

# ENDANGERED ANIMALS

IN CROATIA



AGENCIJA ZA  
MOBILNOST I  
PROGRAME EU



Erasmus+



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# PROTECTED ANIMALS IN CROATIA

Although the Croatian fauna remains abundant and diverse due to the geographical position, geological history, current climate conditions and a large number of protected areas, this does not preclude the extinction of certain species, which, as always, is most commonly caused by humans.



# CAUSES OF THE DECREASE

Excessive water, soil and air pollution, intensive farming, watercourse interventions, illegal landfills, building area expansion, road construction, mass tourism and numerous other human activities directly or indirectly decrease the number of animal species.

Overhunting and overfishing, as well as the introduction of alien species, also pose a threat to a large number of species, many of which are endemic and relictual, which means that they used to be more widespread.



## **VARIETY OF SPECIES**

With around 400 bird species recorded in Croatia, 230 of which are nesting birds, Croatia ranks among the countries with the most diverse ornithofauna, or bird fauna, in Europe. .



## **SPECIFIC AREAS**

While a large number of these singing feathered creatures inhabiting Croatia is widespread, some are limited to a specific area. (Sava river - lesser spotted eagle, griffon vulture , Cres)



## **MEDITERRANEAN MONK SEAL**

The Mediterranean monk seal (*Monachus monachus*) or “morski čovik” (sea-man) is one of the most endangered sea mammals and the rarest seal in the world.



## **SEAHORSE**

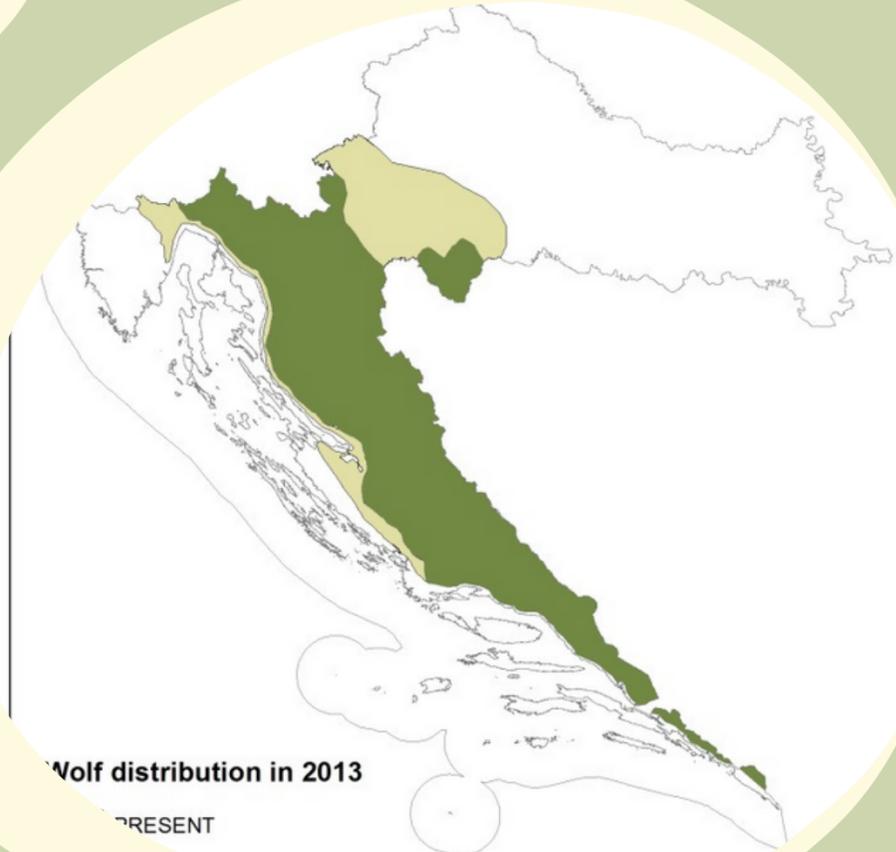
The seahorse is also an endangered species in the Adriatic. This benevolent and gentle sea creature makes for an easy prey for unconscientious divers who fail to comprehend that living beings are not souvenirs.

# WOLF

A hundred years ago, wolves inhabited the entire territory of the present day Republic of Croatia, In the early 1990s, wolves inhabited only Gorski Kotar and Lika, while they were believed to be absent from Dalmatia.



# WOLF DISTRIBUTION



in 2013 it is estimated that the population in Croatia ranges from 142 to 212 individuals.

On average, there are 177 individuals distributed in 49 packs. Of these, 23 packs are in border areas (47%) with Slovenia or Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within the Croatian territory, 26 packs roam in the territories of nine counties

# CAUSES OF THREAT

In stable wolf populations, with no human impacts, wolves perish in various natural ways, such as in conflicts with other wolves, due to disease or starvation.

Today, however, man is the main cause of wolf mortality, either directly or indirectly.

# HUMAN IMPACTS

Human impacts causing wolf mortality can be divided into three categories

- impacts on habitats (construction of motorways and railways, urban spread, tourism and recreation activities, forest clearing, pollution, etc.),
- impacts on prey (poaching, hunting management, etc.) and
- direct impacts on wolf populations (legal hunting, illegal hunting, poisoned bait, traps, spread of disease, lack of immunisation of rural dogs, etc.).



# WHAT IS THE PROJECT "PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF WOLVES IN CROATIA"?

The project "Protection and Management of Wolves in Croatia" is a three-year programme consisting of various activities, whose implementation should result in the establishment of mechanisms for the long-term conservation of wolf and their harmonious cohabitation with humans.

The project was officially completed on 1 December 2005, though work on protecting the wolf continues.

The campaign to determine the abundance of large carnivores using snow tracking, genetic tracking (cooperation with Faculty of Veterinary Medicine), and establishing an educational-information centre for large carnivores in Gorski Kotar, are only a handful of the activities that corroborate this.

It is important to stress that all activities that were conducted during the project have continued even after project completion.

# ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT

## Institutional strengthening

During the implementation of the project, two regional offices were established: one in Gospić for the Lika and Gorski Kotar region, and the second in Šibenik for the Dalmatia region.

## Monitoring wolf populations and

### management activities

Furthermore, the collection and processing of data on damages to livestock and monitoring the success of measures to protect livestock from wolf attacks were continued.

## Reducing damages

Reducing damages to livestock was one of the key activities in this project.

## Education and information

Particular attention was dedicated to education and information of the local population and general public.

# BY WHOM IS THE PROJECT EXECUTED AND FUNDED?

The project implementing authority is the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Physical Planning in collaboration with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the University of Zagreb as a partner. The project has been executed with the financial assistance of the European Commission programme LIFE – Third Countries



# THE MOST IMPORTANT PROJECT RESULTS WERE:

- Wolf Management Plan in Croatia developed through the cooperation of all interest groups, and accepted by the public;
- Raising public awareness about wolves;
- Better knowledge about wolves;
- Reducing damages to livestock;
- Including the local community in decision-making.
- greater trust and better cooperation between all interest groups;

**THANK YOU!**