

Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) in Benin : status and conservation

Only few scientific data are available on the birds of Benin. Scarce information on storks is provided by census works (GREEN & SAYER, 1978; CLAFFEY, 1995; THONNERIEUX, 1998). Those works concern only three stork species: White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*), Abdim's Stork (*Ciconia abdimii*) and White-necked Stork (*Ciconia episcopus*). Only maps of migration monitoring by satellite (LIBOIS, 1996) and few rangers notes mention the seasonal presence of black storks in Benin. Potential presence areas or wintering grounds are further north: the W national Park near Karimama (Pékinga and Monsey villages, Gouroubi forest), Malanville village near the Niger valley; the Diona Game Area and the Goungoun forest; Bénou forest surrounding Bembèrèkè, all in north-east Benin.

Even if those wintering grounds are in areas where illegal hunting and sale of birds aren't widespread, as in other parts of the country, other human threats exist. Those regions are, as a matter of fact, the greatest farming regions where annual bush fires, agriculture and cotton fields are responsible for the deforestation and loss of birds habitats. In addition, pesticides and chemicals used for fishing or agriculture in those

agricultural and ecological areas situated near the wintering grounds are threatening the environment and birds conservation. Then, in wetlands, filling of rivers, ponds and cutting of trees surrounding those areas disturb those fragile ecosystems. Finally, a lack of reforestation politic, the extension of fishing practices and non-application of fish and game legislation could lead to a gradual disappearance of those birds.

Facing this situation and taking example in Europe, we must take actions to insure the conservation of birds and public awareness in Benin but also to make sure that those ambassadors will be protected during their migration and wintering. Those measures should be explained first to local people surrounding Black storks wintering grounds.

Toussaint LOUGBEGNON
Institution DAGE / FSA / UNB
Boîte postale 01 bp 526
Abomey-Calavi
Bénin - Cotonou
ccodjia@syfed.bj.refer.org

La Cigogne noire (*Ciconia nigra*) au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg

Marc JANS & Patric LORGE

Le premier cas de nidification de la Cigogne noire au Grand-Duché de Luxembourg a été prouvé en 1993. L'espèce n'a été notée que quelques fois avant 1920. Entre 1920 et 1960, l'espèce n'a pas été observée du tout et ce n'est qu'à partir de 1966 que de nouvelles observations ont eu lieu. En 1985, le premier cas d'estivage a été constaté. La population nicheuse est maintenant estimée à 4 à 7 couples mais les domaines vitaux de 10 à 12 couples s'étendent

au moins en partie sur le Grand-Duché. De 1993 à 2000, 17 cas de reproduction ont été suivis; ils ont produit, en moyenne, 3,17 jeunes à l'envol.

Les causes de la colonisation sont à rechercher dans l'accroissement des populations dans certains pays baltiques et surtout dans les bonnes conditions pour la reproduction que les Cigognes noires trouvent dans le nord du Luxembourg (région Eifel-Ardenne).

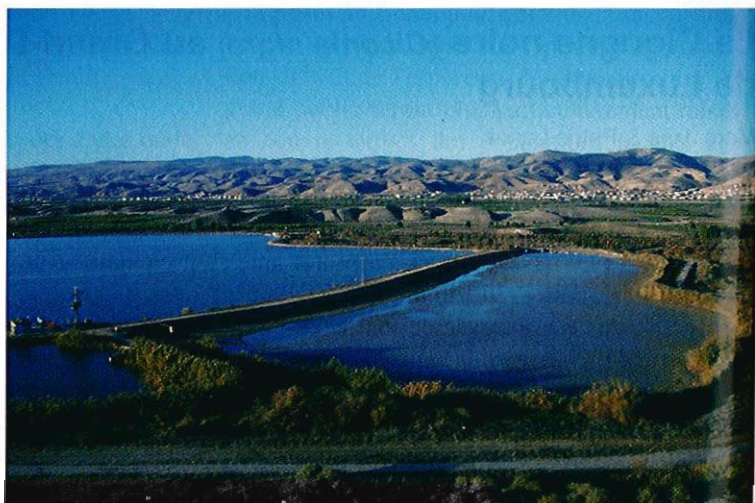


Israël était autrefois, pour les Cigognes noires, un simple lieu de passage entre les zones de nidification d'Europe et d'hivernage d'Afrique de l'Est. Grâce au développement de la pisciculture, ce pays est devenu une étape majeure et, progressivement dans les années 1980-90, le site d'hivernage le plus important au monde pour l'espèce. -

In the past Israel was a simple transit area for Black Storks between European breeding grounds and East-African wintering areas. Thanks to the expansion of fish-farming this country became a major stopping place and, progressively in the 1980-90, the most important wintering area in the world for the species.

Un réseau de plus de 3.000 ha d'étangs de piscicultures s'est développé en quelques décennies dans la vallée de Bet Shean. -

A network of more than 3,000 ha fishponds expanded in a few decades in the Bet Shean Valley



The Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) in Luxemburg.

The Black Stork bred for the first time in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg in 1993. The species was recorded only a few times before 1920 and was totally absent between 1920 and 1960. From 1966 the number of records began to rise and the first summering birds were recorded in 1985. The breeding population is now considered between 4 and 7 couples. The breeding area is restricted to the middle and northern parts of the country. From 1993 to 2000, the species bred 17 times, with an average of 3,17 young leaving

Marc JANS
26a, rue P. Eyschen
L - 7317 - Steinsel

the nest. Between 10 and 12 pairs have their feeding grounds at least partly in Luxemburg.

The colonisation of Luxembourg is mainly due to the increase of the population in some Baltic countries and to the fact that the species is finding good breeding and feeding habitats in Ardennes-Eifel region. The breeding biology, migration, feeding and breeding habitats are described.

Patrick LORGE
Centrale ornithologique du Luxembourg
Route de Luxembourg
L - 1899 Kockelscheuer
secretary@luxnatur.lu

Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) in the Czech Republic : Present Status and Conservation

Frantisek POJER

The distribution of the Black Stork in the Czech Republic evolved rapidly during the 20th century. Only a few pairs nested in southern Moravia from the end of 19th century until 1930, while the species now breeds throughout the whole Czech Republic. The successful penetration into Moravia and Bohemia that began in the late 1940s and early 1950s has been well documented up to present time.

The estimated numbers of breeding pairs during different periods since 1930 are : 4-5 pairs until 1930, about 20-25 pairs in 1942-1945, 50 pairs in 1964, 100-150 pairs in the late 1970s, 200-300 pairs by 1989. The last census of breeding pairs in 1994 gave an estimate of 320-330 pairs. The next estimation will be a result of the third Breeding Bird Distribution Mapping in the Czech Republic in 2001-2003 organised by the Czech Society for Ornithology.

It seems that the numbers of Black Stork breeding pairs are quite stable and that they have had a very good productivity in the Czech Republic during the 1990s. In 1994-2000, the authors checked annually more than 40 nesting territories in a study area in central and southwestern Bohemia. 20-30 nests were occupied in the above area and number of successful nests with hatchlings varied between 13-19 (13, 17, 13, 17, 19, 14, 19). Black Stork pairs relatively often change and abandon their nest (sometimes because of human disturbance or because of the nest falling down the tree but sometimes also without an apparent cause). On the other hand we know a nest that has been annually occupied in 1987 - 2000, and all the young were successfully reared from this nest. The number of offspring in successful nests varied in the range (2.60) 3.18-3.62 (3.77) young per nest in 1994-2000. Altogether, there were 368 young in 112