



HELLENIC ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

To the Fifth Section
of the Council of the State
Panepistimiou Str., 47-49
10564 ATHENS

Athens, 3/5/2023

Protocol No 23/063

Subject: Submission of the report of the Hellenic Ornithological Society

Honourable Madames,

Honourable Sirs,

We attach our report on the Great River of Rafina.

With appreciation,

On behalf of the Hellenic Ornithological Society,

Martin Gaethlich (Signature, Stamp)

Responsible for environmental issues and policy

REPORT

of the Hellenic Ornithological Society

on the Rafina's Great River

Athens, 25/10/2019

A. Introduction

The Hellenic Ornithological Society, a partner of Birdlife International, is an environmental non-profit organization with the aim of protecting wild birds and their habitats in Greece, considering them as essential elements of Greek nature.

As part of its activity, the Ornithological Society implemented the program "Monitoring program of the bird fauna in the wetlands of Attica", an effort to systematically record and collect population data for the birds that live in these wetlands, in order to assess the situation and trends of species populations.

Among the wetlands recorded and evaluated is the Great River of Rafina, which according to the new Regulatory Plan of Athens (N. 4227, Official Gazette 156 A/2014) is classified among the "main watercourses of priority A" (article 20, par. 4, para. e) of the basin of Attica, while with regard to the protection of the characteristics of the wetlands and its catchment basin, it is classified among the "A' priority" wetlands (Annex IX, Article 20, Par. 2.caa). Also, it has been characterized by the decision No 9173/1642 dated 3.3.1993 of the Ministry of Environment and Energy (Government Gazette 281 N/1993), as "Of special environmental interest".

The works that began to be implemented in this river, actually tend to the management of the river and will permanently and irreversibly change its physical form, effectively turning it into a stormwater conduit. These projects completely ignore the wetland character of the river while they are now considered outdated and regressive, both at the European and international level, where the preservation of islands of natural environment and biodiversity in the urban fabric is a priority. It would be wishful thinking to have the cemented part of the estuary restored and to have more vegetation growing on the banks to create even more suitable habitat for the avifauna (and more species).

B. Description of the Ornithological value of the area

In Rafina's Great River around 100 species of birds have been recorded to date. The majority has been observed near the estuary due to the increased presence of observers there, but also due to the fact that the brackish ecosystem of the estuary attracts large numbers of migrating waders and herons. Of the species recorded, 23 are species of Annex I of Directive 2009/147/EC. The vast majority of them

are herons, gulls and waders. The remaining two (Peregrine falcon and Booted eagle) are predators seen during migration (Booted eagle) or in winter. Despite the cementation of part of the estuary of the Great River, the avifauna remains remarkably diverse, mostly during the migration season.

The nesting species in the stream are:

The common moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*). Endemic. It builds its nest in the reeds mostly close to the ground, the breeding season starts from March.

The little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*): A summer visitor. It comes in March and the breeding lasts from April to July, often the breeding takes place twice.

The Cetti's warbler (*Cettia cetti*): Endemic. Its breeding season begins in April (maybe even earlier) and it nests within reeds or other aquatic plants usually at a height of approximately 30-50 centimeters.

The great reed warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*). A summer visitor. It comes usually in summer and its breeding period begins at the end of April and lasts up to July. It nests within reeds at a height up to two meters from the soil.

The eastern olivaceous warbler (*Iduna pallida*). A summer visitor. It comes at the end of April and stays up to the end of July. It nests on tamarinds along the river but it often visits the reeds to find food.

In the trees and bushes that grow on the banks several passerine birds nest, such as the spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), the Sardinian Warbler (*Sylvia melanocephala*), the goldfinch (*Carduelis Carduelis*), the greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*), but also nocturnal predators, such as the scops owl (*Otus scops*). Trees and bushes are a place of rest and feeding for a very large number of ostriches and other birds (e.g raptors, herons), depending on the season.

Any intervention, especially at this time, will cause significant and irreversible damage to the ecosystem of the Rafina Great River and in particular to the bird species that nest in this area. It is certain that the loss of the large (in height and age) Sycamores, Whites and Willows will be a serious blow to the bird populations. The works will also have major impacts on the populations of amphibians, reptiles and freshwater fish that live in the waters of the Great River. This in turn will cause a loss of available food for birds feeding on the above organisms.

For the Hellenic Ornithological Society

Martin Gaethlich (Signature, Stamp)

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ANNEX

List of Birds recorded in the Great River of Rafina

(in bold the species that nest in the stream or in the riparian vegetation)

Scientific name	Greek name	Greek red book	Red book	Annex I Directive 2009/147/EC
Tachybaptus rufficollis	Νανοβουτηχτάρι			
Phalacrocorax carbo	Κορμοράνος			
Ixobrychus minutus	Μικροτσικνιάς			YES
Ardeola ralloides	Κρυπτοτσικνιάς	Vulnerable		YES
Ergetta gartzetta	Λευκοτσικνιάς			YES
Ardea alba	Αργυροτσικνιάς	Vulnerable		YES
Ardea cinerea	Σταχτοτσικνιάς			
Cygnus olor	Κύκνος			
Annas crecca	Κιρκίρι			
Buteo buteo	Γερακίνα			
Aquila pennata	Γερακαετός	Endangered		YES
Circaetus gallicus	Φιδαετός	Near threatened		YES
Circus aeruginosus	Καλαμόκιρκος	Vulnerable		YES
Accipiter nisus	Ξεφτέρι			
Falco tinnunculus	Βραχοκιρκίνεζο			
Falco vespertinus	Μαυροκιρκίνεζο		Near threatened	YES
Falco peregrinus	Πετρίτης			YES
Rallus aquaticus	Νεροκοτσέλα			
Zapornia pusilla	Νανοπουλάδα			YES
Galinula chloropus	Νερόκοτα			
Haematopus ostralegus	Στρειδοφάγος			

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Movement for the Protection & Restoration of the Great River of Rafina

Charadrius dubius	Ποταμοσφυριχτής			YES
Charadrius hiaticula	Αμμοσφυριχτής			
Charadrius alexandrinus	Θαλασσοσφυριχτής			
Pluvialis scatarola	Αργυροπούλι			
Calidris canutus	Χοντροσκαλίδρα			
Callidris alba	Λευκοσκαλίδρα			
Callidris minuta	Νανοσκαλίδρα			
Callidris temminckii	Σταχτοσκαλίδρα			
Callidris ferruginea	Δρεπανοσκαλίδρα			
Callidris alpina	Λασποσκαλίδρα			
Callidris falcinellus	Μπεκατσιοσκαλίδρα			
Callidris pugnax	Μαχητής			YES
Lymnocyrtus minimus	Μικρομπεκάτινο			
Gallinago gallinago	Μπεκατσίνι			
Tringa totanus	Κοκκινოსκέλης			
Tringa stagnatillis	Λασπότρυγγας			YES
Actitis hypoleucos	Ποταμότρυγγας			
Arenaria interpres	Χαλικοκυλιστής			
Ichtyaetus melanocephalus	Μαυροκέφαλος γλάρος			YES
Hydrocoleus minutus	Νανόγλαρος			YES
Croicocephalus ridibundus	Καστανοκέφαλος γλάρος			
Chroicocephalus genei	Λεπτόραμφος γλάρος	Vulnerable		YES
Ichtyaetus audouinii	Αιγαιόγλαρος	Vulnerable	Near threatened	YES
Larus fuscus	Μελανόγλαρος			
Larus michahelis	Ασημόγλαρος			

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<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>	Γελογλάρονο	Vulnerable		YES
<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	Χειμωνογλάρονο	Vulnerable		YES
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Ποταμογλάρονο			YES
<i>Columba livia domesticus</i>	Περιστέρι			
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Δεκοχτούρα			
<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Κούκος			
<i>Otus scops</i>	Γκιώνης			
<i>Apus apus</i>	Μαυροσταχτάρα			
<i>Apus pallidus</i>	Ωχροσταχτάρα			
<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Αλκυόνα			YES
<i>Merops apiaster</i>	Μελισσοφάγος			
<i>Upupa epops</i>	Τσαλαπετεινός			
<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Κατσουλιέρης			
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Σταυλοχελίδονο			
<i>Delichon urbica</i>	Λευκοχελίδονο			
<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	Μιλτιχελίδονο			
<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Λιβαδοκελάδα			
<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	Νεροκελάδα			
<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Κιτρινοσουσουράδα			
<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Σταχτοσουσουράδα			
<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Λευκοσουσουράδα			
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Τρυποφράχτης			
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Κοκκινολαίμης			
<i>Phoenicurus ochruchos</i>	Καρβουνιάρης			
<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	Μαυρολαίμης			
<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Σταχοπετρόκλης			

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Turdus merula	Κότσυφας			
Turdus philomelos	Τσίγλα			
Cettia cetti	Ψευταηδόνι			
Acrocephalus scirpaceus	Καλαμοποταμίδα			
Iduna pallida	Ωχροστριτισίδα			
Sylvia melanocephala	Μαυροτσιροβάκος			
Sylvia cantillans	Κοκκινοτσιροβάκος			
Sylvia communis	Θαμνοτσιροβάκος			
Sylvia atricapilla	Μαυροσκούφης			
Pylloscopus collybita	Δεντροφυλλοσκόπος			
Pylloscopus trochilus	Θαμνοφυλλοσκόπος			
Cyanistes caeruleus	Γαλαζοπαπαδίτσα			
Parus major	Καλόγερος			
Lanius collurio	Αετομάχος			YES
Lanius senator	Κοκκινοκεφαλός			
Pica pica	Καρακάξα			
Corvus conix	Κορούνα			
Sturnus vulgaris	Ψαρόνι			
Passer domesticus	Σπιτοσπουργίτης			
Passer hispaniolensis	Χωραφοσπουργίτης			
Passer montanus	Δεντροσπουργίτης			
Fringilla coelebs	Σπίνος			
Serinus serinus	Σκαρθάκι			
Chloris chloris	Φλώρος			
Carduelis carduelis	Καρδερίνα			
Linaria cannabina	Φανέτο			

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Emberiza cirius	Σιρλοτσιχλονο			
Millaria calandra	Τσιφτάς			
Psitaculla clameri	Πράσινος παπαγάλος			
Plagadis falcinellus	Χαλκόκοτα	Critically endangered		YES