

ON-LINE INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR MONITORING OF PROTECTED SPECIES – AN EXAMPLE OF MARINE MAMMALS AND EURASIAN LYNX

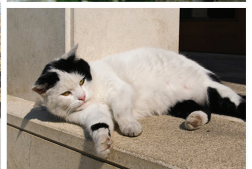
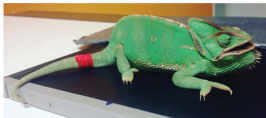
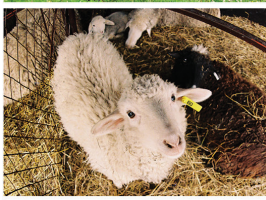
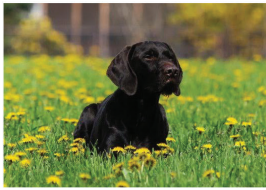
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On the basis of national and international regulations, Croatia is obliged to monitor and report the status of all protected species, including the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) and all marine mammals, primarily the only resident species – the bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*). Already in the 1980s the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb, started systematic monitoring of marine mammals in the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea, while lynx monitoring has been implemented since the late 1990s. During this extensive period, many monitoring tools have been used to collect numerous parameters, so an on-line information system was programmed to unite and categorize all the collected data. Sightings of live animals or traces of their presence, mortality, collected samples and photographs used for photo identification are stored with date/location/photography, and can be viewed on the map. Each entry has a different level of reliability, depending on the source of data, and what kind of data was collected. Data bases are publicly available on-line; lynx -<http://lynx.vef.hr/public/> and for marine mammals - <http://crodolphin.vef.hr/public/>. Also a smart phone application has been developed to facilitate and encourage reporting of marine mammal sightings by the wider public. The location and time of sighting are sent to the main database by SMS, and automatically stored. This kind of information system enables systematic archiving of large data collections, which is especially important for photographs. Moreover, they can be used for gathering data collected by the wider public, and for promoting species protection. With different systems of filters, the stored data can be easily analyzed and used for monitoring the distribution, population size and dynamics, mortality, movements and reproduction of protected species.



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