Dear volunteers, colleagues, friends, partners,
Contributors and adherents of the Wildlife Rescue Centre,
The one and only Wildlife Rescue Centre in the country has been operating in Stara Zagora for more than 15 years so far, as a part of Green Balkans - Stara Zagora. For these years the professionalism of the Centre has proven the significance of the efforts aiming at conserving species ex-situ. For this time the team of the Centre has developed its professional skills and our activities have become popular on a national and European scale.

In 2009 the Centre received over 1000 wild animals in need of help, successfully treated and released back into the wild more than 480 of them. Some of these animals were rare or threatened species of European or global conservation concern.

We are convinced that the good results of the efforts of the Centre will be even more in the year to come, what will bring more nature in our lives and more volunteers and friends in the Centre.

I wish you all good health and loads of personal and professional success in 2010

Yours truly and gratefully,
Eng. Toma Belev – Chairman of Green Balkans Federation and Director of Vitosha Nature Park

The Team
What is typical for the members of the team is that they are tireless, dedicated persons, ready to suffer privation for the sake of animals. Often, the working conditions are hard, requiring quick actions and adequate decisions, critical to saving patients’ lives. Every signal related to a wounded animal or wildlife in distress involves different approach and a lot of ingenuity.

Ivaylo Klisurov – Manager
Ivaylo Klisurov is in charge of: organizing and managing the work of the Wildlife Rescue Centre; managing the team; developing projects and raising funds; contributing actively to the personnel policy and the relations with the public, state and private institutions, and other NGOs; coordinating the development of breeding programs, as well as reintroduction and restocking programs, where the Rescue Centre plays a key role. Ivaylo Klisurov is responsible for the development of the Organization and its activities in Stara Zagora. Chair of the Managing Board of “Green Balkans – Stara Zagora” NGO.

Dr. Hristina Klisurova – Veterinarian and PR
Dr. Klisurova is responsible for receiving, treatment and rehabilitation of patients. Also, Dr. Klisurova’s duties involve: maintenance of the Rescue Centre's database and documentation regarding the Biological Diversity Act and the Veterinary Medicine Act; participation in information campaigns related to the Centre and the conservation of rare species; active coordination of the relations with the public, media, and state institutions; development of new projects and coordination of the donation and adoption programs of the Wildlife Rescue Centre.

Dr. Sashka Vitanova – Veterinarian and Volunteer Program Coordinator
Sashka coordinates actively the activities of the Rescue Centre involving international and national volunteers and coordinates the liaison with “Youth in Action” program of the European Voluntary Service. Thus, she is in charge of the daily coordination and supervision of the volunteers’ duties and weekly program. Sashka deals with the receiving, treatment, rehabilitation, and caretaking of patients

Ivan Ivanov – Breeding Program Coordinator and Technical Assistant
Qualified engineer and born nature-lover, Ivan has been a volunteer of Green Balkans actively involved in field activities for a long time. For several years now, he has held several positions at the Rescue Centre. In his capacity of a coordinator of the breeding program, Ivan is in charge of all breeding pairs, as well as the incubation and hatching premises. In addition, he contributes to the reintroduction and restocking programs, and assists with the general and specialized maintenance of the facility.

Nikolay Arabadzhiev – Wildlife Rehabilitator
Nikolay has long experience as a volunteer of Green Balkans. Now, as an employee, he is the key figure creating good conditions for the birds in the Rescue Centre thanks to his inborn talent and intuition when working with animals. Nikolay is in charge of the daily caretaking of patients and cooperates with the coordinator of the breeding program. He is actively involved in the maintenance of the facility and construction of new cages and perches.

Lyubomila Krivoshieva – Wildlife Rehabilitator
Lyubomila has been a volunteer of Green Balkans and the Rescue Centre for many years, actively involved in the guarding of Imperial Eagle nests and the transportation of animals in distress from Sofia to the Rescue Centre. Wildlife photographer.
Mila has a very special attitude to animals, which, combined with good knowledge of their behavior in the wild, allows for a better assessment of their behavior as patients and easier adaptation of the animals to their temporary captivity. She is working in the intensive care unit. Mila is the photographer of the Rescue Centre and never misses an opportunity to document the patients’ lives.

Pepa Encheva – Team Coordinator and Wildlife Rehabilitator
Having joined the Rescue Centre’s team recently, Pepa combines several key activities: coordination of the everyday work of the team; preparation of the weekly and monthly programs; active participation in the receiving of new patients, food supplies and consumables needed for the daily routine at the Centre, as well as in the caretaking of the animals.
From 1990 to 1993, the founders and supporters of Green Balkans initially discussed the idea of establishing a specialized clinic for wild animals in distress. In 1994 the Centre was a fact already, functioning as a specialized unit of Green Balkans, related to rehabilitation, medical treatment, recovery and release back into the wild of rare or threatened wild animals.

All Centre facilities were provided by the Vocational School of Veterinary Medicine and Thracian University, both in Stara Zagora. More than 250 Green Balkans volunteers from all over the country have been involved in the establishment and development of the Centre. Specialized veterinarian medical care is provided by Dr.Tsekov Veterinary Hospitals and by Thracian University in Stara Zagora. Wildlife Rescue Centre is acknowledged as a Rescue Centre by virtue of Art.71, paragraph 1, section 1 of the Biological Diversity Act by order RD 242/14.03.2003 of the Minister of Environment and Waters.

To date, more than 50 facilities for medical treatment, rehabilitation and breeding of rare or threatened species have been constructed on a 6,300 square meter area, including 1,100 square meters of aviaries, veterinarian surgical rooms, recovery rooms, and areas for recovery therapy (e.g., getting injured birds acclimated to flying).

Main Areas of Activity of the Centre
- Providing medical treatment and recovery for rare or threatened species in distress (injured or exhausted), and releasing them back into the wild;
- Providing the necessary conditions and equipment for harboring confiscated rare animals of the Bulgarian fauna, which may be subject to illegal trade;
- Breeding permanently disabled rare or threatened raptors that cannot be released back into the wild;
- Developing reintroduction programs and supporting the populations of the following species: Bearded Vulture, Imperial Eagle, Black Vulture and Lesser Kestrel;
- Implementing environmental educational youth programs.

Results Achieved
The number of patients increases every year, both as a result of the efforts for popularization of the activity of the Rescue Centre and the raised environmental awareness of the public. More than 40% of these are successfully released back into the wild, including species of high conservation status such as eagles, vultures, falcons, herons, pelicans and storks.
Receiving Animals in Distress

1056 animals of 108 species, belonging to 3 classes - Birds, Mammals, and Reptiles, were received at the Centre during the period January-December 2009. The most numerous were birds, representing orders Strigiformes, Passeriformes, Falconiformes, Ciconiiformes, Apodiformes, Charadriiformes, Piciformes, Anseriformes, Coraciiformes, Galliformes, Caprimulgiformes, Gaviiformes and Pelicaniformes, followed by mammals, belonging to orders Chiroptera, Insectivora, Rodentia, Artiodactyla, Lagomorpha and Carnivora and reptiles, represented by orders Testudines and Squamata.

Signals of animals in distress are received from all over the country almost on a daily basis. Most often, signals come via the Centre’s hot line. In some cases, the patients are brought directly to the Centre. Sometimes, the team of the Centre has to make on-the-spot visits, especially in specific cases, natural disasters or other calamities involving numerous casualties.

The team of the Centre has established a broad network of voluntary supporters in more than 50 settlements throughout the country. These volunteers receive signals on a local level and render assistance for the transportation of the animals.

Every year, as a result of the activity of the Rescue Centre, the number of people and institutions sending or assisting with the sending of animals in distress to Stara Zagora grows, reaching 431 in 2009. In more serious cases, such as gun shot wounds or heavy bleeding from an accident, specialists from the Centre give instructions for
applying first aid and stabilizing the patient on the spot. In the towns of Kazanlak, Burgas and Haskovo, with the assistance of Pet Hospital Dr. Tzekov, the animals are sent directly to the veterinary clinics where they receive qualified first aid and stabilization prior to their transportation to Stara Zagora.

**Veterinary Caretaking**

Veterinary specialists take care of the animals after being transported to the Centre in Stara Zagora. Every day, our veterinary specialists carry out numerous examinations, make diagnoses, perform surgical procedures and X-ray examinations. With some animals, the process of treatment and overall rehabilitation can take more than 6 to 8 months. During this period, depending on the case, there are often numerous complications related mainly to the animals’ wild origin and the shock and stress they get when taken into captivity. In most cases, this hampers the specialists’ work and the whole recovery process of the patient.

Number of patients by reasons for hospitalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curative</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General recovery</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patients presented according to the type of prescribed therapy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fit - symptomatic</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - extremity</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - broken limb</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - lacerated pendant</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - external heamatoma</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - bone fracture</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - internal heamatoma</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - multi organ damage</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - soft tissue trauma</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - joint trauma</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - pectoral muscles</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad - respiratory tract</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dead on arrival</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By territorial subdivision with the MOEW system

Presentation of patients according to the place of finding
Nature conservation status and dynamics of the patient flow throughout the year

Most of the patients are animals of high nature conservation status. Almost all of the animals received at the Centre are listed in Annex 3 of the Biological Diversity Act (BDA) and the Bern Convention. Some of the species are also included in CITES and the Bonn Convention, as well as the IUCN Red List.

Most of the animals are received during the summer (June-August) as well as in winter (October-January). On the average, 3 to 4 animals are received on a daily basis. As in previous years, these peaks coincide with the birds’ breeding period and the beginning of the hunting season for small local and migratory game, which begins at the end of the calendar year.

Main Reasons For Receiving Patients

The most common reason for animals being received at the Centre was young birds falling out of the nest during the breeding season. In 2009, they numbered 381 of a total of 1056 received patients. During the winter peak period, the most numerous group is that of shot animals.

In 2009, in terms of the frequency of reasons for being received at the Rescue Centre, the patients were: birds fallen out of the nest; unknown; confiscated; birds, whose nest had been destroyed; animals found beyond their natural habitat; victims to collision with vehicles; shot, etc.

In most cases, the animals received at the Centre are in extremely poor condition - shot, stabbed, or galled, injured by high-voltage electricity, heavily parasitized, fallen in petrol substances, as well as animals with fractures in the extremities, skull and skeleton.

The cases of poisoned animals have become more and more frequent in the recent years. Such cases most commonly appear in the period before sowing. Farmers have started to use treated seeds not only for sowing but also against rodents. In many of the cases the various poisonous substances are overdosed for guaranteeing more effective extermination of voles and other rodents. These activities result in poisoning vast areas as well as many seed-eating and raptor birds. The cases of keeping wild protected species at home have multiplied in the recent years too. In some of the cases this is not deliberate but rather a result of occasional finding of birds in distress. Unfortunately the permanent taming of these birds is almost always fatal for a great deal of them.

As for the shooting of protected species, the general picture raises even more concerns. More and more animals with gun-shot-wounds arrive in the Rescue Centre every year. Very low percentage of them recovers successfully, especially among birds. Despite the enforced European agreements and various regulations, hunters continue shooting on all sorts of animals with almost no control. The hatred for birds of prey not only still exists but also increases. Many of the hunters shoot on raptors birds just for fun despite the fact that they are not game species and ignoring their high conservation status.

Main reasons for hospitalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Found outside natural habitat</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accident adult individuals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harsh wintering conditions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artificial nest platform destroyed</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybernation interrupted</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breeding program</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buildings and obstacles collision</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle collision</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power-Are collision</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wintening place destroyed</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nest destroyed</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kept in inappropriate conditions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangled in cord in the nest</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngs, fallen off the nest</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confiscated</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For reintroduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim of predator</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results of the Activities of the Centre

During the period January-December 2009, a total of 1056 wild animals in distress were received at the Rescue Centre. After a period of treatment and rehabilitation, almost half of the patients were recovered and released back into the wild. The rest of the animals were either put in aviaries for captive breeding or had a lethal outcome.

The monthly dynamics of the patient flow reveals specific periods. Thus, April-August is identified as the period of fluffy babies, which, for one reason or another, fall out of their nests. September and October are the migrants’ months. Often, those that have not stored enough energy for the long migration are found exhausted or in distress. October-January is the period of shot animals. Not surprisingly, this period coincides with the hunting season, hence the problems for wild animals.

Release Back Into the Wild

Prior to the selection of the sites where the animals will be released back into the wild, the specialists of the Centre coordinate their activities with the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Waters in Stara Zagora. Mainly, the criteria for the selection of the sites are protected areas, providing protection and conditions to monitor the released animals during their adaptation to the new environment. All birds are marked with special rings provided by the Bulgarian Ornithological Centre. 279 birds released back into the wild have been ringed in 2009. Last year, animals were released all over the country, mainly at the invitations of various Nature park directorates and Regional Inspectorates of Environment and Waters. The events were organized on a campaign principle. Locally, in most cases students and citizens were invited to attend the release. There were also official guests, representing the local authorities, as well as many members of the media.
**Breeding Program**

Although a great percentage of successfully treated animals have been released back into the wild, many of the patients remain permanently disabled and cannot survive in their natural environment. These animals are included in a series of rehabilitation courses to get adapted to the future aviary breeding. Some of them are included in the breeding programs of the Centre. Parents unfit for living in the wild have absolutely healthy offspring.

We had breeding success with pairs of Eagle Owls, Long-legged Buzzards, White Storks, Common Kestrels and Griffon Vultures in 2009. Some of the pairs were equipped with observation cameras for improving the nesting success and supporting the successful raising of their chicks.

The Lesser Kestrel breeding program was launched in 2009, aimed at subsequent reintroduction of this species that is extinct in Bulgaria. The Rescue Centre received a donation of two Lesser Kestrel pairs from Walsrode Bird Park (Germany). The birds will be put in special cages providing non-disturbance conditions needed for breeding. The cages were constructed within “Lesser Kestrel – no past, but future” project funded by M-Tel Eco Grant.

**Programs for reintroduction and restocking of endangered or extinct bird species**

**Restocking of Griffon Vulture (Gyps fulvus) in the Balkan Mountains**

A large-scale plan for reintroduction of Griffon Vultures started in 2009. The Wildlife Rescue Centre is the main unit of this plan. The Balkan Vulture Action Plan was initiated and launched by an international Consortium of NGOs, which, in 2005, signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation with the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water. Within three years, a total of 100 to 150 Griffon Vultures (Gyps fulvus) are envisaged to be reintroduced in the area of the Balkan Mountains, where the birds are extinct as a breeding species.

Within this project the Rescue Centre works in partnership with the Bulgarian Environmental Partnership Foundation, the Birds of Prey Protection Society, the Fund for Wild Flora and Fauna, “Central Balkan” National Park, and “Vrachansky Balkan”, “Sinite Kamani”, and “Balgarka” Nature Parks – some of the sites identified for reintroduction of Griffon Vultures.

The first group of 18 birds arrived in March 2009. Having spent a quarantine period in a special cage built for them in the Rescue Centre, the vultures were put in adaptation aviaries in Kotlenska Planina, “Sinite Kamani” and “Vrachansky Balkan” Nature Parks, and “Central Balkan” National Park to get used to the new environment. Depending on their age, the birds will be released gradually into the wild.

**Reintroduction of Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) in Bulgaria**

In 2006 the Central Laboratory of General Ecology (CLGE) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences started a 4-year research on the status and ecology of the Saker Falcon in Bulgaria. At the end of 2009, a team involving Bulgarian and foreign organizations (Central Laboratory of General Ecology, Green Balkans, International Wildlife Consultants, National Museum of Natural History, Institute of Zoology - BAS, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research) came up with a draft document discussing the need for reintroduction...
of Saker Falcons in the country and the possibilities for implementation of such a project. Green Balkans participated both in the field surveys and the elaboration of ex-situ measures for conservation of the species – breeding birds in captivity for the purpose of introducing their offspring in the wild.

In addition, two members of Green Balkans’ staff spent eight months in total at the Hunting Falcons International: Breeding Facility - International Wildlife Consultants Ltd. (Wales, Great Britain), in order to learn the techniques and methods for captive breeding of Saker Falcons. The acquired experience will be applied in the improvement and adjustment of the infrastructure of the Rescue Centre for the purpose of keeping and breeding Saker Falcons in captivity.

Reintroduction of Lesser Kestrel (Falco naumanni) in Bulgaria

The first steps of the program for reintroduction of Lesser Kestrel in Bulgaria were made in 2009. This once common falcon went extinct as a breeding species in Bulgaria in the early 1960s. In general, the main reasons are related to human activity. In this regard, a project proposal entitled “Lesser Kestrel – no past, but future” was developed in the middle of the year and funded by M-Tel Eco Grant. The activities implemented within this project included: reconstructing the breeding cages; providing new, modern incubators; providing video-monitoring equipment for the cages to be used during the forthcoming breeding period. In addition, in the middle of the year, Walsrode Bird Park, Germany, provided Lesser Kestrel pairs fit for breeding to be involved in the breeding period in 2010. As a subsequent step, the Organization developed a project proposal to Operational Program “Environment” (OPE), which started at the end of 2009. One of the three activities under this OPE-funded project is directly related to the program – establishing a material and genetic base for reintroduction of Lesser Kestrel and identifying potential sites for restoration of the species’ populations. What lies ahead is further expansion of the Rescue Centre's base, adaptation of the facility to the breeding of new Lesser Kestrel pairs, increase in the food resource and provision of five pairs from Spain, as well as identification of territories suitable for follow-up release of birds.

Raising qualification skills

The Wildlife Rescue Centre is Bulgaria's only facility of its kind and, as such, it needs a team with specific knowledge and skills that need to be increased continuously. Therefore, the Rescue Centre maintains contacts with numerous foreign institutions, rescue and breeding facilities, zoos, etc., which could provide relevant experience and expertise.

In 2009, two staff members had the possibility to gain useful experience and knowledge while working abroad – one of them at the Raptor Breeding Facility (Wales, Great Britain), and the other – in Walsrode Bird Park (Germany). They will have the chance to apply the acquired expertise in practice – in the everyday caretaking of the patients as well as in the breeding program, which is an extremely important part of the work of the Centre.

In April 2009, an expert of the Organization took part in an international workshop organized in Abu Dhabi, UAE, to discuss the problems related to the global status of the Saker Falcon. There, the representative of Green Balkans presented the Wildlife Rescue Centre and the proposed strategy for reintroduction.

The publication of the final version of the Viability Study on the reintroduction of the Saker Falcon in Bulgaria, the public discussion, and the very start of the reintroduction program (infrastructural development of the Rescue Centre, contacts with owners of Saker Falcons belonging to the European race, in order to secure breeding birds) are expected to be realized in 2010.
Voluntary Efforts

In 2009, the daily work at the Rescue Centre involved lots of volunteers from Bulgaria, Germany, Italy, Macedonia, Romania, and France, as some of them were doing their internship in the fields of zoology, ecology, and veterinary medicine. They made their valuable contribution both to the everyday caretaking of animals, such as receiving animals, preparing the food, feeding, cleaning, monitoring, assisting with the veterinary treatment, participating in release events, and to the different maintenance activities – i.e. mowing, tree-planting, disinfecting, gardening, etc. Depending on their interests and the duration of their stay, the volunteers had the chance to participate in various field activities implemented by Green Balkans.

Within the European Voluntary Service of “Youth in Action” 2007-2013 Program of the European Union, providing young people aged 18–30 with the opportunity to live and work in a foreign country, as well as to receive professional support, supervision, and guidance, the Rescue Centre hosted five volunteers from different countries.

We are really grateful to all of them: Mylene Sannier (France), Cora-Michal Graulich (Germany), Giopar Olah-Gal (Romania), Federico Lettiery (Italy), Corrado Komparoto (Italy).

We express our most sincere appreciation of the efforts of these volunteers who supported the Wildlife Rescue Center in 2009: Alexandra Todorovska (Macedonia), Alexandar Mechev, Antonia Hirshnits (Italy), D-r Bineva, Bozhidar Stoyanov, Branko Bogucevski (Macedonia), Viktoria Vasileva, D-r Vladimir Petrov, Georgi Bakoev, Georgi Dilovski, Gyunlyur Oztas (Turkey), Danail Dushkov, Danko Stoev, Dian Manolov, Eva Rakova, Elena Kmetova, Elena Koleva, Emmanuel Baltag (Romania), Doc. Ivan Zarkov Iliyan Stoev, Kalina Zhelyazkova, D-r Kirkova, D-r Kostov, Lisa Lutz (Germany), Lucian Balboaka (Romania), Lyubomir Yankov, Marin Stoev, Nikolay Cholakov, Pavlin Zhelev, Peter Van Kopenhonl (Belgium), Radina Kaldamukova, Raffin Sarkisiyan, Ruben Gutierrez (Spain), Rumyana Ivanova, Pet Hospital Dr. Tzekov, Stoil Stoilov, Tanyo Markov, Yavor Majarov.

Educational and Public Campaigns in 2009, Participation in Seminars and Visits to the Centre

Our team was involved in numerous educational and public campaigns. Green Balkans’ volunteers popularize various environment protection and nature conservation activities all over the country. Lots of campaigns and workshops about wild animals (e.g., victims to human impact), have also been organized.

Every day our specialist share their opinion on topics related to wildlife rehabilitation and medical treatment in various electronic forums.

In 2009, the Wildlife Rehabilitation and Breeding Centre welcomed more than 2,300 visitors. They were mainly students, undergraduates, conservationists, experts of the Ministry of the Environment and Waters and Executive Forest Agency and journalists. Many tourist operators organizing students’ excursions included the Rescue Centre in their offers as an important place that could be visited by children. Thus, the Centre became a preferred destination of excursion of
students from all over the country. Here, in addition to nice emotions and close encounters with animals in distress, the children had the chance to get closely acquainted with the biology of the species, the story of every patient, and the negative impact of human on nature.

Many public persons visited the Wildlife Rescue Centre, namely: Mr. Angel Marin - Vice President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mrs. Nona Karadzhova – Minister of Environment and Water, Mr. John Beyrle – Ex Ambassador of the USA, Mr. Gayer – Ambassador of Germany, Prof. Tanchev – Mayor of Stara Zagora Municipality, Prof. Dsc. Ivan Stankov – Rector of Trakia University – Stara Zagora, Mr. Yordan Nikolov – Regional Governor of Stara Zagora, Mariya Ilieva – pop star, the artists of Stereo Room – KRISTA and B.O.Y.A.N. – friends and adoptive parents of our patients, the finalists of Miss Bulgaria 2009 Beauty Contest, and Miss Antoniya Petrova – Miss Bulgaria 2009.

The Media

Being an organization of public benefit that helps wild animals in distress, the Rescue Centre is often popularized through media events. The purpose of these events is not gaining popularity, but reaching a wider range of people, encouraging them to protect nature and environment. In this regard, in 2009 the activity of the Rescue Centre was reported more than 307 times by TV channels, newspapers, and magazines at regional and local level.

Funding

Fundraising for a facility like Wildlife Rescue and Breeding Centre is a difficult and complicated process. We managed to accumulate 164 559,27 Bulgarian Leva in 2009, listed in details in the graphics below.

Donation campaigns

In 2009, we carried out several donation campaigns to raise funds for the activity of the Rescue Centre. The traditional adoption program launched in 2006 continued throughout 2009. The campaign offers adoption of permanently disabled patients, and in 2009 it involved 100 adoptive parents – twice more than the previous year, including citizens, whole school classes, schools and companies. The funds raised through the campaign amounted to BGN 17,837.70.

In addition, we carried out two actions entitled “Help me grow up” and “A second chance for wild animals” through the unified donation number DMS. The idea of the campaigns was that everybody could quickly and easily donate a certain amount of money via SMS. The first campaign raised BGN 636.00, while the second one will last till the end of March 2010.

The Wildlife Rescue Centre was included in the donation campaign organized by Raiffeisenbank and Dir.bg. The Christmas initiative “Choose to help” united more than 35 causes in different areas. The Wildlife Rescue Centre was the only focus of the part related to eco-projects. The initiative was intended for the employees of the bank and the internet portal, as they had the possibility to choose the cause they wanted to support. More than 90 employees of the bank chose the cause of the Rescue Centre, and the raised amount exceeded BGN 11,000.
Donors and Partners
We express our sincere gratitude to all who supported the development of Green Balkans’ Wildlife Rescue Centre, and most of all to:

Enterprise for Management of Environment Protection Activities (EMEPA)
Ministry of Environment and Water
Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water – Stara Zagora
Trakia University – Stara Zagora
Vocational High School of Veterinary Medicine „Ivan P. Pavlov“ – Stara Zagora
Pet Hospital Dr. Tzekov
Walsrode Bird Park (Germany)
M-Tel EcoGrant
“Workshop for Civil Initiatives” Foundation

Bulgarian Charities Aid Foundation
Bulgarian Donors Forum
The employees of Raiffeisenbank, who supported us through the donation program “Choose to help”
“Youth in Action” Program of the National Centre „European Youth Programs and Initiatives“ (NCEYPI)
Frankfurt Zoological Society (Germany)
Black Vulture Conservation Foundation (Spain)
Raptor Breeding Facility (Wales, Great Britain)

We thank all those friends of wild animals, who supported our work!