
THE PRESENT STATE OF THE BLACK STORK POPULATION IN THE UKRAINE

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The Black Stork belongs to the rare breeding birds of the Ukraine. In the first half of the 20th century its number decreased greatly. The Black Stork disappeared as a breeding bird in the Crimea, along the Dnieper, and in the east part of the forest-steppe zone.

In the last decades the number of Black Stork increased and its range has been restored. At present the southern limit of its area lies in the Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Khmel'nitsky, Zhitomir, Kiev, Chernigov and the Sumy Regions of the Ukraine. There are also several isolated nesting places outside this main area.

According to the census in 1990-1991, the number of Black Storks in the Ukraine accounts to about 300-350 pairs. The main reason of the population increase is the adaptation to the changed environment. Nests were discovered on 10 tree species, the majority were built on oaks and pines. The height of the nest fluctuates from 6 to 25 m. In 1980-1991 there were 1 to 5 nestlings per brood, the average brood size was 3.26 ± 0.15 ($n=42$).

During migration the Black Stork is observed in the western and northern regions. In other regions it is recorded less frequently. In spring the Black Stork arrives in the second half of March and in April. Spring migration flyways coincide with those of the White Stork. Autumn migration begins in August and the first decade of September; the last birds were observed from the end of August to October.

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