

**THE GREATER FLAMINGO (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* Pallas 1911),
A RARE PIECE IN THE PATRIMONY
OF THE OLTENIA MUSEUM CRAIOVA (ROMANIA)**

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Abstract. In this material, it is presented a rare and unusual piece for the ornithological heritage of the Oltenia Museum Craiova, a young specimen of greater flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*), found dead in the area of Bistreț Lake (the Danube Alluvial Plain, Dolj County), in the first decade of December 2016. Specialized literature mentions that, although they prefer nesting in warm (tropical / subtropical / circum-Mediterranean) areas, some specimens or small groups wander across Europe thus reaching the west and north of the continent (Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, etc.). Our specimen is the 7th specimen collected in Romania.

Keywords: Greater Flamingo, rare piece, Oltenia Museum Craiova.

Rezumat. Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* Pallas 1911), o piesă rară în patrimoniul Muzeului Olteniei Craiova (România). În prezenta notă se face cunoscută o piesă rară și inedită pentru patrimoniul ornitologic al Muzeului Olteniei Craiova, un exemplar tânăr de flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*) găsit mort în zona lacului Bistreț (Lunca Dunării, județul Dolj), în prima decadă a lunii decembrie 2016. Din literatura de specialitate reiese că, deși preferă pentru cuibărit zone calde (tropicale/subtropicale/circummediteraneene), unele exemplare sau mici grupuri rătăcesc prin Europa ajungând până în vestul și nordul continentului (Germania, Olanda, Danemarca). Exemplarul nostru este a 7-a piesă doveditoare colectată din România.

Cuvinte cheie: Flamingo, piesă rară, Muzeul Olteniei Craiova.

The Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*) is a migratory species whose distribution area mainly includes tropical / subtropical regions of the old continents: Africa (Egypt), Asia (Anatolian Plateau, the coast of the Aegean Sea near Izmir, Lebanon) and Europe - the Basin of the Mediterranean Sea (Camargue - France, the Ebro Delta - Spain, the Tajo Estuary - Portugal, Sardinia, Cyprus, Greece) – HAGEMEIJER & BLAIR, 1997. The most northern and western nesting colony, located at the western border of Germany with the Netherlands, within Zwillbrocker Venn Nature Reserve, is supposed to have been established by certain erratic specimens from zoos and parks (TREP, 2000). According to the classical literature, in our country, the greater flamingo appears sporadically / accidentally and generally in small flocks (LINȚIA, 1955).

The data on the occurrence of the species in Romania until September 2001 were recapitulated by KISS & SZABÓ (2002). Until then, there were 10 mentions of the species. The first and most numerous specimens (20) were observed in Tuzla-Constanța, on the 10th of October 1900. Later on, on the 13th of December 1999, in the same locality, there were observed 3 specimens, which, from the phenological point of view, were the most delayed on the territory of our country (GACHE & ANTONOAIIEA, 2000). The other 8 reports mentioned by certain authors refer only to one specimen of flamingo observed in different locations from Dobrogea (Garvan, Istria, Murighiol, Sabangia), the Danube Alluvial Plain (Orlea, Pietrușani / Zimnicea) and Banat (Grabați - Timiș County), most of them in September-October. A further informative note refers to the appearance of a specimen of flamingo in the Danube Delta, between Maliuc and Partizani, on the 25th of June, 2011. In the same note, there is also mentioned the first and only observation of the species from the Republic of Moldova, near the western border, on the evening of the 13th of July, 2011 - 3 specimens over the pools of the Prut, at Văleni (***, 2011). A recent report belongs to a group of members of the Romanian Ornithological Society who, during the Ornithological Camp organized in the Danube Delta, observed and photographed 4 adults of flamingo at the end of Lake Sinoe, on the evening of the 20th of August, 2016 (<http://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-mediu>). In this period, the list of observations was also updated (KISS, 2016).

Erratic flamingos reached Western Europe and even the north of the continent, for example Denmark (CHRISTENSEN, 1992). According to the parasitological examinations of some young specimens captured in Germany, they originated from the colonies around the Caspian Sea (BAUER & GLUTZ von BLOTZHEIM, 1966). The origin of the unmarked, captured or observed specimens in our country is unknown, but, because they reproduce hard in captivity, they are likely to come from natural reproductions. It is known that the populations in Southern Europe and Northern Africa mainly circulate and migrate in the circum-Mediterranean area (JOHNSON, 1991; JOHNSON et al., 1991), but there is also a possibility that some specimens or populations may originate in Asia Minor or Central Asia colonies (KISS & SZABÓ, 2002).

By this material, we relate about the identification of a young specimen of flamingo found dead in the area of Bistreț Lake (the Danube Alluvial Plain, Dolj County) in the first decade of December 2016. The bird was shot and abandoned, later located, and now, after the naturalization in the preparation and restoration laboratory of the Department of Natural Sciences of the Oltenia Museum Craiova, is registered in the ornithological patrimony of the museum with the inventory no. 55693. This is the second specimen identified in Oltenia after 78 years since the one from Orlea (TĂLPEANU, 1964a, b), and in Romania it is the seventh captured specimen. Five collected specimens are

preserved in the collections of the following museums: M. N. I. N. "Grigore Antipa" - 2 specimens (PAPADOPOLO & TĂLPEANU, 1986), the Banat Museum Timișoara - 1 specimen (NADRA, 1972), the Museum of Nature Sciences Galați - 1 specimen (GLĂVAN, 2003), Orlea Village Museum - 1 specimen (TĂLPEANU 1964a, b), and a specimen is owned by a forest ward from Pietrușani-Zimnicea (KISS & SZABÓ, 2002).

We further render the biometric data of our specimen, as well as the photography of the naturalized bird (Table 1, Fig. 1).

Table 1. Biometric data of the flamingo specimen (*Phoenicopterus ruber roseus*), found at Bistreț (the Danube Alluvial Plain, Dolj County) in December 2016.

Sex and age	Total length	Wingspan	Length of wing	Length of tail	Tarsus	Length of beak	Body mass
♂ Juv.	910 mm	1366 mm	380 mm	119 mm	220 mm	110 mm	2640 gr.



Figure 1. *Phoenicopterus ruber roseus* preserved in the ornithological patrimony of the Oltenia Museum Craiova (original).

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