

Migrations of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in area of the Kaniv Nature Reserve (Central Ukraine)

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Introduction. The Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) is a rare but regularly migrating bird species in Ukraine. It listed in the Red Book of the country. Peculiarities of its migrations are studied insufficiently. The Kaniv Nature Reserve is located on the Dnieper river near the town of Kaniv (Cherkasy region). Research of bird migrations in this area represents the main features for the whole country.

Material and Methods. We studied migration of birds in the nature reserve and its environs in 1987-2019. Observations conducted regularly during the whole year. We used also the information from the Chronicle of Nature of the Kaniv Nature Reserve for 1970-1986. Thus, the collected data cover the period in 50 years. All the average values are given with standard error. For the analysis of changes in timing of migrations and numbers of birds we used the linear regression.

Results. The Osprey was a rare but regularly migrating bird species in the study area. It occurred more frequently during the autumn passage. The spring migration lasted as a rule about one month: since late March or early April till late April or the first half of May. The first birds were observed on average on 5.04 (\pm 1.7 days; range: 27.03 – 18.04; n = 14). The end of the spring passage was registered on average on 6.05 (\pm 3.4 days; range: 28.04 – 15.05; n = 5). The autumn migration was more prolonged. We observed the first migrating Ospreys on average on 20.08 (\pm 3.1 days; range: 26.07 – 14.09; n = 20). The last birds can be stayed up to late September and October. The mean date of the last departure was 5.10 (\pm 2.8 days; range: 22.09 – 25.10; n = 13). Timing of migrations during 50 years of studies remained stable. Ospreys were registered as a rule singly, very rarely we found two birds at once. Hunting Ospreys were observed most frequently on the Dnieper or in its flood-plane, sometimes we met them also in flood-plane of the Ros river (a right tributary of the Dnieper) and on fish-farming ponds. For the rest birds stayed on river islands. We saw them in trees and on sandy spits. Passing Ospreys did not bound up with waterbodies, we encountered them even above ravines in the rolling landscape on the right bank of the Dnieper. Migrating birds were registered almost yearly but in very small numbers. We observed usually no more than 3-5 individuals during a season. Ospreys occurred most often in August and September. Frequency of records during the spring migration remained stable but for the autumn passage we found the positive linear trend ($p < 0.01$). During the last decade Ospreys began to appear more often. Sometimes on the Dnieper near Kaniv we found also summering birds. Ospreys were observed on river islands in June and July in 1987, 1989 and 2001. V.I. Strigunov (1986) has encountered a bird in the mouth of the Ros river (to the south from the Kaniv Nature Reserve) on 18.07.1980.

Discussion. According to L.A. Smogorzhevsky (1952), studied the birds of the Kaniv Nature Reserve in 1947-1950, the Osprey was a common migrating bird. It occurred on the Dnieper during the autumn migration. First birds appeared in the second half of August. These features remain to be actual, only the species became rare. The present rise of the frequency of occurrence can be related to the number increasing of the Osprey in some countries of North Europe (Schmidt-Rothmund et al., 2014). Ringing and satellite tracking has shown that via Central Ukraine migrate Ospreys from Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Belarus and other European countries (Zubarobsky, 1977; Saurola, 1994; Väli & Sellis, 2015, etc.).

Keywords: timing, number, summering, habitat, the Dnieper.



Birds of Prey of Ukraine and surrounding territories

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