Bat Night 2017
Science for Nature Foundation’s Report

On August 26th Science for Nature Foundation (SNF) and Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research at Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IBER-BAS) celebrated the BAT NIGHT 2017 in Bulgaria with an educational event – lectures and field expedition.

LECTURES:

The lectures were held in the conference room of IBER where two presentations where shown. The first talk was on the topic "Myotis mystacinus morpho group phylogeny on the Balkan Peninsula". It was given by the PhD student Heliana Dundarova. She presented her studies on the origin and evolution of the Whiskered Bats.

The second talk was on the topic "Bat rehabilitation – stories from the kitchen" and it was given by Vyara Krushkova from the Wild Animals Foundation. She presented the efforts of the organization to save stricken bats living around us.
Twenty-five students and bat enthusiasts participated in the event. Information materials and bat souvenirs (e.g. handmade post cards, brooches, bags etc.) were distributed during the event.
FIELD TRIP:

The practical part of the event took place outside the city at "Rejishkata" cave ("Vrachanski Balkan" Nature Park – part of Natura 2000 site BG0000166 "Vrachanski Balkan"), where our colleagues Stoyan Goranov and Dimitar Ragyov conducted a training course "Bat observation and trapping for research and conservation purposes". Mist nets were used for trapping and the bat sounds were recorded with bat detector.

Thirteen trainees participated in the expeditions. We captured 15 bats from 6 species: *Tadarida teniotis, Eptesicus serotinus, Nyctalus noctula, Myotis blythii, Hypsugo savii* and *Myotis myotis*.

The Bat Night 2017 had a great scientific and conservation value as the first species (*Tadarida teniotis*) was never been recorded in the Nature Park and Natura 2000 site “Vrachanski Balkan”. The record is the most northern locality of the species in Bulgaria and also potentially newly revealed swarming place (Dundarova et al. *in prep.*).
INTERNATIONAL BAT CONSERVATION WEB PLATFORM

As a part of the Bat Night 2017 we established web based platform for exchange of information and experience between bat workers such as: current projects, ideas, conservation results, scientific findings, discussions about bat population and conservation status of bats, threats, problems, bat news and bat events. The platform is based in Facebook on the following address: https://www.facebook.com/groups/112047226159772/. More than 130 bat researchers, conservationists and enthusiasts are already on board. It is an open group and we warmly welcome everyone interested in bats.

MEDIA COVERAGE:

The Bat Night 2017 were covered by 4 local and 2 national media and the websites of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and „Vrachanski Balkan“ Nature Park Directorate:

Bulgarian National Radio
Darik News
Media News
Concurrent
Vratsa Today
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
„Vrachanski Balkan” Nature Park

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