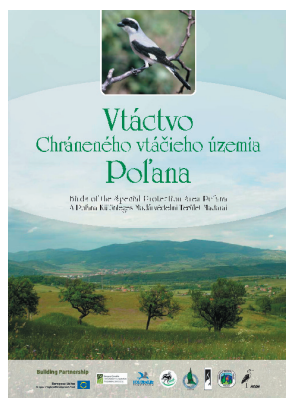


Book review

Danko Š, Lešo P, Pjenčák P, Lipták J, Fulín M, Pačenovský S, Mošanský A, Mošanský L, Olejár R, Potočný R, Krištín A, Šimák L, Buday M, Fecko M, Urban L, Imrich P, Balla M & Žigraj J 2010: Vtáctvo Slanských vrchov a ich predhorí [Birds of the Slanské vrchy Mountains and their foothills]. Slovak ornithological society/BirdLife Slovakia, Bratislava, 252. [In Slovak with English summary] ISBN 978-80-89412-17-4.

Krištín A (ed) 2010: Vtáctvo Chráneného vtáčieho územia Poľana [Birds of the Special Protection Area Poľana]. Slovak ornithological society/BirdLife Slovakia, Bratislava, 146. [In Slovak with English and Hungarian summaries] ISBN 978-978-80-88855.



Slovak Ornithological Society/BirdLife Slovakia enriched our ornithological literature in 2010 by two new books. These modestly-sized publications focus on the avifauna in two mountain ranges in Slovakia, Poľana Mts in central and Slanské vrchy Mts in eastern Slovakia.

Both of these regions have long traditions of ornithological research, with systematic studies of various birds going back to the 1950s, but they differed in their initial conceptions. While at Poľana Mts ecological research dominated, in the Slanské vrchy Mts a faunistic approach was applied. As a result Slanské vrchy Mts have been traditionally perceived as one of the most important territories in Slovakia with regard to the occurrence of birds of prey (the book pays them sufficient attention). Both books have been compiled by true experts on each territory, who assembled broad teams of colleagues to

support their work (book about Slanské vrchy Mts has contributions from 18 ornithologists).

The differences in conception of research in these territories are also reflected in publications. The book on the Slanské vrchy Mts contains mainly faunistic information. Its composition also corresponds to this approach, starting with chapters on the territory, history and methods of research and on nature protection of the area, followed by an extensive systematic section containing more or less detailed (depending on the species) faunistic data. The distribution of selected bird species are documented in maps, biological, phenological and ecological information are given in the species texts. Valuable information about the structure and quantitative characteristics of the ornithocoenoses are presented only in appendices. Here the authors also set out a summary of the species and numbers of ringed birds in the area. Altogether the book covers a very respectable total of 251 bird species.

The book on Poľana Mts also contains chapters describing the territory and the history of ornithological research in the area, as well as a part focusing on the methods and on nature conservation. In many aspects this publication is presented in a more synthetic (and concise) manner, incorporating information on the structure of ornithocoenoses in the particular habitats in Poľana Mts, and on the long-term trends of individual bird species (especially the criteria species of the Poľana Special Protection Area), as well as a brief chapter on the results of ringing. In a separate chapter the authors give a comparative assessment of Poľana's ornithological significance to other neighbouring territories. The book on the Slanské vrchy Mts lacks a similar analysis.

Both publications contain extensive reference lists on these territories, as well as content summaries in English (especially extensive and informative in the book on Poľana Mts, which also has a Hungarian summary), and the book on Slanské vrchy Mts contains the already-mentioned species register. While the Poľana Mts publication is typographically better presented, the Slanské vrchy Mts book features a larger number of photographs. These books have been published as parts of independent projects (the Norwegian Financial Mechanism and the Programme for Cross-border Cooperation Slovakia-Hungary) and they are distributed by the Slovak Ornithological Society (www.vtaky.sk).

Marcel Uhrin