



Newsletter, Winter 2025 / Issue 1 after rebranding

Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme

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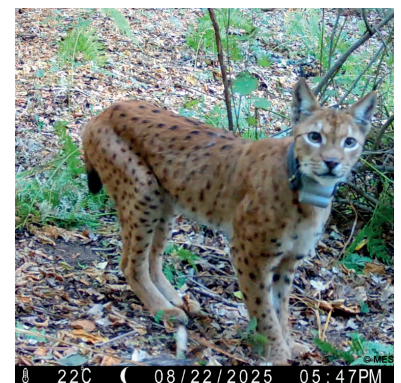


The Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme (BLRP), launched in 2006, is a long-term cross-border initiative in North Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo, supported by partners from Switzerland and Germany. Its goal is to restore a viable Balkan lynx population through research, legal protection, habitat conservation, cooperation with local communities and awareness-raising. Major achievements include confirming the species' presence through surveys and camera traps, tracking lynx with GPS collars, contributing to the designation of new protected areas, and securing international recognition under the Bern Convention (2017) and CMS (2024). Partnerships with authorities, hunters and foresters, along with public education campaigns, have laid the foundation for the subspecies' long-term survival.

Collared Lynx for Scientific Purpose

Within the BLRP project, MES in North Macedonia equips Balkan lynx with GPS collars to better understand the habitat use and movements of this endangered subspecies.

Since the project began, 15 animals have provided valuable data. Zora, the most recent lynx captured in April 2025, roams the forests of the country's western region and, at 15.5 kilograms, is a strong predator with a preference for roe deer. Luna, captured in the winter of 2024 under a full moon, delivered about one and a half years of high-quality data before her collar stopped working; the recordings even revealed a potential den site, later confirmed when she was found with a kitten. Krle, captured in March 2024 and initially heavily infested with ticks, has recovered well, hunts roe deer



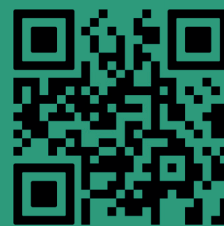
successfully and was recorded meeting Zora during summer—an unusual but not impossible interaction for these territorial cats.

The GPS collars typically function for one to two years and can be retrieved and reused; once the battery nears its end, an integrated mechanism allows the collar to detach automatically.



Monitoring Prey Availability for the Balkan Lynx

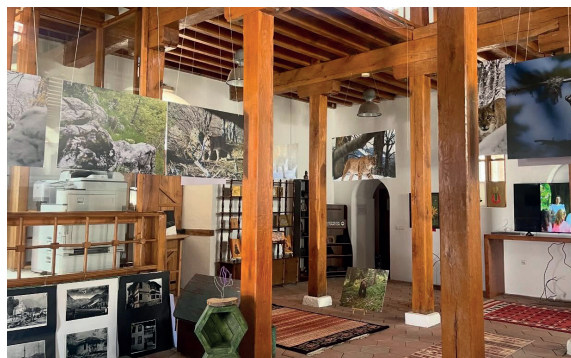
We are monitoring chamois populations in key regions to better understand prey availability for the critically endangered Balkan lynx. This predator mainly relies on small ungulates such as chamois and roe deer, but also feeds on brown hares, rodents and occasionally foxes. Sufficient prey availability is vital for its survival. In **North Macedonia**, MES and local rangers surveyed the Jasen Area on 11 November 2025, recording 231 chamois of various age classes along five transects within known lynx habitat. Earlier, on 30 October, MES also conducted a smaller census on Mt. Galichica, counting 13 chamois across three transects in this key lynx area. In **Kosovo**, ongoing monitoring in Bjeshkët e Nemuna, the Gjeravica area and the Kopaonik range has already confirmed chamois presence in all three regions, which are regarded as current or potential lynx territories. In **Albania**, PPNEA carried out surveys in Prespa and Shebenik National Parks in November 2025. No chamois were recorded along the transects, although the species remains present—supported by recent local observations. Further monitoring in additional lynx areas is planned for December. By assessing chamois availability, the BLRP gains essential insights into the status of one of the most relevant lynx prey species and can lay the groundwork for targeted conservation measures.



International Lynx Day

On 11 June 2025, organisations across the Balkan lynx range marked International Lynx Day with events aimed at raising awareness of the species' critical status.

In **Kosovo**, ERA presented an exhibition of camera-trap images showcasing local wildlife, accompanied by donations of educational materials to three schools to support environmental learning. In **Albania**, PPNEA brought together community representatives, institutions and con-



servation organisations in Razëm for a gathering focused on ecological connectivity.

The event included the premiere of a new documentary, discussions on vital habitat corridors and recognition of the women's group "Zojat e Munellës" (= ladies of Munella) for their contributions to local traditions and lynx monitoring. Plans to declare Balgjaj Mountain a Regional Nature Park were also highlighted. In **North Macedonia**, MES unveiled a large mural of the Balkan lynx on the facade of the Comedy Theatre in Skopje, complemented by an informational board with key facts and a QR link.



To The Website
www.balkanylynx.com

