

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

Veliki strnad – dne 9.3.2002 so se na kraških poljih Hercegovine (Duvanjsko, UTM XJ63, 864 m n.v., in Livanjsko, UTM XJ55, 710 m n.v.) spretavali številni pojoči samci. Zvečer so na Livanjskem polju jate od 200 do 300 strnadov letele na prenočišča. Število opazovanih ptic v kombinaciji z visoko nadmorsko višino in zgodnjim datumom kaže na močne lokalne populacije. Na Livanjskem polju je v okviru pilotskih popisov dne 9.6.2002 prvo štetje velikih strnadov opravil Borut Rubinič, ko je na relaciji Livno – Prolog – Sajković v dolžini 39,7 km in v stometerskem pasu vzdolž cestišča naštel 126 pojočih samcev.

On March 9th 2002, I and my colleagues Martin Schneider-Jacoby and Borut Rubinič were travelling by car across the karst fields (poljes) of Herzegovina. In view of the altitude, date and behaviour of the Corn Buntings observed during the ride we wrote down the following details: (1) Duvanjsko polje (864 m a.s.l., Petroviči – Kolo section, three stops between 14.30 and 15.00 hrs) 1 male singing in the meadows opposite the village of Bukovica, (2) at Buško jezero (716 m a.s.l., Prisoje – Misi section, three stops between 15.30 and 16.10 hrs) 1 male singing in the pastures near the village of Misi, (3) at Livanjsko polje (710 m, Livno – D. Kazanci section, seven stops between 16.15 and 18.00 hrs) about 25 males singing. Here we noticed, just after the turning for Glamočko, a few groups of up to 20 buntings and a flock of some 200-300 birds flying in the direction of

Livno to their night quarters. Corn Bunting's large roost sites are known from the colder part of the year from the coastal part of Croatia [RUCNER, D. (1998): Ptice hrvatske obale Jadrana. Ministarstvo razvitka i obnove, Zagreb], while in spring the numbers of territorial buntings in Dalmatia hinterland begin to rise from mid-March onwards [e.g. MAŠTROVIĆ, A. (1942): Die Vögel des Küstenlandes Kroatiens. Band 1. Institut für angewandte Zoologie, Zagreb]. The earliest date about their spring migration from Sarajevo polje (central Bosnia) was March 22nd 1906 [REISER, O. (1939): Ornis balcanica. I., Bosnien und Herzegowina. Annalen des naturhistorischen Museums, Wien]. In spite of the fact that no research has been carried out in the karst poljes of Herzegovina, I believe that our observation of territorial Corn Buntings is early. In combination with the relatively high altitude, the number of territorial individuals and flocks of these birds flying to their roost site, indicates strong local populations, particularly at Livanjsko polje with 400 km² extensively farmed dry to wet grasslands. Namely, on the basis of the research carried out in the NE of Brandenburg in Germany, the greatest distances from which the buntings fly to their night quarters are max. 10 km, the median 2-5 km [FISHER & WATZKE (1996) In: GLUTZ VON BLOTZHEIM, U.N. (1997): Handbuch der Vögel Mitteleuropas. Bd. 14, Passeriformes – Teil 5. Aula-Verlag, Wiesbaden]. At Livanjsko polje, Corn Buntings were counted for the first time, within the framework of pilot surveys, by Borut Rubinič on June 9th 2002, who along the Livno – Prolog – Sajković route, at a length of 39.7 km and in some 100 m wide belt, registered 126 singing males. He carried out the survey in cloudy weather between 10.00 and 17.00 hrs.

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