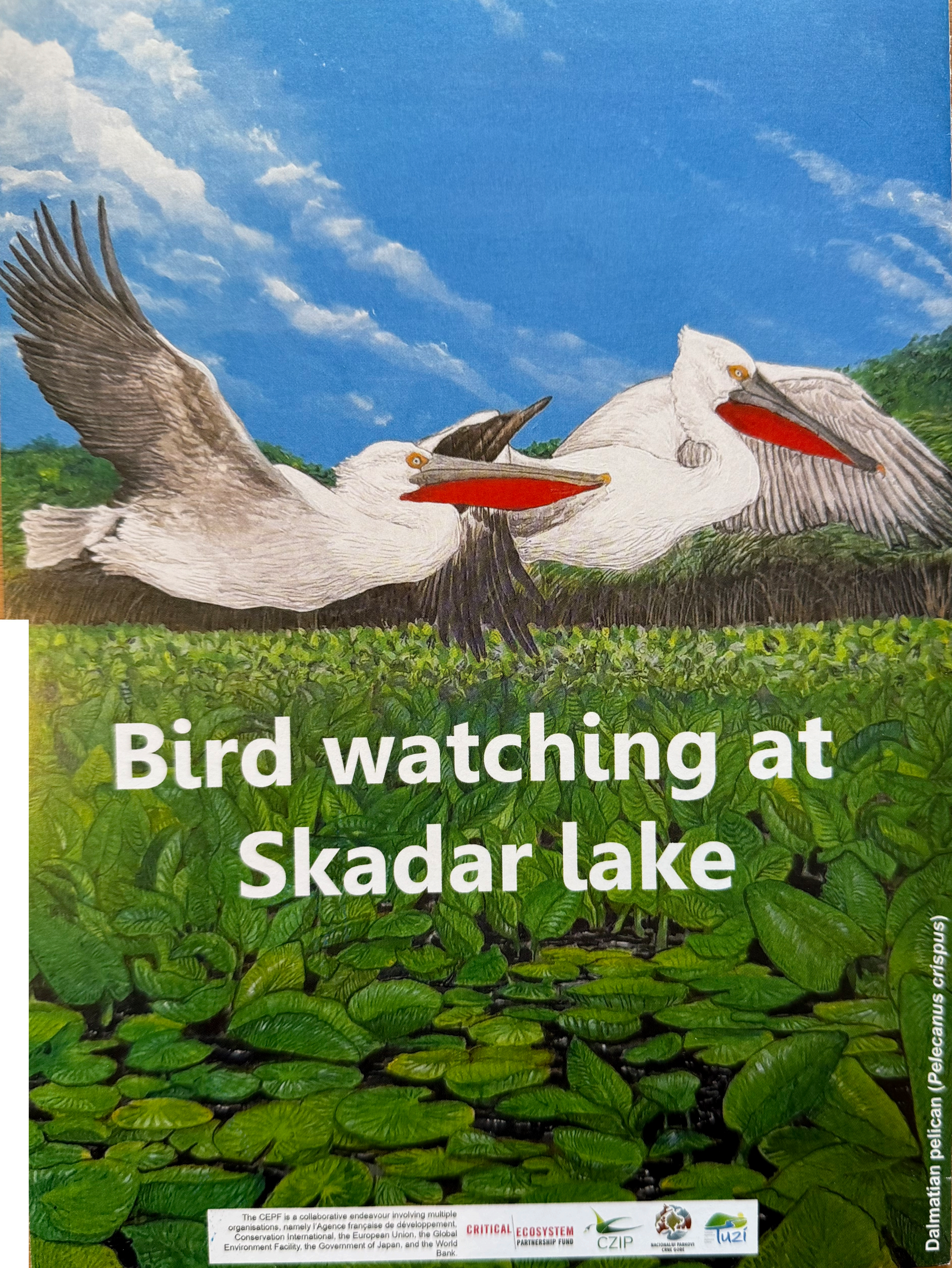


# Bird watching at Skadar lake



Great crested grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)



# Bird watching at Skadar lake

The CEPF is a collaborative endeavour involving multiple organisations, namely l'Agence française de développement, Conservation International, the European Union, the Global Environment Facility, the Government of Japan, and the World Bank.

**CRITICAL ECOSYSTEM**  
PARTNERSHIP FUND



Dalmatian pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*)

# NACIONALNI PARK SKADARSKO JEZERO

## NATIONAL PARK SKADAR LAKE



**1.** Poseljani. The short-toed snake eagle can be observed on the hills; a colony of whiskered terns can be found near the lake; ferruginous ducks can be spotted in the reeds, and pelicans can be seen resting on fallen trees.

**2.** Lesendro. The mouth of the Moraca River serves as a gathering site for waders, ibis, and dynamic species such as crested grebes, terns, and cormorants, who like deeper waters.

**3.** Donji Murići. Here one has the opportunity to witness avian species from neighbouring islands engaging in colonial nesting behaviour. Notably, pygmy cormorants and grey herons are the predominant species observed in this area.

**4.** Gjon Ljekino oko is a vibrant location that offers a scenic view of Panceva oka and a diverse array of animals. In this location, one may observe the presence of the bittern, small egret, nightjar, eagle-owl, and Dalmatian pelican.

## About Skadar lake

Skadar lake, situated in the Balkans, holds the distinction of being the largest lake in the region. Two-thirds of the lake's expanse are in Montenegro, and one third in Albania. The initial ethnic groups inhabiting the region surrounding Skadar Lake may be traced back to the Iron Age, specifically to the Illyrian tribe known as the Labeates.

In Montenegro Skadar lake was proclaimed a national park in 1983. It is designated as Important Bird Area (IBA), and listed as Wetland of international importance - Ramsar list. National park Skadar lake covers 40.000 hectares, has a median depth of 5 meters and is 5 meters under sea level. Traditional activities in national park Skadar lake are fishing and agriculture, and lake is a popular tourist destination.

## What you need for bird watching

To watch birds in a comfortable and safe manner first of all you must dress according to the weather, have a hat, water, suitable footwear and long trousers if you are traveling on land. One venomous snake species inhabits NP Skadar lake, **horned viper\***, which may be easily identified by the presence of a horn on its snout. The remaining snake species pose no threat to people. For bird watching equipment, it is essential to possess binoculars with at least 10x magnification, or alternatively, a scope. A camera can replace binoculars if it has high-quality zoom feature. Birds can be identified based on their distinct vocalisations, so think about downloading an app for recognising birds via their sounds.



## How to watch birds responsibly

There are good manners in bird watching to minimise disturbance and any harm to the birds and their offspring. Maintain safe distance from nests or chicks; don't touch nests or eggs even if they are empty; don't pursue birds or come close enough to spook them in to flight; don't approach flocks while they are feeding; during sailing or walking don't speak loudly, shout or play loud music; when you spot a bird don't make sudden movements. Be a well mannered guest in the nature and refraining from littering, uprooting vegetation, disrupting ecosystems, and igniting fires in unauthorised areas.

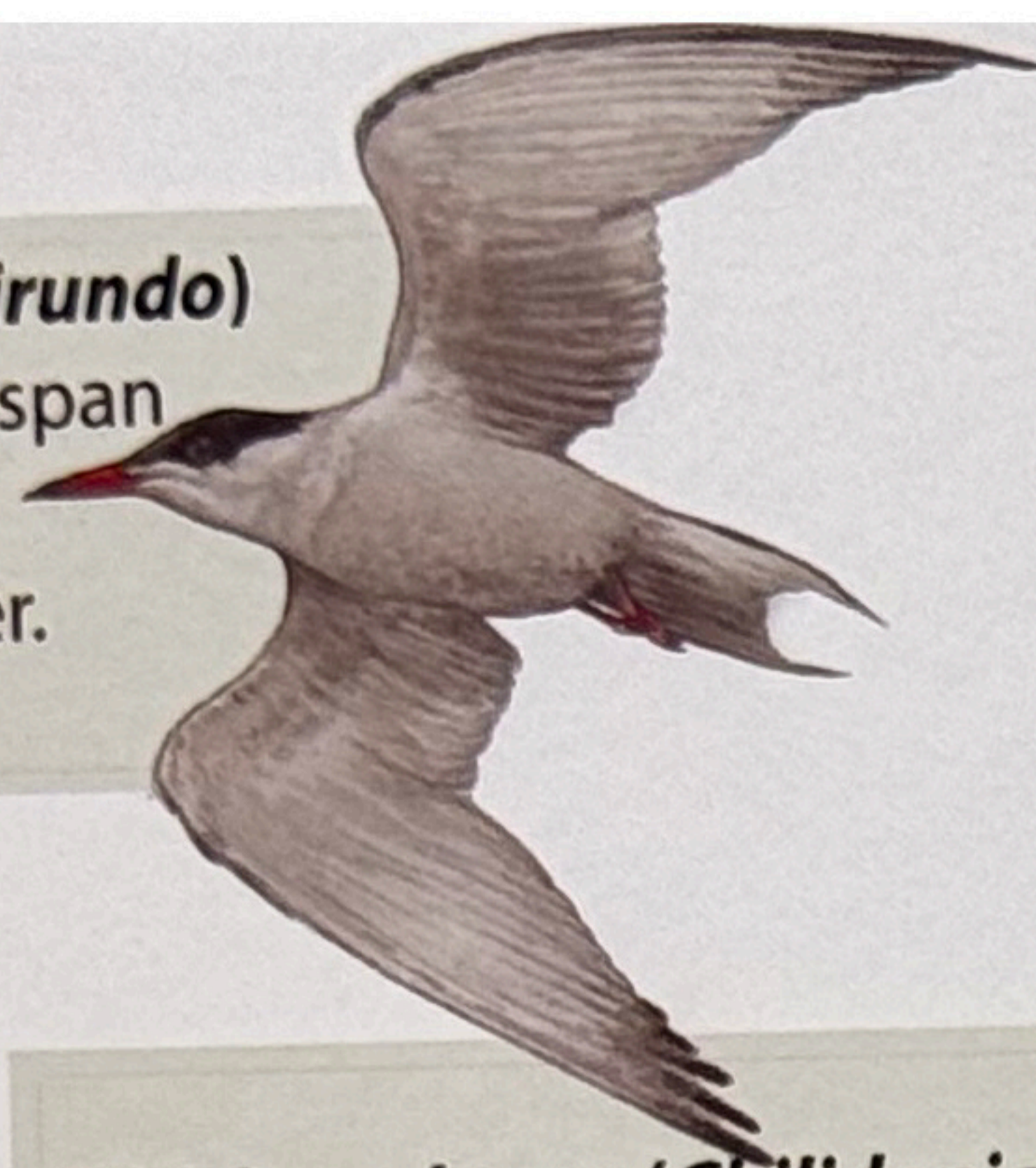


## What else can you observe

The National Park Skadar Lake harbours a diverse array of flora and fauna. In this area, a total of 25 rare and endemic species have been documented, among which are skadar oak, water chestnut, yellow water-lily and different species of orchids. Animal life is rich with 48 fish species, numerous amphibians with endemic **albanian water frog\*\***, reptiles with endemic sharp-snouted rock lizard, and 50 species of mammals with their most charismatic representative otter. There is a wide array of insect species, among which the butterfly Alexanor swallowtail, rhinoceros beetle, and stag beetle are the most attention-grabbing. Natural treasures that require diligent preservation can be found in every nook and cranny of the national park.

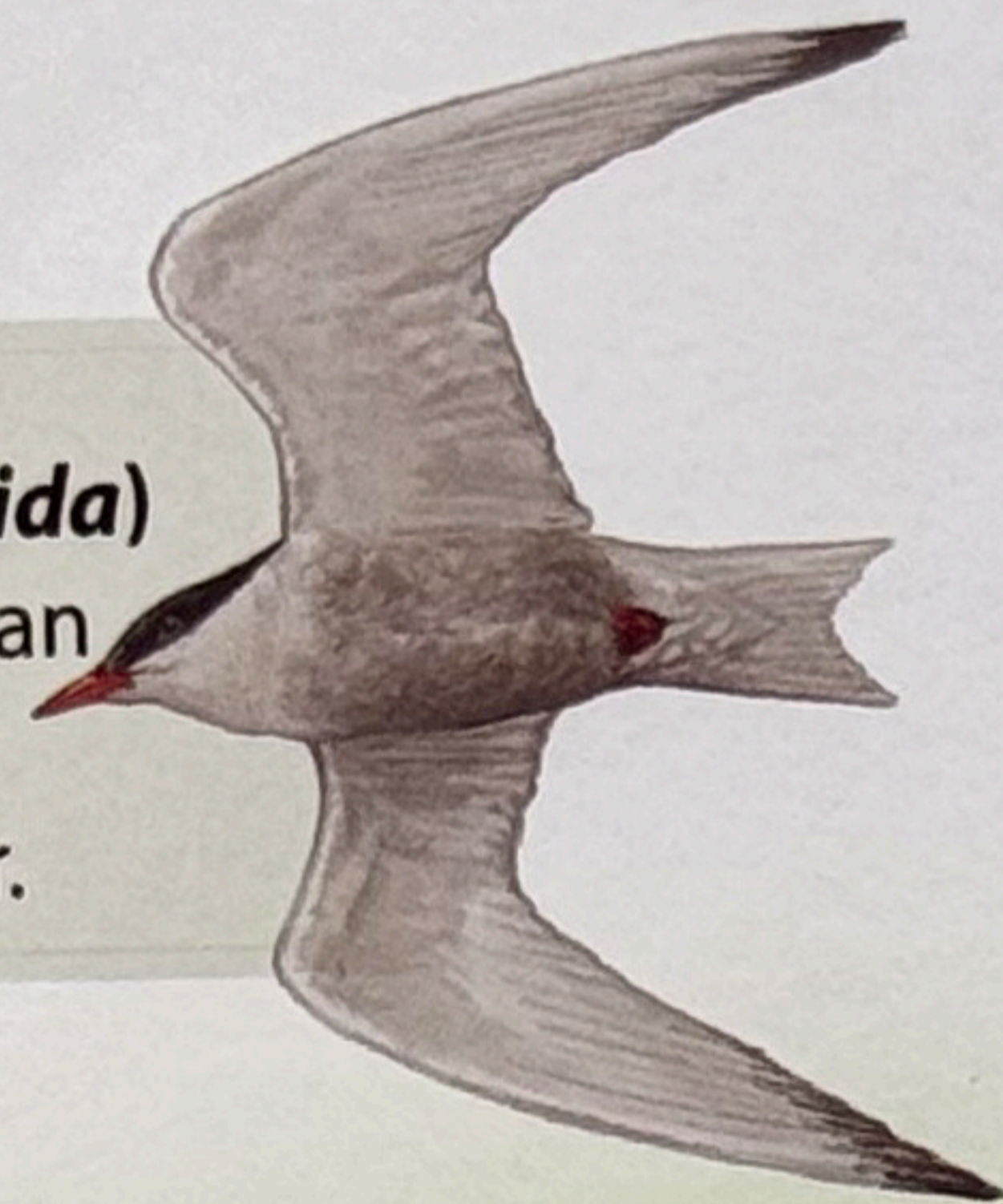
**Common tern (*Sterna hirundo*)**

Body length up to 37 cm, wingspan up to 80 cm. Feed on fish. Hunt while flying close to water.



**Whiskered tern (*Chilidonias hybrida*)**

Body length up to 28 cm, wingspan up to 63 cm. Feed on fish. Hunt while flying close to water.



**Little egret (*Egretta garzetta*)**

Body length up to 62 cm, wingspan up to 106 cm. Feed on various water animals by swift hit with the beak.



**Eurasian bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)**

Body length up to 81 cm, wingspan up to 103 cm. Feed on various water animals by swift hit with the beak.



**Glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)**

Body length up to 65 cm, wingspan up to 105 cm. Mainly feed on insects and amphibians while wading through shallows.

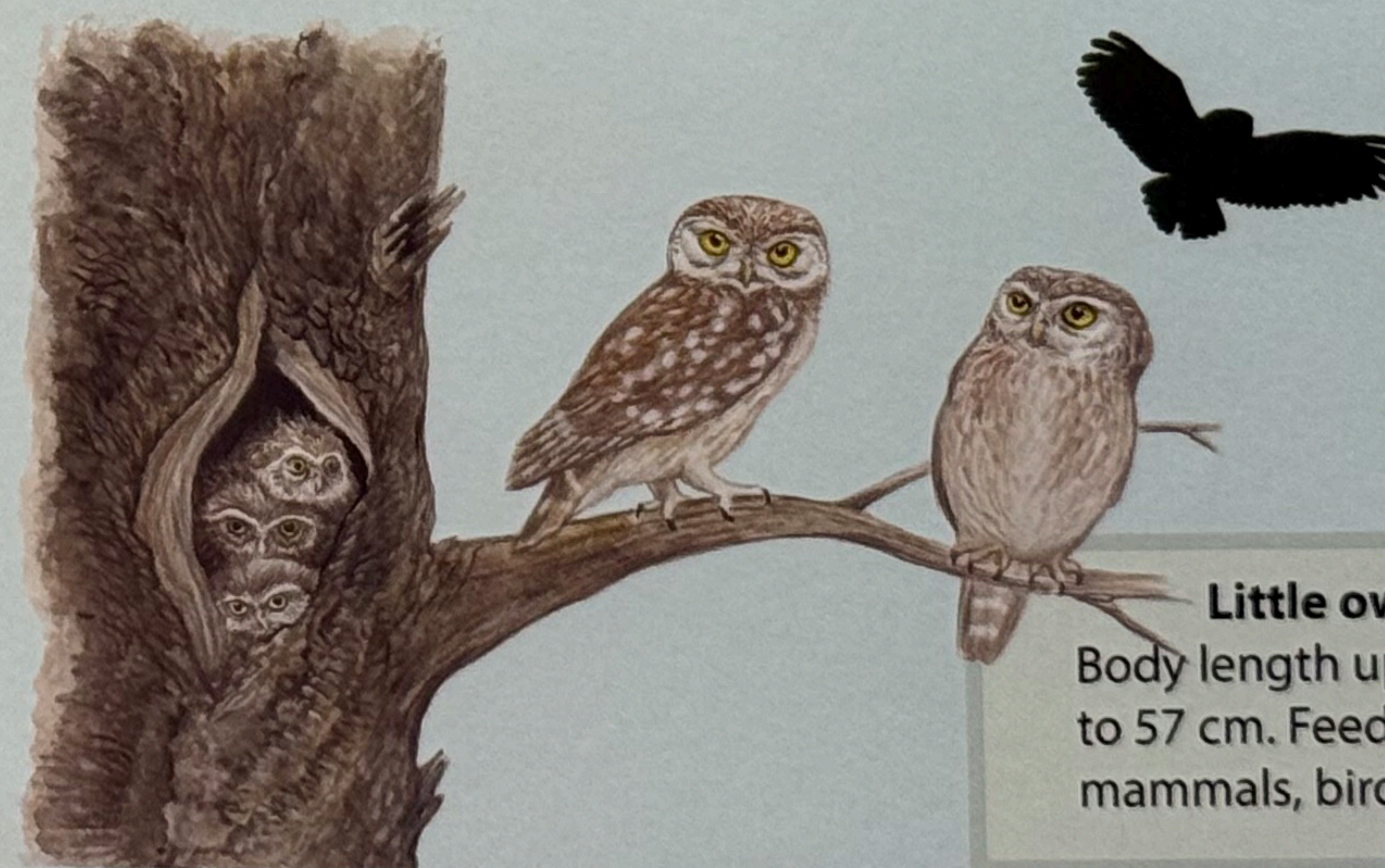


**Ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*)**

Body length up to 42 cm, wingspan up to 67 cm. Feed via diving for water plants, snails, insects and small fish.

**Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*)**

Body length up to 73 cm, wingspan up to 170 cm. Feed on mammals and birds. The usual prey are wild hares, crows and water birds.



**Little owl (*Athene noctua*)**

Body length up to 27 cm, wingspan up to 57 cm. Feed on large insects, small mammals, birds and reptiles.

**Greater spotted eagle (*Clanga clanga*)**

Adults dark brown, young spotted. Body length up to 69 cm, wingspan up to 177 cm. Feed mainly on small mammals and birds.

Photo reference: Saverio Gatto, Pröhl/fokus-natur.de



**Levant sparrowhawk (*Accipiter brevipes*)**

Adults have stripes on front, males gray, females brown. Body length up to 37 cm, wingspan up to 76 cm. Young spotted. Feed on birds, and reptiles.

Photo reference: Bogdan Boev



**Eurasian hoopoe (*Upupa epops*)**

Body length up to 29 cm, wingspan up to 48 cm. Feed mainly on invertebrates picked from the ground via their long beak.

Photo reference: ©lookphotos



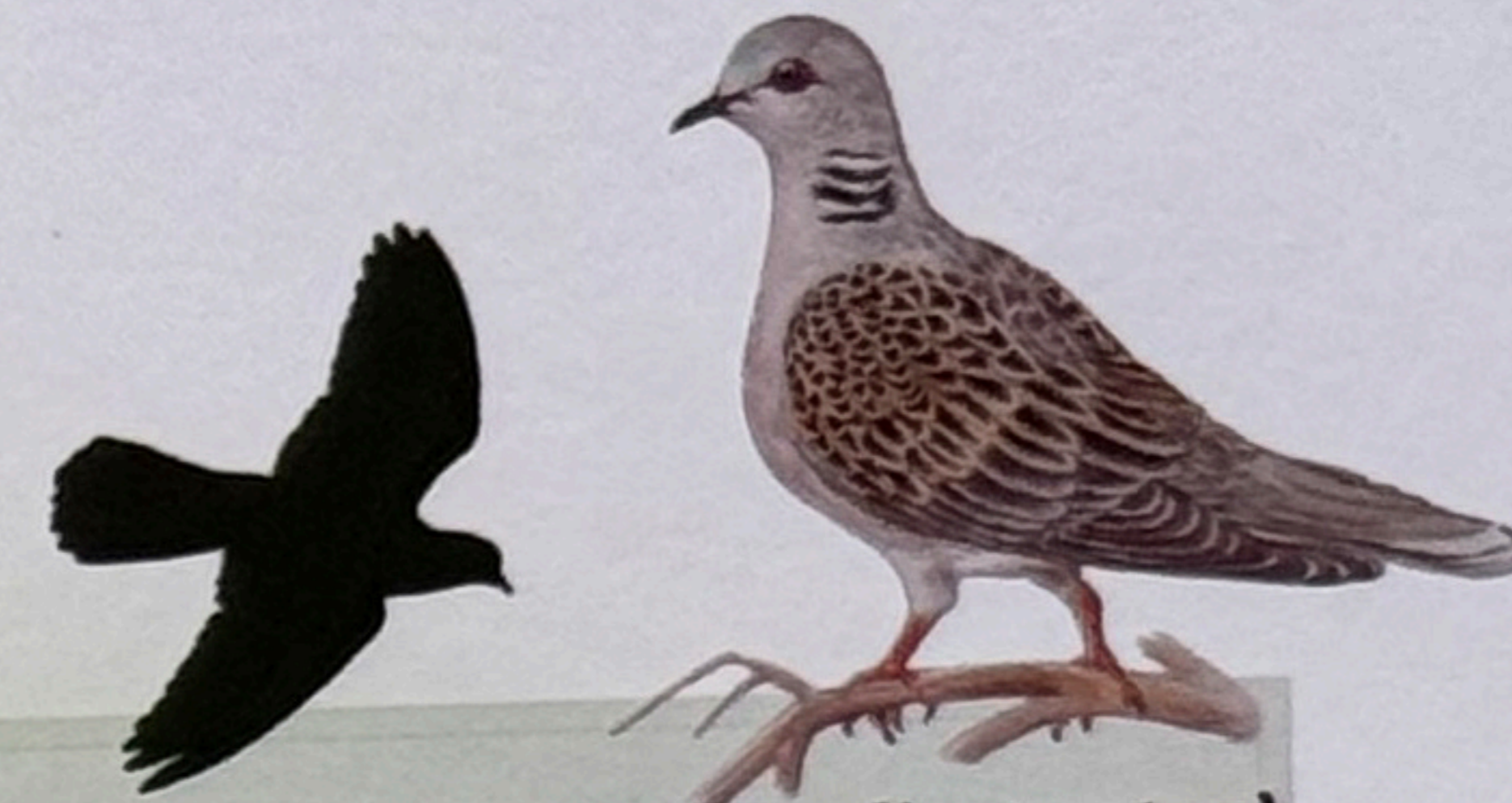
**European roller (*Coracias garrulus*)**

Body length up to 32 cm, wingspan up to 57 cm. Feed mainly on insects, but will hunt for small mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

**Red-footed falcon (*Falco vespertinus*)**

Body length up to 24 cm, wingspan up to 76 cm. Feed on insects, small mammals, birds and reptiles.

Photo reference: Bart Hoekstra



**European turtle dove (*Streptopelia turtur*)**

Body length up to 28 cm, wingspan up to 50 cm. Eat seeds, amongst which are seeds of weeds.



**Lesser grey shrike (*Lanius minor*)**

Body length up to 21 cm, wingspan up to 36 cm. Feed on large insects, especially grasshoppers and butterflies.



**Common quail (*Coturnix coturnix*)**

Body length up to 18 cm, wingspan up to 35 cm. Young have spots. Feed mainly on seeds, rarely on small insects.

Photo reference: Rudi Debruyne



**Cattle egret (*Bubulcus ibis*)**

Body length up to 52 cm, wingspan up to 95 cm. Feed mainly on insects. Often follows grazing cattle.



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Illustration and design: Bjanka Prاكلjadic  
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