Giving in is not an option

Milan Ružić himself was almost run over by a mafioso with his car a few years ago. He had caught the poacher red-handed. Milan escaped with no more than a fright, while the almost 80-year-old Italian was convicted and expelled from the country. The bird conservationist once also became the target of a load of buckshot. But Milan doesn’t allow anything to deter him from his mission. “I love the birds, I love my country, I love this planet and I have no second home. There is no nature conservation movement in Serbia yet. This means that if we surrender, no-one will continue. Thanks to our persistent commitment, we are witnessing a slow but steady change for the better. Giving in is not an option,” Milan says determinedly.

Your donation is also a sign of solidarity with our courageous partners in Serbia!

Organised crime against nature

“When it comes to confronting armed guys, never show signs of panic! Show self-confidence, or they’ll only feel stronger.” Marko is commemorating the words of his mentor Milan when he hears shots at the fish ponds of Ečka in Vojvodina this afternoon. At dusk, Marko sees three men shooting birds from a hide in the middle of a pond. They use duck hunting decoys and semi-automatic weapons, both of which is strictly forbidden in Serbia. With his mobile, Marko documents all the details to be reported to the police. He can feel his heart beating. As inconspicuously as possible, he sneaks to the perpetrators’ car and takes a photo of the number plate. Apparently the bird conservationist has come across Italian hunting tourists – not uncommon in this area, and a major source of illegal income. “They come, they pay, they kill,” says the Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia (BPSSS), the organization dedicated to bird protection in the Balkan state, for which Marko is out in the field.

Your donation helps to put an end to illegal bird hunting in Serbia!

“The support we receive from EuroNatur is essential for us. There is hardly any backing from the Serbian government. We are very grateful for the donations that EuroNatur conveys to us. This helps us fight the killing of birds in Serbia.”

Milan Ružić, passionate bird conservationist, managing director of BPSSS in Serbia

Milan and his fellow campaigners are in the process of establishing an effective system against bird killing. Among other things, they have trained more than 50 volunteers to document cases of wildlife crime and report them to the police. Additional activists are being trained by BPSSS on an ongoing basis.

They take on the poachers: Milan Ružić and his team (in the picture with sound decoys that have been secured).

These weapons no longer kill: confiscated rifles of Italian hunting tourists.

First lured, then shot: Fake sounds make the quails hear the voices of other quails. Unfortunately with great success. In the picture: Poached quails. Picture above: Poisoned peregrine falcon.

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Pushed by BPSSS, the police even set up a unit for “Green Crimes” – an absolute novelty in Serbia. But that’s not enough.

Milan wants to see bird slaughter punished within a few months. This can only be achieved with a large network of competent allies. Your donation helps to build this network!

For these and other measures we need at least 350 donations of 100 euros each in the coming months.