

Travaux du Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle «Grigore Antipa»	Vol. L	pp. 283–287	© Octobre 2007
---	--------	-------------	-------------------

THE NESTING OF COMMON TEAL *ANAS CRECCA* L., 1758 (AVES: ANSERIFORMES: ANATIDAE) IN ROMANIA

LUCIAN PÂRVULESCU

Abstract. Common teal (*Anas crecca* L., 1758) is mentioned in ornithological papers as „unnesting” bird for Romania, or as „rare nesting” based on three reliable observations published until now. References on a report from Hagieni locality area, from the South of Dobrogea, and two reports from Sânpaul locality area, from the South-East of Transylvanian Plateau, are made here. This paper brings another reliable proof about this species nesting in Romania, in the Apuseni Mountains, as a direct result of our observations and pictures of a single female with four unflying juveniles of *Anas crecca* in Padiş Flat on the 4th of August 2005.

Résumé. En Roumanie, la femelle de la Sarcelle d’hiver (*Anas crecca* L., 1758) est mentionnée, dans les travaux d’ornithologie, soit comme non-couveuse soit comme rarement couveuse. Ce constat se base sur trois observations: l’une effectuée dans la région de Hagieni, au sud de la Dobrogea, et deux autres dans la région de Sânpaul, au sud-est de Plateau de la Transylvanie. De plus, sur les photographies du 4 août 2005, on observe une femelle d’*Anas crecca* avec quatre canetons dans la région de Padiş, ce qui ajoute encore une preuve à la nidification de cette espèce dans les Monts Apuseni.

Key words: *Anas crecca*, common teal, hatching, unflying juveniles, Apuseni Mountains, Padiş Flat.

INTRODUCTION

Common teal (*Anas crecca* L., 1758), belonging to subfamily Anatinae (Anatidae), is a small surface duck, the male being brownish with dark-orange head, the sides of the head presenting one green spot bounded by a white area. While flying we can observe the dark coloured tail feathers and the yellow-whitish lateral subtail feathers. The female is dotted-brownish with white abdomen. The colour of wing mirror is metallic green bounded by a white line, this white line missing in *Anas querquedula* female confusing with common teal female. While flying the females can be differentiated by the supraallars colour – brown in *Anas crecca* and grey in *Anas querquedula*. Also the beaks base is yellowish in *Anas crecca* (Bruun et al., 1999).

In older ornithological books this species is mentioned as “unnesting bird” for Romania, but in the recent specialized books we can find it as a „rare nesting bird” for Romania (Bruun et al., op. cit., Ciochia & Radu, 2002).

At an European level the nesting habitat of this species has the South frontier at the North of the Caucasus Mountains in Kuma Manici Depression, the North of the Carpathian Mountains, the North of the Alpi Mountains to the North of the French Central Great Mountains. At the South of this bound there are a few isolated regions where this teal is nesting: Pad Plain and the North Turkish Coast (Bruun et al., op. cit., www.birdguides.com). In “The EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Bird, Their distribution and Abundance”, Hustings & Pöysä (1997) indicate a few areas of

reproduction for this species in the SE of Europe, probably due to good sources of food and environmental conditions, but the authors are still suggesting that the reproductive population is in decline.

Beginning with May 1915 Dionisie Lintia made the first observation (unpublished) regarding the nesting of this bird in Romania. He observed and collected a nest with ten eggs in it as later it was described in "Les Anseriformes de Roumanie (Nidification, Hivernage)", Tălpeanu (1970), the nest and the ten eggs being preserved in the collection of the Banat Museum, Timișoara, managed by Kiss (1997). The first published paper regarding the common teal nesting in Romania was published in 1980, but without a reliable proof of this fact. Between 1867 and 1916, basing on some observations it was asserted that a few adults and juveniles were observed in different areas from Transylvanian Plateau and Moldavian Plain, Salmen (1980).

After Szabo (1987) and resumed by Ardelean & Bereș (2000), in 1986, the biologists I. Bereș and A. Mihăileanu asserted that common teal was nesting at Hagieni, in the South of Dobrogea. In 1987, a paper which brings the common teal as "rare nesting bird" for Romania is published, basing on the observations from Sânpaul area, from the South-Est of the Transylvanian Plateau. Here, in 1985, two common teal females with four and two juveniles were observed (Szabo, op. cit.). The same Szabo (1990) brought a new reliable proof, a nest with nine eggs left by the juveniles in the same area, Sânpaul, on 29 June 1990.

In the „Provisional atlas of nesting birds from Romania” wrote by Weber et al. (1994) we can find a similar situation: two reliable nesting areas, one in the South of Dobrogea and another one in the South-Est of Transylvanian Plateau, plus another few unreliable nesting areas in the North of Transylvanian Plateau and the North-Est of Moldavian Plain.

This paper brings new information on the common teal nesting in Romania, in the Apuseni Mountains area.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

During the 4th – 12th of August 2005 we were taking part to a volunteering program for the benthic invertebrate fauna monitoring from the Apuseni Natural Park. While we were investigating wet areas from this perimeter, we observed in an *Anas crecca* female and a male flying above the puddles from the Padiș Flat. Assuming that we saw a pair of common teals we initiated an observation action with a binocular and a digital camera Nikon 8800. Also, in the field we used the topographic map of that region for orientation, 1 to 5210 scale and a GPS system. The observations were taken during a 8 days period while we made a few photos with the female and her unflying juveniles. The male could not be captured on photo. Also we renewed our investigations in the same period of year 2006 (13 – 17 July).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on our field observations, on the 4th of August 2005 we were able to identify a female of *Anas crecca* L., 1758 and four unflying juveniles (Fig. 1), on one of the Padiș Flat puddles. The family was observed 7 more days, period in which both the female and the four juveniles haven't leaved the habitat. The nest was not collected and the birds were not captured or ringed. The observations were

made in the field using the Hamlyn Guide (Bruun et al., op. cit.) and afterwards using photos and the help of S.O.R (Romanian Ornithological Society) members, Mureş Departement, on the „Milvus” debating forum.



Fig. 1 – The female and the four unfluying juveniles of *Anas crecca*, photographed in 4th of August 2005 in Padiş Flat (focal length in 35 mm: 490 mm).

Situated on a 1225 m medium altitude, Padiş Flat is a plateau which is deploying at North to Măgura Vânăta Mountain, westwards from Boghii Mountain, estwards to Biserica Moşului Mountain and southwards to a series of low peaks like Tomasca, Rotunda, Răchita. The karstic plateau is interspersed with numerous dolines in different stages, most of them being cloged up and full of turbid water due to the acid soil. The topographic map was updated with all these dolines, the active and the flooded ones (Fig. 2).

The puddle in which we observed *Anas crecca* family, during the 7 days of observations, is situated approximately in the center of the plateau (Fig. 2), a puddle with shallow water and approximately 150 m² surface, with smooth and bladed banks covered with abundant riparian vegetation in the North-Est area: *Carex*, *Juncus* and *Sphagnum*. The GPS coordinates were: 46°36'02" North latitude and 022°42'17" East latitude.

Based on our observations from 2006, we established that in the same habitat an *Anas platyrhynchos* family nested.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank to all my colleagues from 2005 volunteering group for their field support: Snejana Petrovici, Luca Andrei Dehelean and Crainic Teodora; to Romanian Ornithological Society – Mureş Departement, especially to Cosmin Mancu for attesting my observations; to Mr. Conf. Dr. Dan Stănescu from West University of Timișoara, for giving me the scientific literature and information I needed; to the Apuseni Natural Park Administration, especially to the biologist Dr. Milca Petrovici for helping me with the access in the park, and to Mrs. Prep. Ioana Iluț from West University of Timișoara, for translating this paper in English.

I also want to thank to the editorial board, especially to Dr. Dumitru Murariu and to the reviewer Dr. Angela Petrescu for their guidance and advice.

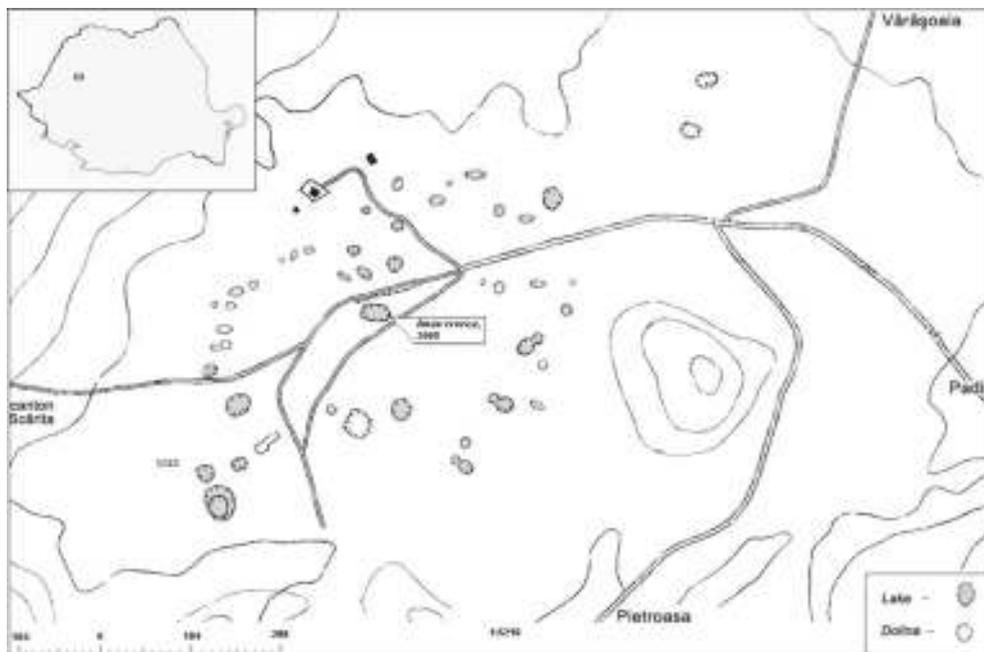


Fig. 2 – Padiș Flat topography, on the map is marked the puddle in which we found the *Anas crecca* family in 2005 (after Cadastral Office Oradea updated by the author).

CUIBARITUL RAȚEI MICI *ANAS CRECCA* L., 1758 (AVES: ANSERIFORMES: ANATIDAE) ÎN ROMÂNIA

REZUMAT

Rața mică (*Anas crecca* L., 1758) este menționată în lucrările de ornitologie fie ca pasăre „neclocitoare” pentru România, fie ca „rar clocitoare”, pe baza a trei observații certe publicate până acum; este vorba de o semnalare în zona localității Hagieni din sudul Dobrogei și două semnalări în zona localității Sânpaul din sud-estul Podișului Transilvaniei. Această lucrare aduce încă o dovadă certă despre cuibăritul speciei în România, în Munții Apuseni, ca urmare a observațiilor și fotografiilor din 4 august 2005 a unei femele și patru juvenili nezburați de *Anas crecca* în Șesul Padiș.

LITERATURE CITED

- ARDELEAN, A., I. BEREȘ, 2000 - Fauna de Vertebrate a Maramureșului (Clasa Aves). Edit. Dacia, Cluj-Napoca: 117-283. (in Romanian)
- BRUUN, B., H. DELIN, L. SVENSSON, 1999 - Hamlyn Guide: Păsările din România și Europa, determinant ilustrat. Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, Londra. 54 pp. (in Romanian: D. MUNTEANU)
- CIOCHIA, V., D. RADU, 2002 - Dicționarul păsărilor. Edit. Pelecanus, Brașov. 276 pp. (in Romanian)
- HUSTINGS, F., H. PÖYSÄ., 1997 - The EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Bird. Their distribution and Abundance. W. J. M Hagemeyer, M. J. Blaire (eds), European Bird Census Council by T & A. D. Poyser: 90-91.
- KISS, A., 1997 - Repertoarul colecției ologice de la Muzeul Banatului din Timișoara. Analele Banatului, Științele Naturii, Muzeul Banatului, Timișoara, 3: 277-312. (in Romanian)
- SALMEN, H., 1980 - Die Ornis Siebenbürgens-Studie Transylvanica, 8 (1): 155-156. Köln, Wien.
- SZABO, J., 1987 - Cuibăritul raței mici în România. Vânătorul și Pescarul Sportiv, 9: 1-13. București. (in Romanian)
- SZABO, J., 1990 - Date noi despre rața mica. Buletin de Informare S.O.R., 3. Mediaș. (in Romanian)

TĂLPEANU, M., 1970 – Les Anseriformes de Roumanie (Nidification, Hivernage) (I). Travaux du Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle "Grigore Antipa", 10: 295–305.

WEBER, P., D. MUNTEANU, A. PAPADOPOLO, 1994 – Atlasul provizoriu al păsărilor clocitoare din România. Publicație S.O.R., Mediaș: 34 pp. (in Romanian)

*** Available online (accessed in 26. 11. 2006) at: www.birdguides.com

Received: December 4, 2006

Accepted: February 20, 2007

*Universitatea de Vest Timișoara,
Facultatea de Chimie-Biologie-Geografie,
Departamentul de Biologie,
Strada Pestalozzi Nr. 16,
300115, Timișoara, România
e-mail: parvulescubio@yahoo.com*