

In 2002 the Milvus Group Association conducted here the first ever season-long raptor migration count in Romania. Volunteers carried out the work and some young conservationists were initiated to become counters for the next seasons.

Daily hawk count was conducted between the 1st of September and 29th of October. A number of 10663 raptors of 26 species were recorded. From this 9 species are complete, while 17 are partial migrants. There are several endangered raptors that migrate at the site: two near threatened species, the White-tailed Sea Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, and the Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*, including the vulnerable Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* and the Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca*.

The highest daily count was of 2552 birds. The most representative species are: Steppe Buzzard *Buteo b. vulpinus*, Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*, Western Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*, Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* and the Eurasian Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*.



● - Măcin Lookout



Raptor Migration in ROMANIA

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Each year millions of raptors undertake long distance migratory movements. Two factors combine to make the migration of many species an ornithological spectacle:

- They are mostly diurnal, especially the larger species
- They congregate in large numbers at certain favored locations

Raptors migrate in response to the fluctuations in food supplies. European migrants are wintering in Africa, Southern Europe and some of them in the Middle East.

The most known migration routes are:

- Southern Scandinavian corridor
- Eastern Baltic corridor
- Trans Iberian corridor
- Central Mediterranean corridor
- Via Pontica (Western Black Sea corridor)
- Trans Caucasian corridor



For energy efficiency raptors use the uprising warm air (thermal) for soaring flight and deflected air (updrafts) for gliding. Typical soaring birds are the Buzzards and Eagles while the flapping and gliding flight is characteristic for Accipiters and Falcons.

According to the migratory behavior, there are three types of raptors:

- Complete migrants (more than 90% of population leave the breeding range)
- Partial migrants (less than 90% of population leave the breeding range)
- Local migrants (movements are less predictable and regular than those of partial migrants)

Although in Romania raptors migrate on a broad front many aggregate along established corridors.



The Carpathians are major barriers that are influencing the migration routes. The Black Sea coast of Romania is a major migration corridor for northern European and western Asian migrants.

The Măcin watchsite, located in the North of Dobrogea, belongs to the Via Pontica migration route. The landscape here offers excellent conditions for thermal formation on sunny days and strong updrafts in windy days, especially when the wind is from NE or NW. The agricultural fields and pastures offers good feeding conditions and the nearby forest is used as roosting place for the late arriving birds.

Migration Timetable

