous statement that there were about 15 pairs nesting there. On the edges of the floodable terrain in the Stojski basin about 10 nests have been registered. However, in other basins there were no nests neither territorial behaviours noticed in spite the fact that there were noticed all over the saltpan. In the near of herring gull nest, in the kneta, *Sterna hirundo hirundo* has been noticed and it was paired and on the little island ready for nesting. Later, the existence of this bird has been confirmed. A great number of these gulls in the saltpan (overnight there are more than 600) influenced the nesting of other birds. It is well known fact that they are predators of eggs and young of other birds so that their new nesting place is for concern, because the species of international importance and with negative trend of colony developing nest in the saltpans.

CONCLUSION

In the knetas and Stojski basin of Ulcinj's saltpan as well as in the marsh Žara Sutjelska, at the very near of dike of the first evaporation, the new colony of *Larus cachinnans* (*Larus argentatus Michahellis Nauman*, 1894). The colony is situated on natural little islands, in the clod *Juncus gerardi*. In the salt plant 25 nests have been registered. The Yellow legged gull nest in the kneta's basin with *Sterna hirundo hirundo*. Beside the Golubovo and Grmozur islands, as well as Mamula in Boka Kotorska, Ulcinj saltpans are the fourth active colony of Yellow legged gull in Montenegro. The new nesting place has already influenced the nesting of other birds.

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