



INTERNATIONAL
BEARDED VULTURE
MONITORING

8th International Bearded Vulture Observation Days

October 12th 2013 (period: 11th-20th of October)

A co-operation within the International Bearded vulture Monitoring (IBM)

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1. Introduction

In the 12th of October of 2013 the well-known International Observation Day took place. This day consists in an international gathering of observers to monitor the Bearded Vulture populations in the Alps. This day also serves as wide-spread public awareness of the current status of this species and continues to raise more and more participants as it becomes a birdwatching tradition throughout the years.

The monitoring is planned in detail and in synch by the local administrators and ultimately allows us to get information gathered simultaneously from over 400 different points in the Alps by more than 589 people in total, which is a very good statistical sample that reduces tremendously the chance of double counts and sampling effort by an isolated team.

The observation time-frame this year was from 11th to the 20th of October (focal day on the 12th) and was selected by previous agreement of all the partners of the project bearing in mind former results and the date suitability to maximize bird sightings (courtship, nest building, copulations and synchronous flights, for example). Unfortunately the weather was not a positive influence throughout the Alps, being that most of the observations points were influenced by rain, snow or a dense fog which limited accessibility, visibility and even the level of activity displayed by the actual birds.

As it has been pointed out in previous years, there are some observation gaps (e.g. Central Switzerland, north-eastern Italy and some parts of Austria) to be closed in order to cover the whole Alpine range, but once again it proved unfeasible to do so. Most of the data was sent through the suggested format which reflects a global effort to standardize the data collected, and to keep on improving the quality of information.

The International Observation Day not only allows us to collect a large amount of data about the Bearded Vulture populations but also about the general status of the Alps – presence of other important species (like Golden Eagle or Black Vulture, for instance), interaction between these species and the BV and even any kind of disturbances near the observation points.

2. Methods and Data

1.1. Focal date and buffer time frame:

The date for the International Observation Days was proposed by mutual agreement during the meeting of the IBM Steering Committee, just as in previous years. The focal date in the IOD 2013 was the 12th of October and the buffer time frame was from 11th-20th. The buffer period spanned until the end of the following weekend, in order to allow some flexibility for areas where the weather conditions were not suitable. All data collected in this period was included in the report. However only observations between 1 day before and 1 after the focal date have been used for population estimations, as this is the most reliable for statistical analysis and model elaborations since using a larger time-frame would increase the probability of double-counting due to the high mobility of bearded vultures (especially juvenile and immature birds). The rest of the data collected outside these dates will be used for guidance purposes.

In this period of the year, Bearded vultures are active in nest building, copulation, synchronous flights (display), etc., which makes this the most suitable period to observe the birds and record possible new territories and breeding pairs.

1.2. Observation Protocol & Optic Equipment:

Protocol

Observations were made between 10am-15pm and the following information was recorded: Local weather conditions, topography, average travel speed of bearded vultures, activity period, presence or absence of a territory in the area, species and age of birds seen. Identification of birds was done accordingly to protocol available at the IBM website (<http://www.gyp-monitoring.com> → Downloads) and the booklet by the Natural History Museum of Crete / University of Crete and the Hellenic Ornithological Society.

Optical Equipment – Team setup

IOD works on a voluntary basis so all equipment used is personal equipment that the observers bring themselves. Each team is generally equipped with binoculars, spotting scope, and digital camera with a long-range lens. The number of observers per team usually ranges from 2 to 10 people.

The observation teams are organized so inexperienced observers are always accompanied by an experienced member.

1.3. Area covered & Weather conditions

The area covered by the observers has increased over the years but the whole Alpine range (~188.000 km²) cannot be completely covered simultaneously, so it is unfeasible to monitor the whole Bearded vulture population. Therefore, the main purpose of the IOD is not to determine the whole population in the Alps, but to assess the evolution of the population on a regional level, and therefore **an index for the abundance of vultures e.g. per km²**.

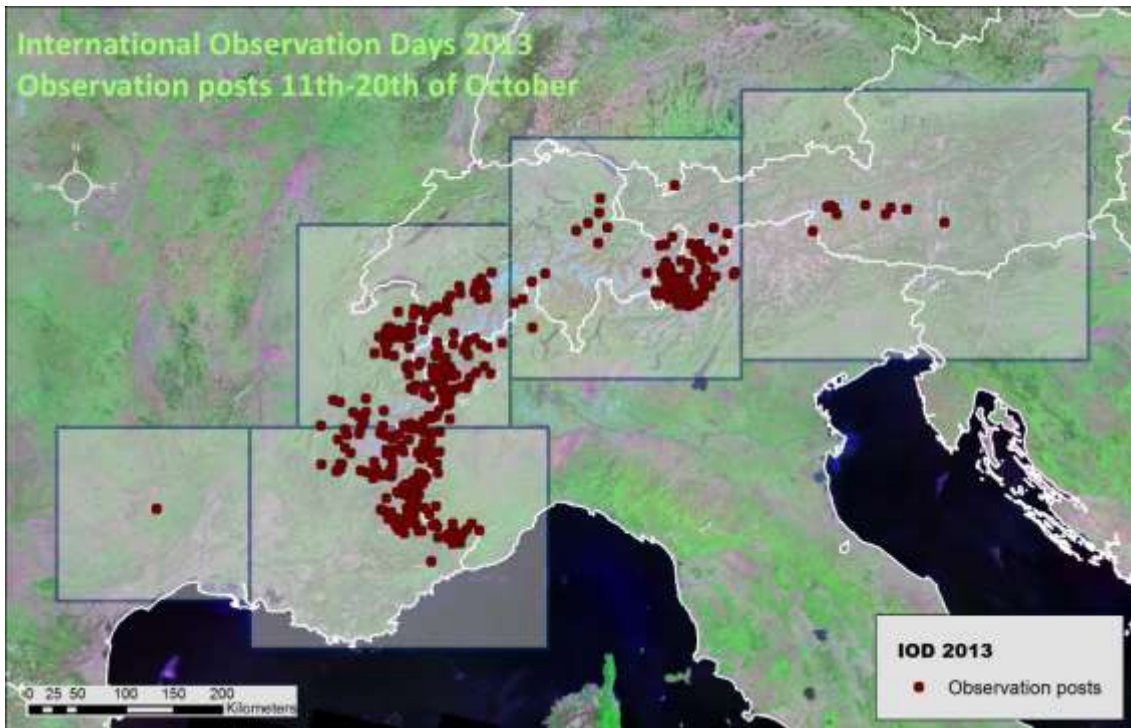


Figure 1: Observation points for the International Observation Day at the Alps.

Weather conditions affect the observations quite strongly influencing visibility, bird activity, limiting the access to some observation points, and even the possibility of not performing the scheduled observations.

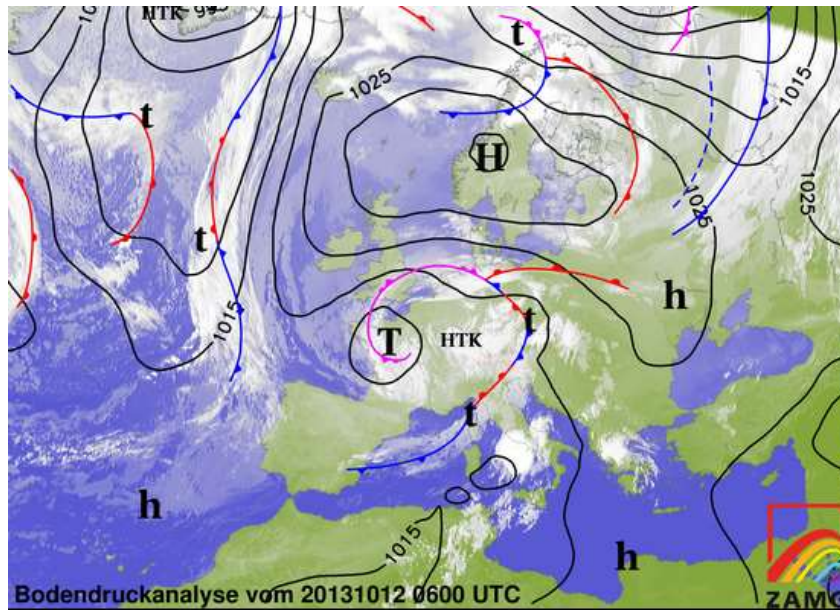


Figure 2: Weather cast for Europe at the focal day (12th of October) of observations in the International Observation Day in 2013.

Generally, the weather was inadequate for observations throughout the Alps – snow, dense fogs and heavy rain in several observations points. The exception to this was the Western part of the Alps (West part of Switzerland and French Alps).

1.4. Data management

All observers used an online database to record their observations. The database is available at the IBM Webpage (www.gyp-monitoring.com), as well as the observation protocol.

Date	Team	Post	Post coordinates		Period		Results	Age	Bird presence		Obs coordinates		BirdID/Hypothesis	Description	Photo
			lat. (dec)	long. (dec)	Start	End			Start	End	lat. (dec)	long. (dec)			
08.10.2011	PNM	19 Col d	6,710	44,534	10:00	16:00	1	juvenile (1.year)	10:15	10:23	6,715	44,584	BV670 Tussac	1 young BV flyii	yes

Figure 3: Example of how to fill in the table with the data gathered in the IOD.

3. Results

All information of the observation sites and observations collected by the local administrators during the focal period on the local and regional level were sent by email to the IBM Administration to be merged on the entire Alpine scale. This information, plus additional data stored in the IBM data base collected in the same period, has been the basis for this report.

3.1 Monitoring effort

During the focal period 596 observers participated in the IOD over the entire buffer period and went out in the field within these days. A total number of 437 observation posts were occupied in this time; almost all of them on the focal date of the 12th of October, 83 posts on the 19th, and 10 or less on the other observation days. Observations made in this period but not on the focal date are included in this report. The total number of observation posts is slightly lower than in 2012 (446), as well as the number of observers being lower than the last 2 years (2012: 720, 2011: 635). 2013 was the first year where the number of observers did not increase as in previous years. This could be due to the poor weather conditions which were prevalent during these dates, affecting the distribution of observation points and number of observers. As with last year, most of the partners have sent coordinates of every observation site regardless of the success, which has contributed to a more general impression of the area covered by observers. Within the four geographic regions in which the population of vultures is distributed in the Alps, it can be observed that this year the western regions (South-Western and North-Western Alps) are the most thoroughly surveyed areas.

The IOD every year is the outcome of a great coordination effort among the IBM partners and the involvement of a significant number of trained observers, which has created a very effective and active monitoring network. The International Observation Days remain one of the main tools within the Bearded Vulture program to raise public awareness. Therefore, most members have done a great effort to make the event a big success and motivate the participation of people interested in this species. Every new observer that is interested and learns about the vultures in the Alps provides an inestimable input for the project.

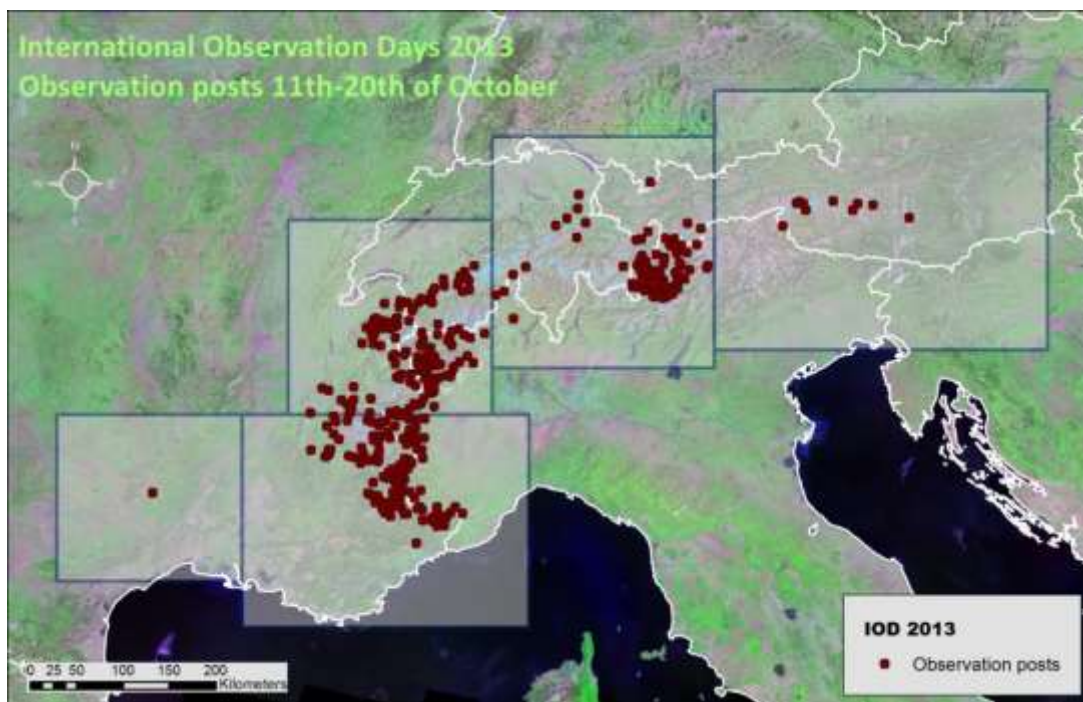


Figure 4: Occupied observation posts in the focal period of the International Observation Days IOD 2013 (12th October).

3.2 Distribution of birds

In 2013, a total of **400 observations** were reported (including double counts) for the whole period of the IOD, out of which **180 (45%)** were made in the focal date (12th of October). Although it might seem that the results for the focal date are lower than those obtained in previous years, in fact the results are very promising considering that in 2012 the focal period spanned 3 days (5th – 7th), whereas this year we focused in a single day. Furthermore, several partners postponed the IOD in their regions due to the adverse weather conditions during the focal date, which made observations impossible. Thus, the high number of observations this year can be considered like a success, especially thanks to the good organization of the local coordination of the observation days.

Table 1: Comparison of numbers of observations in the last 4 years.

	Whole period	Focal period
2010	248	94
2011	239	160
2012	348	304
2013	377	174

The resulting maps with the distribution of observations are shown in the **figures 5 and 6**, displaying the sites where birds were observed just in the focal date (12th of October) and in the whole period (11th – 20th of October) respectively. In these maps, the observed birds have been grouped according to their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit; therefore, the birds have been considered separately in 3 groups: adults + sub-adults (older than 4 years) in one group, immature + juveniles (birds younger than 4 years) in a second and finally undetermined age class (unknown) in the third.

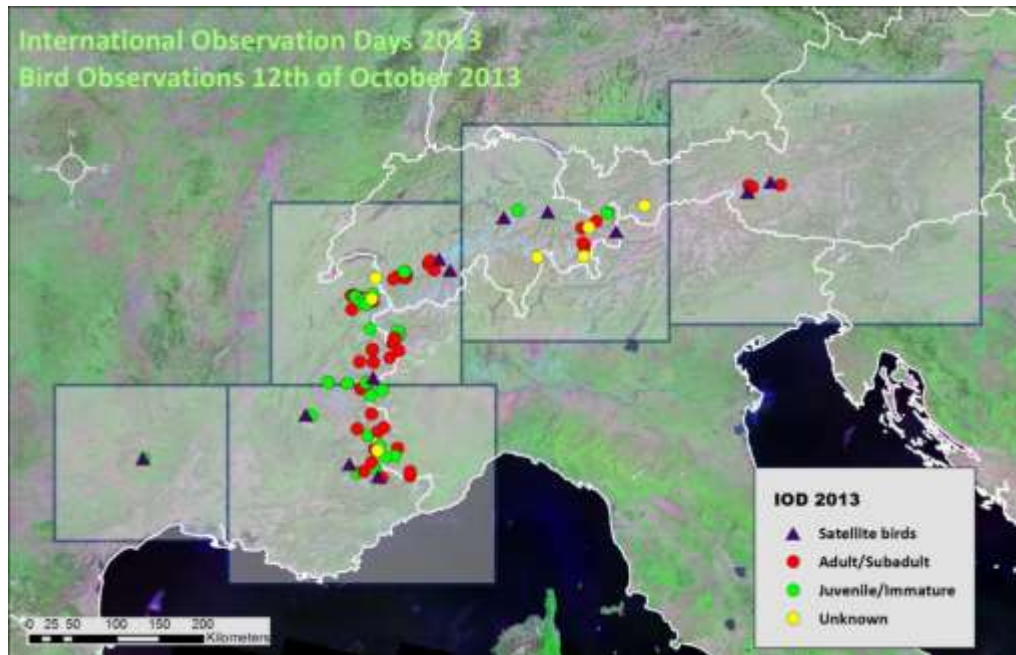


Figure 5: Observations of bearded vultures in the focal period of the International Observation Days (12th October 2013) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data

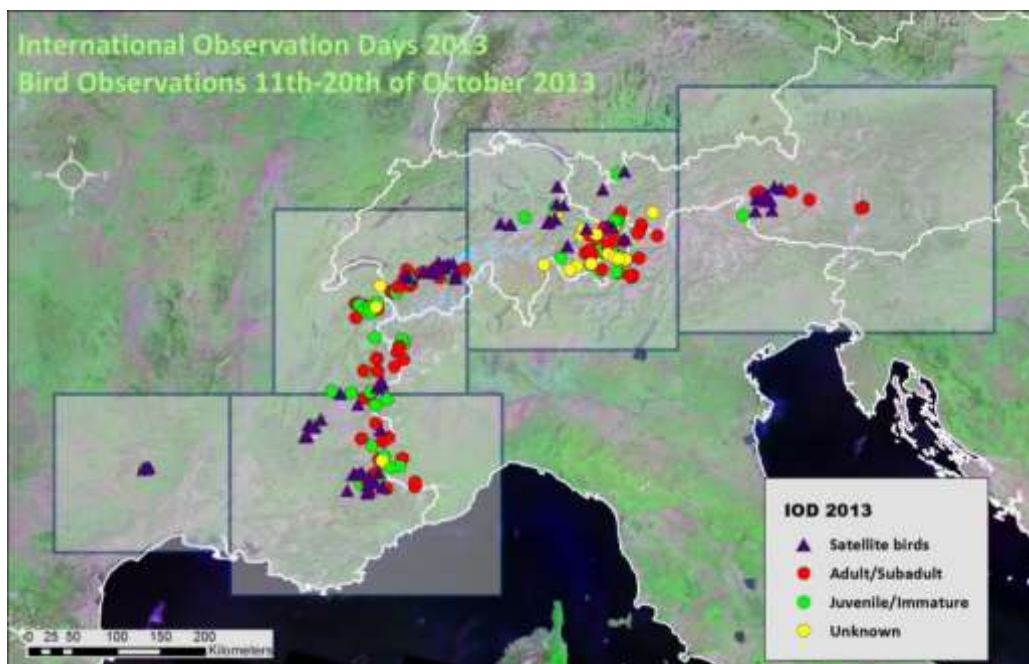


Figure 6: Observations of bearded vultures in the whole period of the International Observation Days (11th – 20th October 2013) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data

During the observation period 109 satellite positions were received and stored in the database, out of which 12 were taken in the focal period. These observations were not used on the overall counting since they were not part of the IOD as such, although they were used as an indication for identification of birds and to detect areas with monitoring deficiencies.

The following figures 7 to 10 are a more detailed description of the distribution of the observations made in the different geographic regions of the Alps (within the whole observation period).

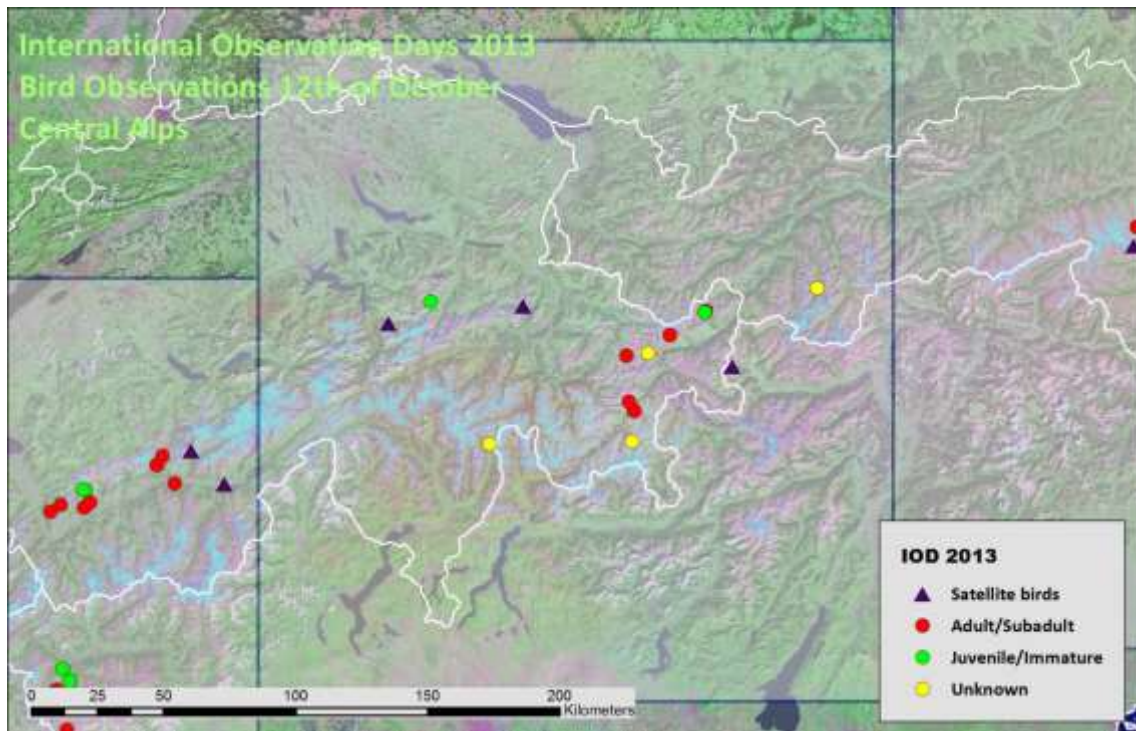


Figure 7: Observations of bearded vultures in the Eastern Alps in the whole period of the IOD (11th to 20th of October, 2014) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data

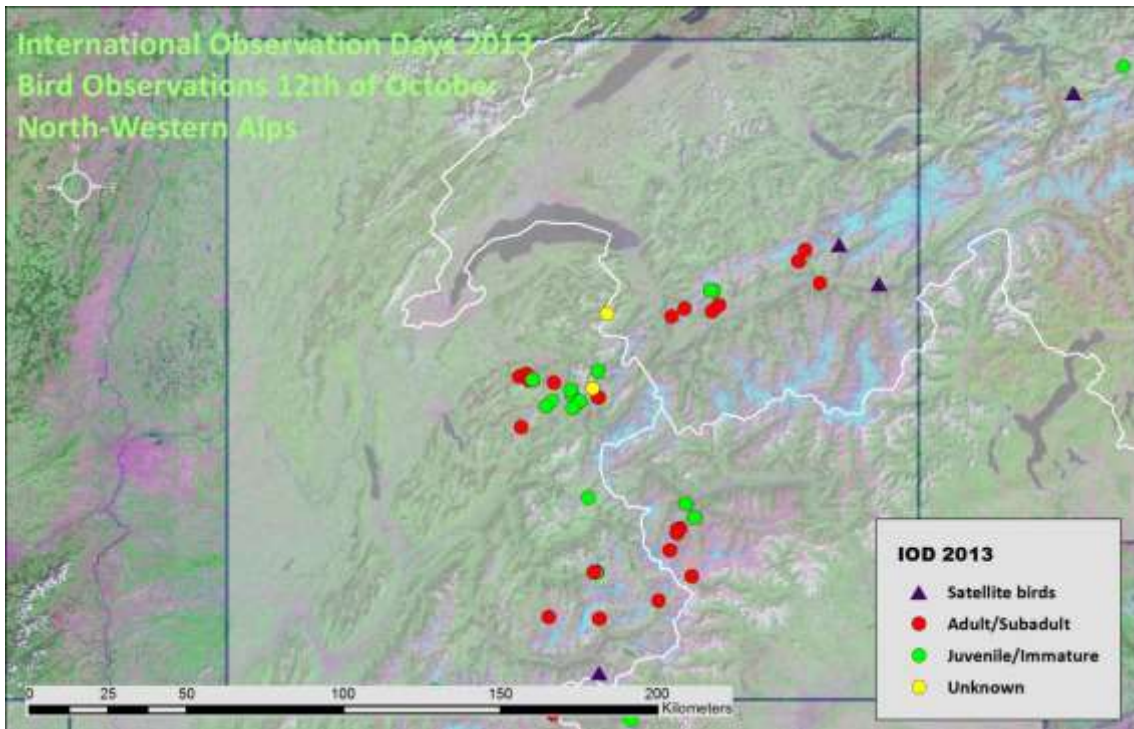


Figure 8: Observations of bearded vultures in the North-Western Alps in the whole period of the IOD (11th to 20th of October, 2014) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data

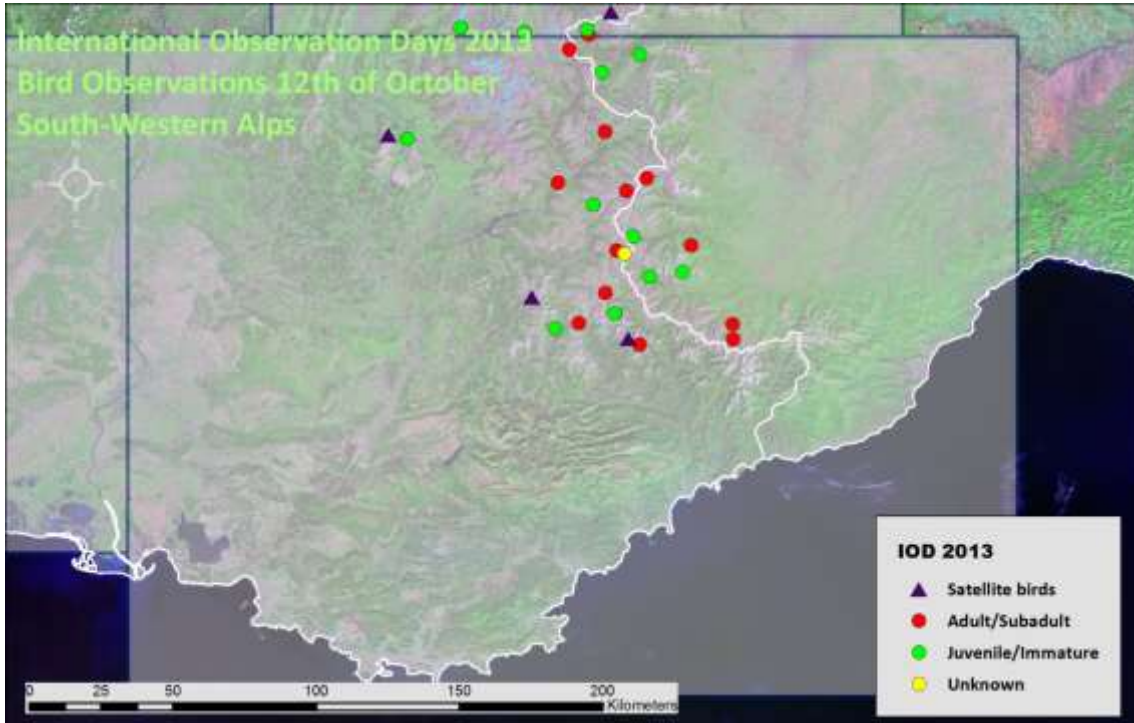


Figure 9: Observations of bearded vultures in the South-Western Alps in the whole period of the IOD (11th to 20th of October, 2014) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data

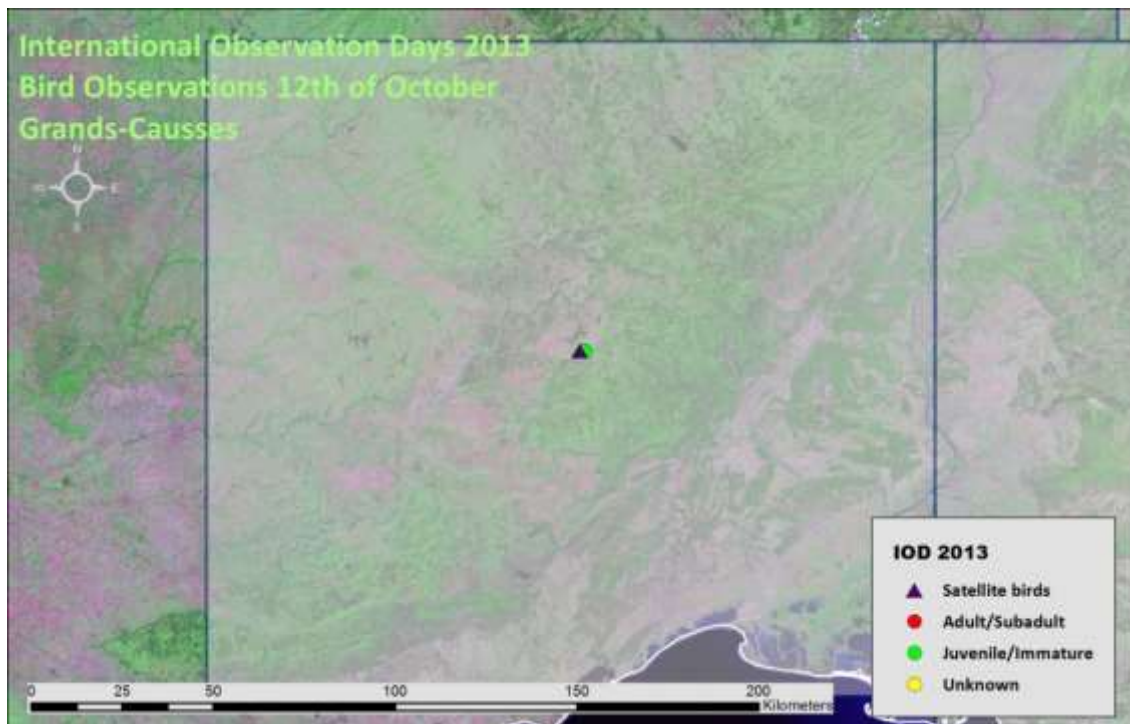


Figure 10: Observations of bearded vultures in the southern Massif Central in the whole period of the IOD (11th to 20th of October, 2014) separated by their potential capacity to establish a breeding unit, including satellite data.

In 2013, 13 different young Bearded vultures with satellite tags have sent their positions during the focal date of the IOD. Although this data is not part of the IOD, this information is shown in figure 11 as representative of their positions. Most of these birds still show their individual marking patterns (bleached feathers) and therefore some could be also identified by observers. The positions of other birds provided us a hint for the identity of young bearded vultures that could not be identified by observers whereas other birds could not be observed during the IOD.

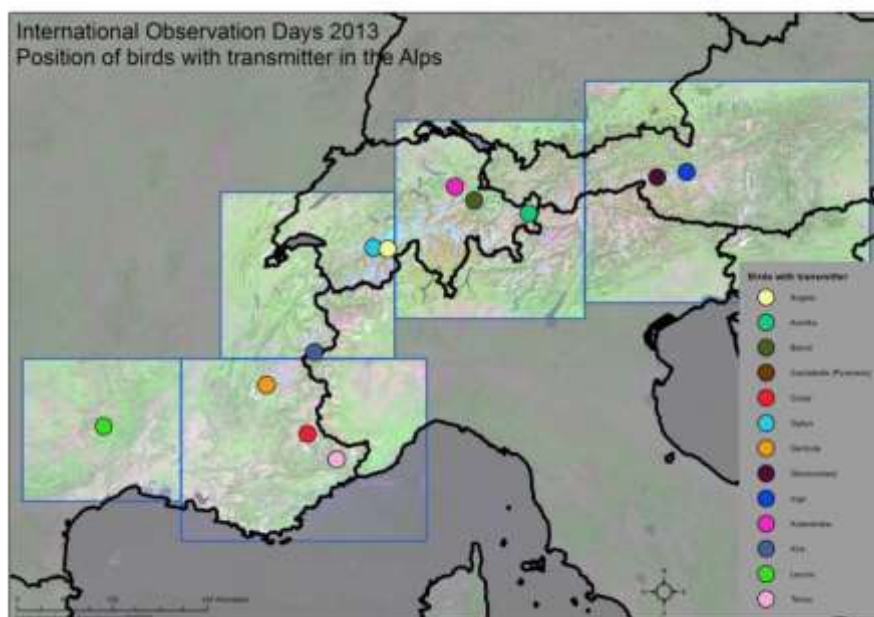


Figure 11: Positions of the 13 young satellite-tagged birds on the 12th of October 2013 © SPB/FPG, SWILD

3.3 Proportion of age classes

Out of the maximum number of observations reported on the whole period of the IOD (11th – 20th October, n=400), the **proportion of birds older than 4 years** (potentially in age to settle down and establish a territory) **reaches almost 2/3 (62.5%, n=250)** of the total number of observations. The rest of the age classes, including juveniles to immature, comprise a proportion of 31.5% (n=126) of the total number of observed birds. The remaining 6% (n=24) correspond to the percentage of birds of unknown age that could not be identified. These results are shown in table 2.

Using the total number of observations for the whole period of the IOD is a good way to get a general picture of the distribution of age classes within the Middle European Bearded vulture population. As the observations are relatively equally distributed among the Alpine range and not focused on known pairs or juvenile individuals, the percentages of each age class should be representative of those of the general population. Therefore, the results obtained for the IOD 2013 were compared to the expected number of living individuals per age class in 2013, calculated by using the demographic model designed by Schaub et al. (2009). According to this model, in 2013 the population of Bearded vultures in the Alps amounts to approx. **197 individuals**; the percentage of **birds older than 4 years** (subadults + adults, potentially in age to settle down and establish a territory) would then be of **61%** of the total, being the remaining 39% younger than 4 years (immature and juveniles). These figures fit quite accurately with the results obtained during the IOD, especially for birds older than 4 years (61% expected and 62.5% observed), although the observed fraction of birds younger than 4 years is slightly lower than expected (respectively 31.5% and 39%). This could be explained either by the difficulty of identifying the age in young vultures (meaning that most of the 6% of birds of unknown age would therefore be immature) but also by the dispersive behaviour shown by the birds in their first years of life, which takes them to areas outside of the “hot-spots” more intensively surveyed, and even to regions outside of the Alps in some occasions (i.e. Cardabelle, which spent some time in the Pyrenees).

This year a maximum of 40 individuals could be recognized, out of which up to 22 birds belong to known pairs. The average age of the mature individuals (adults and subadults) was of 13.8 years with the oldest bird, Balthazar (born in 1988), being almost 26 years old. The average age of non-mature birds (<4 years old) was 1.2 years.

Table 2: Age classes of the birds observed in the whole period of the International Observation Days (11th – 20th October 2013)

Age	Observations	%
≥ 4 years	250	62.5
<4 years	126	31.5
Indetermined	24	6
	400	100

3.4 Counted birds

Although the total amount of observations gathered during the IOD can be used as an indicative of the presence of Bearded vultures in the Alpine range, due to the high mobility of the species it is not possible to use data from the whole week. In order to omit the possibility of double counting birds and to create a more accurate picture of the Bearded Vulture's presence in the Alpine region, only observations from the focal date of the 12th were used to determine the approximate number of birds present. This data set excludes known territorial birds, couples, or GPS tracked that were not observed during the count. The number of territorial and paired birds not observed (or not observed with certainty) during the 2013 IOD was **24**, and GPS birds not seen was **6**. The observations taken during the week and not on the focal date are still important for the data overall as they can help identify birds that have not been seen during the year or the focal date, as well as increase the public relations and recruit more people who may not have been able to come out on the 12th.

The maximum speed of the Bearded vulture is up to 170km/h while normal flight speed is 33km/h- 40km/h (Boudoint, 1976). Taking this into account, the observations reported were contrasted and analyzed considering direction of flight (when provided), observation time, approximate flying distance and any other important information provided (such as distinctive marks on an individual) so as to discard any possible double counts of individuals. This establishes a minimum number of **87** different birds, and a maximum of **98**. This does not include the number of birds observed at Stelvio NP as they conducted their count on the 19th and not on the focal date of the 12th. There were up to 24 other known individuals that were certainly not observed during the focal date (individuals of known pairs and young individuals equipped with transmitters). **Thus the total for observations on the focal date plus the extra birds that were not observed makes a minimum of 117 and the maximum 128 different individuals** (not including the counting results of the Stelvio region on the 19th of October 2013 see next page). This number of observations during the focal period was slightly lower in comparison to last year, as the number of counted birds in 2012 was a record of 127.

Table 3: Final summary of the census 2013 considering the focal time only

Type	Minimum	Maximum
Seen	87	98
Known	24	24
GPS	6	6
Total	117	128

Unfortunately weather conditions have been extremely bad during the focal date in the area of **Stelvio National Park and Sondrio Province**. Therefore the count had to be delayed for a week and took place on the 19th of October. During that day a minimum of 10 adult birds, two juvenile birds born in nature, one bird with a dark head (juvenile / immature), one immature and two sub-adult birds have been counted. All in all a remarkable total of **16 different individuals** in this region only!

These numbers, compared with the total number of individuals predicted for 2013 by the model of Schaub et al. (2009, compare chapter 3.3) fit quite well. The total of 122 individuals is 61.93% of the predicted 197. The actual total number of the population, however, is most likely higher than the maximum of individuals that were observed and thus closer to the predicted 197, due to deficiency of information from some areas in the Alps (lack of man power/observers). This makes it unfeasible to envisage the whole population just with the data collected in the focal date, especially since the weather on that date was not the most suitable. The number of counted birds during the IOD is thusly best used as a model for population trends to compare one year to another rather than for population estimation.

3.5 Identified birds

During the whole period of the IOD 2013 (11th – 20th October) a total of 40 individuals could be identified. Out of these, 21 were identified during the focal period, whereas the other 19 were identified in the rest of the period. These results are significantly lower than those of 2012, when 62 birds were identified, which is even more remarkable considering that the number of observations in 2012 was lower than in 2013 (304 in 2012 and 400 in 2013). This could be a consequence of bad weather conditions that hindered the identification of birds this year. The percentage of individuals identified over the total number of individuals counted (the maximum of 98 individuals) is 40.8%, which is less than the 48.8% in 2012. A summary of the birds identified this year is shown in the **table 5**.

An estimate of the total size population points to 197 individuals, which would mean that this year only the 20.1% of the expected number of individuals was successfully identified. Using the same model, in 2012 the percentage of individuals identified was 34.3%. A summary of the birds identified this year is shown in **table 5**.

This year 7 birds were successfully released, out of which 5 individuals were observed and identified during the focal day of the IOD in this year, which is a better result than last year, when 7 out of the 10 released individuals were identified in the IOD.

In general, the number of re-identified juveniles of 2013 and immature from 2012 and 2011 has been quite low. This can be explained by the dispersal behaviour of the young birds, which takes them to areas of lower monitoring effort, and for birds in their 3rd/4th year of life to the loss of the marked feathers and consequent difficulty to identify them.

Table 4: Summary of birds identified within the focal period of the International Observation Days 2013 (12th October), separated in 2 groups (younger than 4 years and older than 4 years). Bold: birds are members of known couples; (*): identification not clear or bird for several years not genetically re-identified.

	n1	n2	Name	ID	Birth date	Age (days)	Age (years)
Birds < 4 years	1	1	Linky	W130	01.04.2013	194	0,5
	2	2	Curdin-Sinestra	W134	01.04.2013	194	0,5
	3	3	Plume-Rhemes*	W129	31.03.2013	195	0,5
	4	4	Layrou	761	08.03.2013	218	0,6
	5	5	Costa	757	03.03.2013	223	0,6
	6	6	Marlon	W133	01.03.2013	225	0,6
	7	7	Gerlinde	759	28.02.2013	226	0,6
	8	8	Séolane*	W118	28.02.2013	226	0,6
	9	9	Tenao	755	20.02.2013	234	0,6
	10	10	Kalandraka	750	13.02.2013	241	0,7
	11	11	Basalte	716	12.03.2012	579	1,6
	12	12	Il Malizia*	704	22.02.2012	598	1,6
	13	13	Stephan	616	01.03.2010	1321	3,6
	14	14	Elena	613	17.02.2010	1333	3,7
Average:						429	1,2

	n1	n2	Name	ID	Birth date	Age (days)	Age (years)
	15	1	Pinzgarus	558	05.03.2008	2047	5,6
	16	2	Girasole*	549	16.02.2008	2065	5,7
	17	3	Rocca*	516	20.02.2007	2426	6,6
	18	4	Swaro*	459	17.02.2005	3159	8,7
	19	5	Gilbert*	440	04.03.2004	3509	9,6
	20	6	Palanfré (Neve)*	435	17.02.2004	3525	9,7
	21	7	Guillaumes*	411	17.02.2003	3890	10,7
	22	8	Aravis*	405	16.04.2002	4197	11,5
	23	9	Moische-Livigno	W11	24.03.2002	4220	11,6
	24	10	Paolo Peila	388	21.02.2002	4251	11,6
	25	11	Louis*	364	09.04.2000	4934	13,5
	26	12	Diana-Stelvio*	W07	16.03.2000	4958	13,6
irds > 4 years	27	13	Mont blanc*	361	12.03.2000	4962	13,6
	28	14	Pablo*	359	04.03.2000	4970	13,6
	29	15	Sereno	348	03.02.2000	5000	13,7
	30	16	Veronika*	321	22.02.1999	5346	14,6
	31	17	GT028	GT028	01.01.1999	5398	14,8
	32	18	Stelvio*	W02	08.04.1998	5666	15,5
	33	19	Gildo*	299	23.02.1998	5710	15,6
	34	20	Republic 11	288	20.02.1998	5713	15,7
	35	21	Gelas*	279	04.03.1997	6066	16,6
	36	22	Andreas Hofer	260	26.02.1996	6438	17,6
	37	23	Assignat*	111	01.04.1989	8960	24,5
	38	24	Colleen*	112	19.02.1989	9001	24,7
	39	25	Balthasar*	99	17.02.1988	9369	25,7
	40	26	GT036	GT036	?	?	?
Average:						5031	13,8

A comparative list of the birds identified in 2012 and 2013 was elaborated (see **table 4**). 37 birds that were identified in 2012 were not identified in 2013 and, out of the 62 individuals identified in 2013, only 12 were not identified in 2012. The birds seen in 2012 but not in 2013 were 12 juveniles, 8 immature, 15 adults and 2 birds identified genetically (GT024 and GT031). The birds seen in 2013 but not in 2012 were 10 juveniles (Kalandraka, Tenao, Costa, Gerlinde, Layriu, Séolane, Plume-Rhemes, Linky, Marlon and Curdin Sinestra), 1 immature (Elena), and 4 adults (Guillaumes, Gilbert, Swaro and Moische-Livigno).

Table 5: Comparison of identified birds during the International Observation Days 2012 and 2013; birds marked with an “x” have only been identified in one year; (*): identification not clear or bird for several years not genetically re-identified.

Name	ID	2012	2013
Balthazar*	99	1	1
Assignat	111	1	1
Colleen	112	1	1
Moische	146	1	x
Cic*	186	1	x
Andreas Hofer	260	1	1
Gelas*	279	1	1
Tell	283	1	x
Republic 11	288	1	1
Gildo*	299	1	1
Diana Valais	301	1	x
Veronika *	321	1	1
Sereno	348	1	1
Retia	357	1	x
Pablo*	359	1	1
Montblanc*	361	1	1
Louis*	364	1	1
Paolo Peila	388	1	1
Ambo	392	1	x
Stift	393	1	x
Aravis*	405	1	1
Guillaumes*	411	x	1
Jausiers	413	1	x
Palanfré (Neve)*	435	1	1
Gilbert*	440	x	1
Hubertus2	446	1	x
Swaro*	459	x	1
Sallanches*	460	1	x
Escalero	462	1	x
Michegabri*	488	1	x
Rocca*	516	1	1
Girasole*	549	1	1
Pinzgarus	558	1	1
Elena	613	x	1
Spellugue	615	1	x
Stéphan	616	1	1
Cordouane	618	1	x
Italia 150	660	1	x
Madagaskar	665	1	x
Tussac	670	1	x
Smaragd	675	1	x

Jakob	676	1	x
Junior Ranger	702	1	x
Il Malizia*	704	1	1
Bellemotte	708	1	x
Angélo	715	1	x
Basalte	716	1	1
Glocknerlady	718	1	x
Cardabelle	719	1	x
Kalandraka	750	x	1
Tenao	755	x	1
Costa	757	x	1
Gerlinde	759	x	1
Layriu	761	x	1
Phenix Alp Action*	W01	1	x
Stelvio*	W02	1	1
Diana-Stelvio*	W07	1	1
Livigno	W08	1	x
Moische-Livigno	W11	x	1
Verouet*	W89	1	x
Cassos	W104	1	x
Tenneverge	W106	1	x
Primus	W107	1	x
Denis	W109	1	x
Fabiano	W110	1	x
Champagne	W112	1	x
Praline	W114	1	x
Séolane*	W118	x	1
Plume-Rhemes*	W129	x	1
Linky	W130	x	1
Marlon	W133	x	1
Curdin Sinestra	W134	x	1
GT028	GT 028	1	1
GT024	GT024	1	x
GT031	GT031	1	x
GT036	GT036	1	1
Adult territorial Ubayette		1	x
Total:		62	40

Telemetry has also allowed the verification of the presence of some birds in the Alps during the focal day of the IOD, although these birds were not observed per se.

Also, given the buffer period of the IOD and the constant monitoring of a part of the nest sites, it is also possible to point out some birds that are known to be in the area but were either not observed with certainty or not observed at all (Table 5).

Table 6: List of birds that were known to be present in the areas where the focal observations in IOD 2013 were performed but either were not observed with certainty or at all.

n1	Name	ID	Birth date	Age (days)	Age (years)
1	Moische	146	13.03.1991	8249	22,6
2	Cic	186	02.03.1993	7529	20,6
3	Retia	357	03.03.2000	4971	13,6
4	Martell	395	08.03.2002	4236	11,6
5	Jausiers	413	23.02.2003	3884	10,6
6	Folio	463	27.02.2005	3149	8,6
7	Pinzgarus	558	05.03.2008	2047	5,6
8	Livigno	W08	30.03.2000	4944	13,5
9	Zebra	W12	18.03.2002	4226	11,6
10	Braulio	W37	12.03.2006	2771	7,6
11	Katschberg	W103	30.03.2011	927	2,5
12	Adult female (Foraz)	GT031			
13	Adult male (Foraz)				
14	Adult male (Poschiavo)				
15	Adult female (Poschiavo)				
16	Adult male (Val D'Isère)				
17	Adult male (Valle del Braulio)				
18	Adult female (Valle del Braulio)				
19	Adult male (Foscagno)				
20	Adult female (Foscagno)				
21	Adult male (Schnals)				
22	Adult female (Schnals)				
23	Adult male (Planeil)				
24	Adult female (Planeil)				
Average:				4267	11,7

4. Outlook for 2014

The IBM steering committee at the Annual Bearded Vulture Meeting 2013 fixed the date for the next International Observation Day: Focal Day is 11th of October 2014. Even though for public communication again a period (10th – 19th of October) was chosen we would like to stress the importance of focused observation intensity. Observations can be cumulated only within the core period. Therefore the count by specialists shall be carried out **ONLY during the focal day**. The focal time for the count starts at 11 AM (11:00 GMT+1) and lasts at least 4 hours until 3 PM (15:00 GMT+1).

Focal day: 11th October 2014.

Core period 10th -12th of October 2014

Observation Period for public communication: 10th to 19th of October 2014

Unfavourable weather conditions influence not only the visibility and the activity of birds, but also the attendance of observers and the accessibility of some observation posts. Therefore we will keep Saturday (18th of October) as a reserve for an alternative count if weather conditions on the 11th are unfavourable for the majority of the Alps. Whether we get forced to switch to the alternate date or not will be announced on the short term through the IBM mailing list.

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