

Actes del Cinquè Simposi Internacional del Mussol Comú, 4–6 febrer 2011, Vic, Catalunya (Spain)

Actas del Quinto Simposio Internacional del Mochuelo Europeo, 4–6 febrero 2011, Vic, Cataluña (Spain)

Proceedings of the Fifth International Little Owl Symposium, 4–6 February 2011, Vic, Catalonia (Spain)

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The Fifth International Little Owl Symposium, 4–6 February 2011, Vic, Catalonia (Spain)

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The First International Little Owl Symposium took place in Champ-sur-Marne (France) in November 2000, organized by the International little owl Working Group (ILOWG). It was the first international meeting regarding a sole owl species in Europe. Since then, efforts have been made to improve our knowledge and develop management plans for little owl conservation, and every new advance has been shared among all of us, owl researchers and owl friends, at regular international meetings.

The Fifth Symposium gave continuity to the series of previous meetings held in France, England and Belgium. The most recent meeting was held in Herzele, Flanders, and the highlight was the presentation of the latest little owl monograph (Van Nieuwenhuysse et al., 2008). This meeting demonstrated the need to promote future gatherings of researchers.

This year's symposium therefore aimed to serve a dual purpose. On one hand, it was a call to stimulate studies of the species from consolidated groups from central and northern Europe, and on the other, it aimed to promote the less known initiatives from southern European countries where there is less tradition in the study of little owl.

Researchers from Poland, The Netherlands, England, France, Belgium, Canada and Spain attended the call and offered 14 presentations to an audience of 60 little owl enthusiasts. It was an opportunity to catch up with recently completed studies as well as ongoing projects. Topics ranged from population studies and citizen science to the use of technology in tracking owl movements, measuring the effectiveness of broadcast surveys and reviewing results from rehabilitation centers. This issue of the journal includes five peer reviewed papers from among these presentations, and others are expected in future publications.

The recent publication of an owl conservation book in Catalonia (Baucells, 2010) favoured this symposium being held in Vic, and the support of several sponsors contributed greatly to the meeting becoming a reality. We are extremely thankful to the Departament de Medi Ambient de la Generalitat de Catalunya, Grup Naturalista d'Osona, Institut Català d'Ornitologia (ICO), Patronat d'Estudis Osonencs, Escola Sant Miquel, Grup d'Anellament Calldetenes Osona (GACO), Caty Lorton, and last but not least to the Institut de Cultura: Museu de Ciències Naturals de Barcelona for their readiness to publish the papers presented at the Fifth Symposium.

As the organizing committee, we hope that these proceedings provide a valuable step towards advancing our knowledge of the little owl and contribute to its conservation.

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