

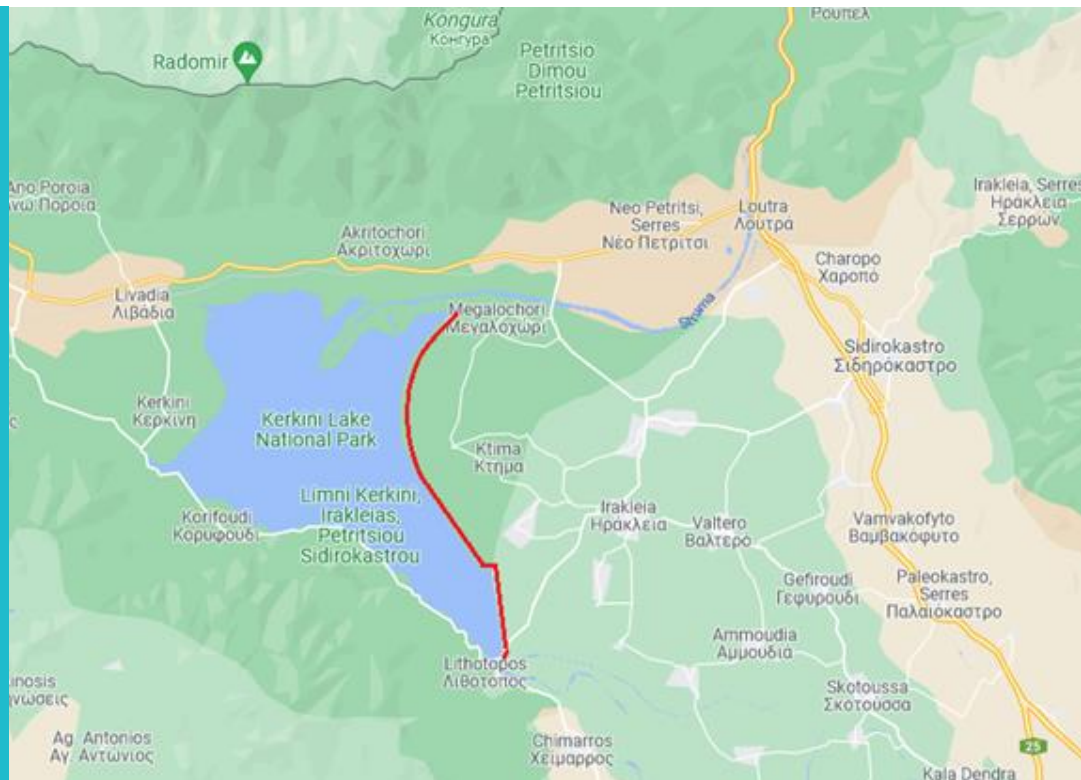


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PROMOTING HERITAGE - AND CULTURE - BASED EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM IN THE BLACK SEA BASIN

Project No BSB-1145



EUROBIRDWATCH

(Natural Heritage)

Common borders. Common solutions.

BASIC INFORMATION

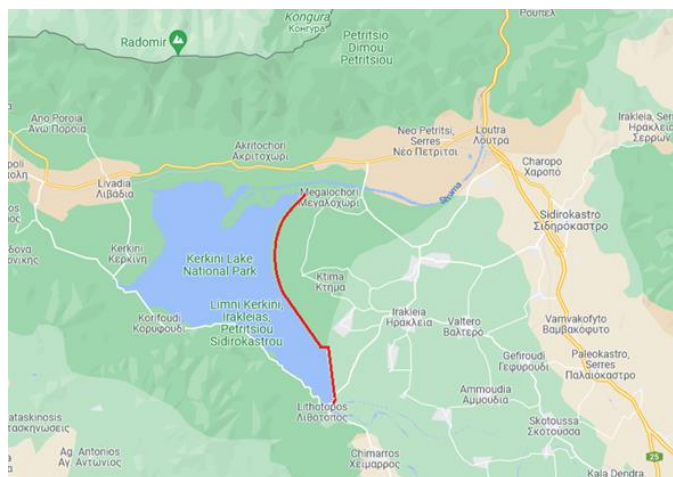
WHERE:

The event takes place in the Eastern embankment of Lake Kerkini, which is located in the Regional Unit of Serres in the west part of the Region of Central Macedonia.

Lake Kerkini is one of the 10 Wetlands of International Importance in Greece (also known as Ramsar Wetlands). It is also one of the 196 Important Bird Areas of Greece (IBA), and a Special Protection Area (SPA - Directive 79/409 /EEC). In November 2006, Lake Kerkini National Park was established for the protection of the area as a national natural heritage.

The lake was created in 1932 with the construction of a dam on the Strymonas River near the village of Lithotopos and the construction of embankments to the east and west.

The biodiversity of the area is very important and valuable. At least 300 species of birds have been observed and recorded in the Lake and the surrounding mountains, of which 50 are included in the Red List of Birds of Greece. The presence of other species is also important, such as amphibians (11 species), reptiles (26 species), mammals (> 58 species), fish (30 species), plants (> 800 species) and invertebrates (at least 4700 species of which 1396 new species for Greece and at least 46 new species for science). In the area of the Lake there is the largest number of buffaloes in Greece which are animals adapted to live in wetlands. Important is the presence of various plant species, too.



SCHEDULE:

First Sunday of October (10:00-14:00)



ORGANIZER AND CONTACT INFORMATION:



Lake Kerkini Management Authority, Aggeliki Dimaki.
Telephone number: 2327028004,
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DESCRIPTION

EuroBirdwatch is an initiative of the NGO organization for the event is the Hellenic annual bird watching Birdlife International. The is the Hellenic event organized action has been taking Ornithological Society throughout Europe every place since 1993. In (HOS), with which the year on the first weekend Greece, the responsible Lake Kerkini Management of October at the environmental Authority cooperates.

KEY MESSAGE

The need to protect birdlife and its habitats.

KEY ACTIVITIES

Information and awareness activities, bird watching, activities for children.

EXPERIENTIAL AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

On the day of the event the experiential / interactive activities are related to constructions for the birds (e.g. bird nests) especially by children.

Moreover, since 2008, the Lake Kerkini Management Authority has carried out three voluntary work programs in the Lake Kerkini National Park (the first two programs took place with the collaboration of the WWF Greece), which usually start at the beginning of August and last for two weeks. The volunteers that participate come from all over Greece and their work includes a set of interventions in existing infrastructure as well as the implementation of new ones, such as nests making for cormorants into the riparian forest, construction of platforms for pelicans, fencing for the protection of the natural vegetation in the riparian forest, construction of cages for injured birds and mammals, participation in recording (monthly recording of dead animals, monthly recording of otter's population, predators recording), maintenance works of observatories and kiosks.

There is also the intention to create an association to organize bird watching events/activities throughout the year.

INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS

Posting live links from the area on social media (facebook), which started during the pandemic.

MAIN FEATURES AND SERVICES THAT ATTRACT PUBLIC

The wetland itself with its valuable biodiversity, especially the large number of rare and protected bird species. Important is also the willingness of the staff to inform the public about bird protection issues.

KEY PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

The event is held under the auspices of the Hellenic Ornithological Society and there are no sponsors.

PARTICIPANTS, LOCAL COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMER SEGMENT

The participants come from all over the world. People come from all over Greece and mainly families from the Regional Unit of Serres. The percentage of tourists from abroad is smaller. They come mainly from Bulgaria (large percentage), the Republic of North

Macedonia, England, France, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, America, Canada, Israel and Australia.

COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION CHANNELS

Promotion of the event is mainly made through social media (facebook), and with oral communication.

The Lake Kerkini Management Authority also organizes environmental information and awareness activities, especially for the students at the primary schools of the municipalities adjacent to the National Park. The students are informed about the values of the wetlands in general and more specifically for the importance of Kerkini wetland. During the presentation there is a projection of photos from the National Park and in the end the students are free to express their opinion, thoughts or questions. A useful awareness tool is also the educational material distributed by the Lake Kerkini Management Authority to all schools. The material titled “Meet the Nature of Lake Kerkini Protected Area” was created by the Hellenic Ornithological Society in cooperation with the Lake Kerkini Management Authority and is licensed by the Greek Ministry of Education. The material is addressed to students of primary (age 11-12) and secondary (age 13-15) education. It involves a power-point presentation of the protected area, an instruction guide for the teachers and activity sheets. There are activities focused on field practice.

The Management Authority applies seminars and meetings about the National Park to the local professionals that are involved with ecotourism (especially to tour guides).

The Information Centre of Lake Kerkini functions continuously since 1998 at the service of the National Park’s visitors. The visitors can obtain information from the exhibition hall of the Centre. Also, there is a projection hall for those who are interested to learn more about the area. Apart from that, the personnel of the Management Authority can guide the vis

itors outdoors for bird watching.

SPECIFIC ELEMENTS AND FEATURES

MANAGERIAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SPECIFICS

Lake Kerkini Management Authority was founded by the laws 2742/1999 (OJ 207A/7-10-1999) and 3044/2002 (OJ 197A/27-08-2002) aiming to administer and manage the area of the Kerkini wetland. It is supervised by a Board of Directors appointed by a ministerial decision of the Greek Minister of Environment and Climate Change. The Board of Directors consists of representatives of ministries, local authorities, professionals' unions and environmental organizations (11 members). It is mainly funded by the Greek Ministry of Environment and Climate Change through the Operational Program "Environment". The personnel of the Management Authority consists of 12 persons (recruitment in May 2008). There are a variety of scientists like foresters, environmentalists, economists, and also wardens for the patrolling of the National Park. Each person undertakes a specific action, e.g. some deal with bird watching in telescopes, some with information and some with children's activities.

ACCESSIBILITY

Access to the area is possible mainly by car (only until one point and then on foot).

Access by bus is not satisfactory. From Serres there is a connection through Sidirokastro only in the morning, while from Thessaloniki there are 3-4 itineraries per day for the eastern part of the area (Heraklion and Sidirokastro). The railway connection of the area is substandard. From Serres to Thessaloniki and vice versa there are two routes, one of which is an Intercity train that stops only in Rodopoli and Sidirokastro, while the other one stops at all stations serving the settlements of the area.

LIAISON WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS OF THE BLACK SEA BASIN REGION

There are no associations and connections with other countries for this event.

In general, there is cooperation with Bulgaria due to the existence of their own national park (on the other side of Mount Beles).



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