

# The Fauna



**Of The Central Balkan**





**The diverse relief, vegetation and microclimate of the Central Balkan National Park determine the high diversity of the fauna. The territory of the park shelters 70% of the invertebrate and 62% of the vertebrate species diversity in Bulgaria.**





In the Central Balkan National Park there are 2390 invertebrate species of which:

- **260** worldwide rare and endangered;
- **86** Balkan peninsula endemics;
- **52** Bulgarian endemics;
- **29** local endemic species.

Most of these local endemic species are beetles.







There are 303 vertebral species in The Central Balkan National Park of which:

- **224** species of birds;
- **51** species of mammals;
- **14** species of reptiles;
- **8** species of amphibians;
- **6** species of fishes.







**The Central Balkan National Park is one of the last natural habitats in Europe for rare and endangered animals such as Wolf, Marten, Otter, Wild Cat, Geoffroy's Bat, Barbastelle Bat, Schreiber's Long-Fingered Bat, Fat Dormouse, Chamois (Wild Goat), Imperial Eagle, Corn Crane, Ring Ouzel, etc.**





**The Central Balkan National Park is the world's most important protected territory for Semi-collared Flycatcher, White-Backed Woodpecker, Bechstein's Bat, European Ground Squirrel, Lesser Mole Rat, etc.**





# **Brown Trout**

*(Salmo trutta fario)*

**Балканска пъстърва**

The Brown Trout is a typical cold water fish. Its habitats are the fast flowing rivers whose waters are highly saturated with oxygen. The Brown Trout spawns from the end of September to the beginning of January. During this period it swims upstream. The young trout feeds on insect larvae while the adult trout often feeds on small fishes. In the Central Balkan this species is widely distributed.

**The population of the Brown Trout in the Park is of national significance.**





# Viper

## (*Vipera berus*)

### Усойница

The viper is one of the two venomous snakes in Bulgaria. The other one is the Western sand viper. The two species are easy to differentiate – the viper has no “horn” on the nose. The viper is a species widely spread all over Europe. On the Balkan peninsula its range of distribution is strongly fragmented – only in the mountains. It inhabits almost all elevation belts – up to the very subalpine zone. Most often it prefers the wet mountain pastures with juniper and berries. It feeds on mouse-like rodents, lizards, frogs, eggs and chicks of land-nesting birds. It delivers 4-8 young in late summer. Although the species is venomous in Bulgaria there are no reports of lethal cases of its bites.







# **Imperial eagle**

*(Aquila heliaca)*

*Царски орел*

This is one of the most impressive predatory birds. With a wing span up to 220 cm this is the largest of the eagles.

It builds its nest on single trees.

From their tops it can easily observe the meadows. The nest of the Imperial Eagle has gigantic sizes – some 180 cm in diameter. In them it grows 1 to 3 chicks for 65-77 days. Its most common prey is the European souslik. Sometimes it also attacks quails.

**The species is protected by the Bulgarian Biodiversity Act.**





# **Wild boar**

*(Sus Scrofa)*  
*Диво прасе*

The fur of the wild boar is bristly. The canine teeth on the lower jaw of the male boar are large and sharp and grow outside of the mouth. They are a dangerous weapon. The wild boars have well-developed smell and hearing.

It feeds on fruit, tuber, small mammals, carrion, eggs, etc. When searching for food it can even be seen on the alpine pastures of the park. The breeding period of the wild boar is during the winter. The female gives birth to 4-10 young.

The wild boar can be found in deciduous and mixed forests.







## **Pine marten** *(Martes martes)* **Златка**

The pine marten is a typically forest animal. Its coloration is brownish. On its chest and beard it has a light spot. The pine marten has a long fluffy tail. It makes its lairs in the hollows of the trees, under big rocks, caves, etc. The pine marten is active at night. It climbs very well. It feeds on mouse-like rodents, birds, lizards, frogs, insects, and in winter – even squirrels. The pine marten wanders most of the time.

**The pine marten is included in the Red Data Book of Bulgaria in category "endangered species".**







## **Wild cat** *(Felis silvestris)* *Дива котка*

The wild cat is much larger than the domestic one. It is active at night and spends the days sleeping. Its hides are holes in rocks. In summer the wild cat is a real tramp. In April – May it delivers 5-6 kittens. It feeds on rodents, birds, sometimes plants. The species is especially threatened by hybridization with stray domestic cats but the Bulgarian population is almost pure.

**The wild cat is an European endangered species and its population within The Central Balkan National Park has a global significance.**





# Chamois

## *(Rupicapra rupicapra)*

### Дива коза

The chamois has reddish-brown fur, which becomes dark brown in winter. The coloration on the muzzle is black and white and there is a specific black strip along the whole back. Both sexes are horned. The horns of the males are larger and with ends pointing downwards, unlike the females whose horns are bent backwards. The chamois is active during the day. It climbs on the rocks and jumps perfectly. The males attract the females by the strong musk odour. The Chamois occurs in rocky inaccessible habitats.

**The wild goat is a world endangered species, included in the Red Data Book of Bulgaria.**







# **Bechstein's Bat**

## *(Myotis bechsteinii)*

### *Прилеп на Бехщайн*

This middle-sized bat weights 7 – 18 g and has body length about 50 mm. Its long ears reach up to about half of the body length.

This species breeds in holes and makes small groups of maximum 20 bats. The females give birth to only one baby during the summer. The Bechstein's bat feeds mainly on non flying insects. It inhabits the well preserved deciduous and mixed forests and is very sensitive to their status. The biology and ecology of this species is not well studied because it is a very rare animal.

**The species is under strict national and international protection.**





# Wolf

(*Canis lupus*)

Вълк

The wolf is a symbol of the wildlife. This predator feeds on mammals and birds. The carrion is a significant part of the food of the wolf. The wolf is a highly organized social animal. Its success as an effective predator is due to its biological characteristics combined with the complicated structure of the family pack. The pack of wolves usually consists of 5-7 adult animals. The wolf can be seen in remote, well-wooded mountainous and inaccessible places. **The wolf is included in the Red Data Book of Bulgaria as an endangered species.**







# **Brown bear**

*(Ursus arctos)*

*Кафява мечка*

The brown bear is the Lord of the mountain and the symbol of The Central Balkan National Park. The males can reach 350 kg of weigh and live up to 30 years. They inhabit the forests but often visit the mountain pastures. The hibernation of the brown bear during the winter is a myth – only the pregnant females hibernate in the coldest winters. Bulgaria is inhabited by some 800 brown bears, which make the core of the South European population of the species. The Central Balkan National Park shelters some 200 brown bears.

**The brown bear is a rare species, included in the Red Data Book of Bulgaria.**

