



RESTORATION OF DRAGOMAN AND ALDOMIROVTSI MARSHES IN BULGARIA

**BRIDGES AND BARRIERS TO PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION, Sofia, 20th April 2015**

Andrey Ralev



Balkani Wildlife Society

Created 1989, registered 1992.

70 members and 10 employees.

1. Research, conservation and restoration of biodiversity.
2. Development of nature protection legislation.
3. Rising public awareness.

www.balkani.org



Wetlands

- Areas where the water covers the soil or is present in its top layer.
 - Lakes, marshes, rivers, wet meadows, seashore
 - Permanent or temporary, natural or artificial
-
- **Highest ecosystem services = 2500 Euro/ha**
 - **Richest biodiversity**
 - **CO₂ reserve**





Wetlands in Bulgaria

- 1900 = 2% of Bulgaria (~2 000 km²)
- 1970 = 0,1% of Bulgaria (~100 km²)
- Biggest wetlands destroyed around Danube, Tracian Valley, Sofia Plane.
- Draining for arable land, converted in dams, fishponds
- Huge losses to biodiversity, fishing, hunting, flood risks and water purification.
- 20% of CO₂ emissions worldwide.

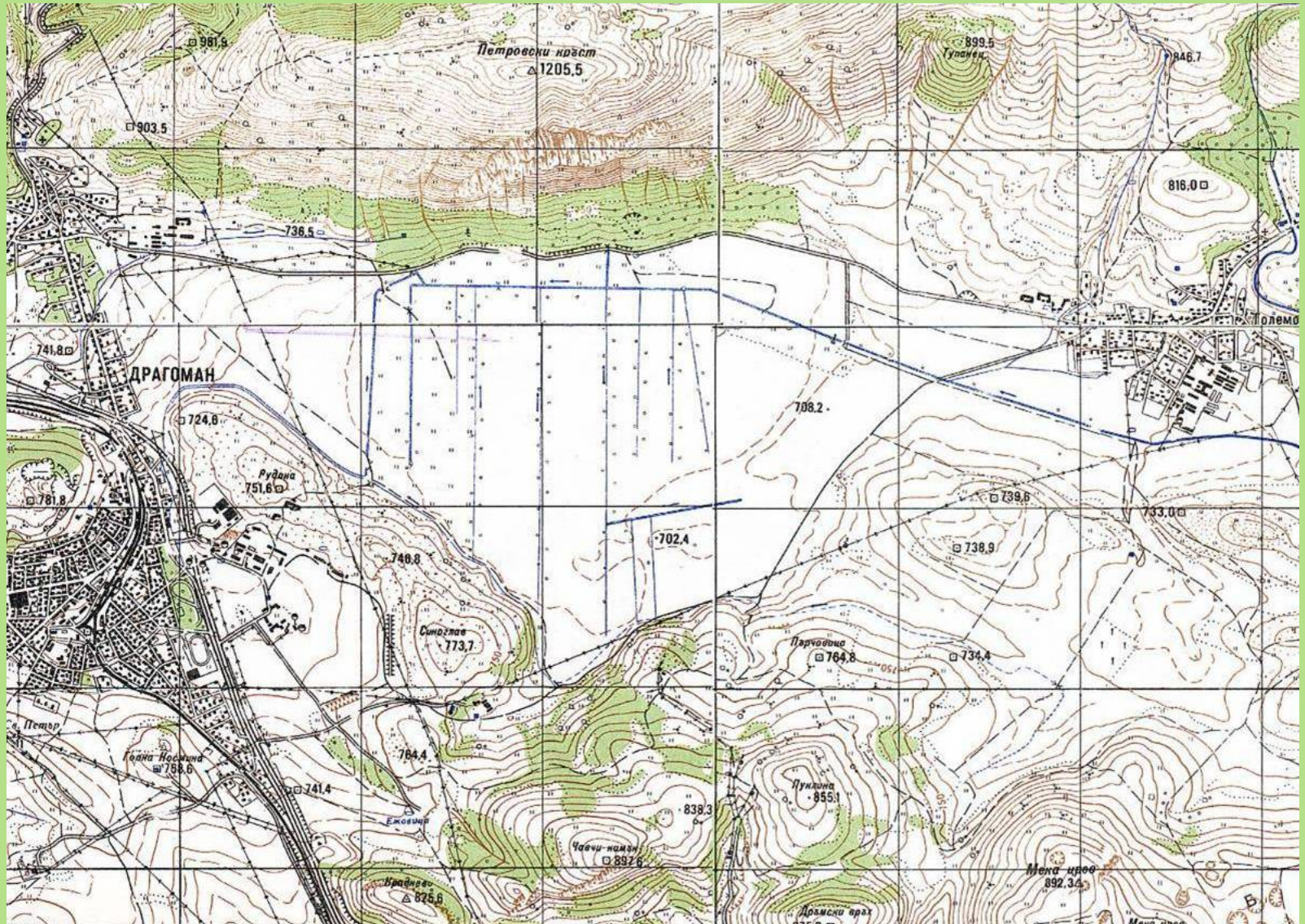




Dragoman Marsh - 1900



1970





2000



2007



- 300-400 ha, 705 m.a.s.l., 40 km from Sofia
- The biggest karst marsh



Chepan Hill

Dragoman Marsh

1

2

3

4

<< to Belgrade

DRAGOMAN

to Sofia >>



Dragoman Marsh - now

- 216 species of birds, 125 breeding
- 30-40 pairs Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*)
- 2006: Great White Egret, Purple Heron, Gray Heron, Great Bittern, Little Bittern





Chepan Mountain (1206 m)

- Unique steppic submediterranean flora
- Endemic plants: *E. serbicus*, *A. wilmottianus*, *T. urumoffii*



Wet meadows

- Specific boreal flora: *Salix rosmarinifolia*, *Plantago maxima*, *Viola pumila*, *Fritilaria meleagroides*
- 30-50 pairs of Corncrake (*Crex crex*)





Work in the region



Monitoring of
birds(since 1994)

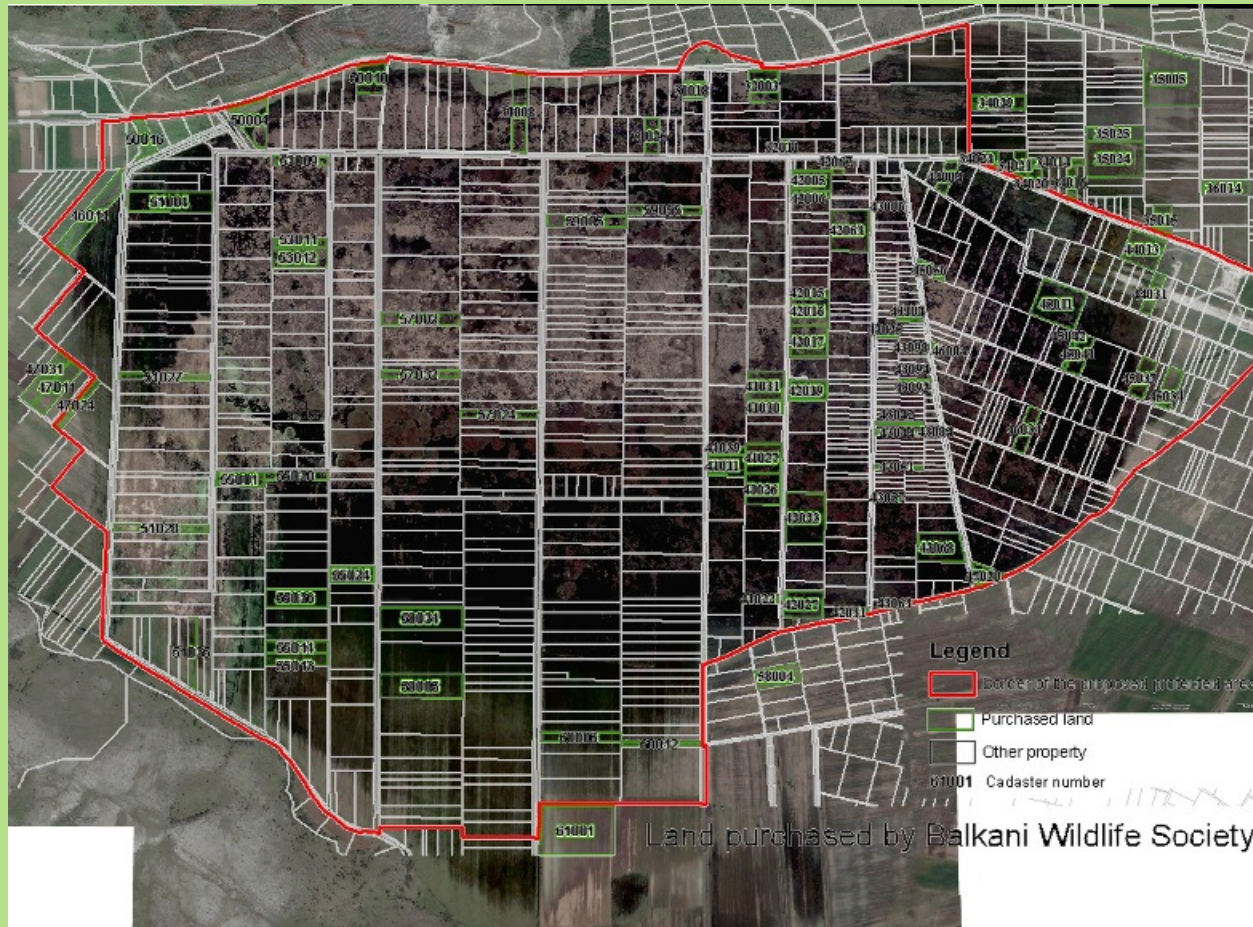


Environmental education



Work in the region

Purchase of land in the Marsh (43 ha)





Work in the region

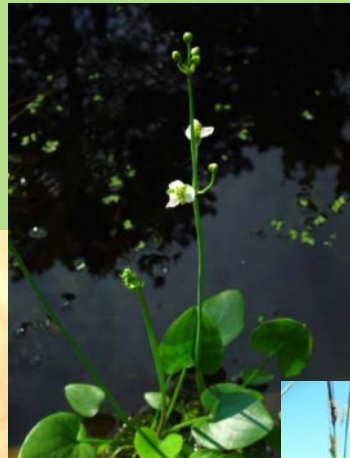
Visitors infrastructure





Work in the region

Restoration and monitoring of species and habitats



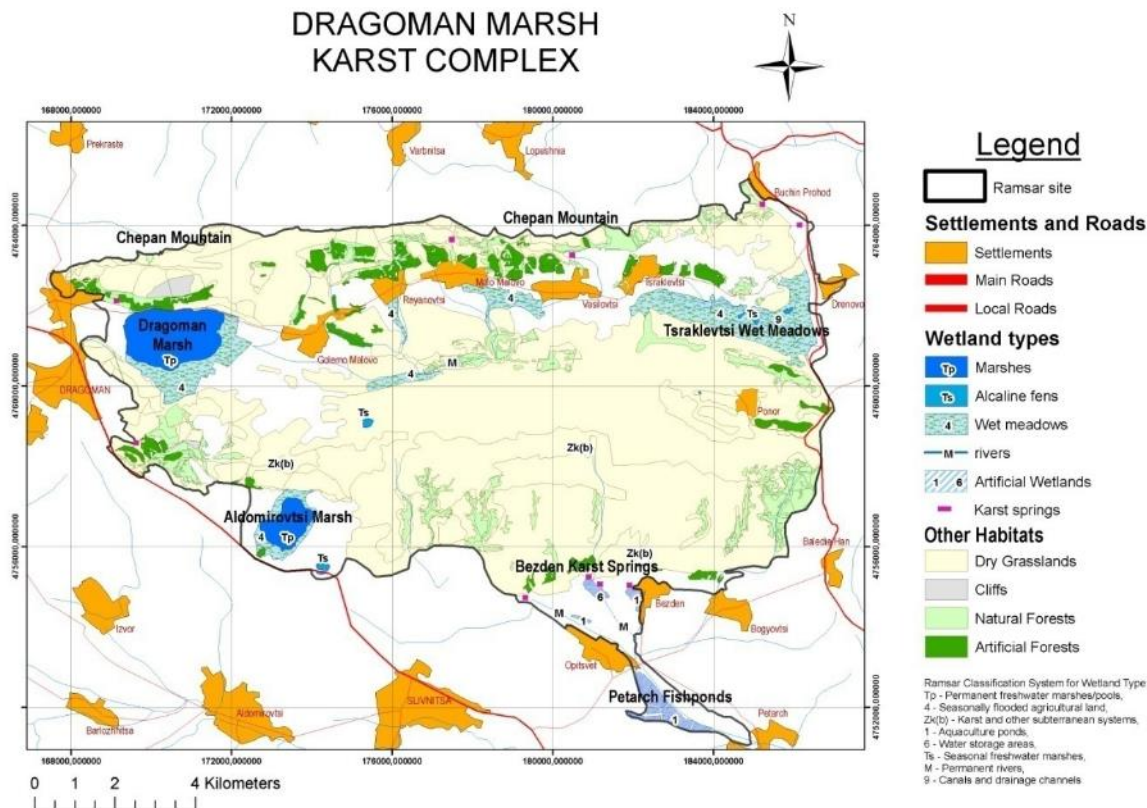
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Misgonyx fossilis ag8953



Work in the region

Ensuring legal protection of territory

- Natura 2000
- Wetland of international importance (Ramsar convention) – 2011





Work in the region

Biomass utilization - heating pellets (*Phragmites*,
Typha, *Schoenoplectus*)





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Aldomirovtsi Marsh

Drained in August 2012

=> The reason: earthquake 22.05.2012





February – July 2013 there was water
then drained again



05 02 2013

November 2014 – we found a sinkhole





...and filled it with clay



2014



2014



2014



2015



2015



Thank you for your attention!

email: dragoman@balkani.org

www.balkani.org

Facebook pages:



- Wetland Centre Dragoman
- Balkani Wildlife Society