

Making Ends Meet

Mila 23, Danube Delta, Romania



A pelican takes off from a lake near Mila 23

The 'ecologisti' and conservation agendas

The people of the Delta are, they will tell you, knowledgeable and skilled conservationists. They know how to look after the Delta, on which they rely for their livelihoods. They know how many fish they should take, and how to ensure that fish stocks are kept high. They have great love and respect for the birds of the Delta, especially the pelican, that 'monument of nature' – except the cormorants, which compete with the people of the Delta in fishing!

After the Revolution of 1989, when Ceaucescu was overthrown, environmentalists in Romania and outside it acted quickly and the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve was set up. The people of the Delta have mixed feelings about this. While they support the idea of protecting the Delta against outsiders coming in and exploiting it, and they believe that rules are important to look after it effectively, they are quite upset about the fact that the 'ecologisti', as they call them, have failed to consult the fishermen of the Delta when planning the care of the Delta. Some of the behaviour of the 'ecologisti' is, they feel, actually damaging the Delta. And the rules restricting the use of some areas and prohibiting fishing during the fish spawning season are, they feel, excessive and damage the livelihoods of the people of the Delta, who must fish to survive.

Interview extracts

Marcian Bleahu:

- ↪ On the Danube Delta
- ↪ On the need to save the Delta
- ↪ On the lives of the people of the Delta

Anton Radu Roman

- ⌞ On environmental conservation and the people of the Delta
- ⌞ On his hopes for the future of the Delta

Fyodor Butelkin:

- ⌞ On the 'ecologisti' and the way the Delta is managed now

Traian Gherasim:

- ⌞ On the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve

Dan Burunghiu:

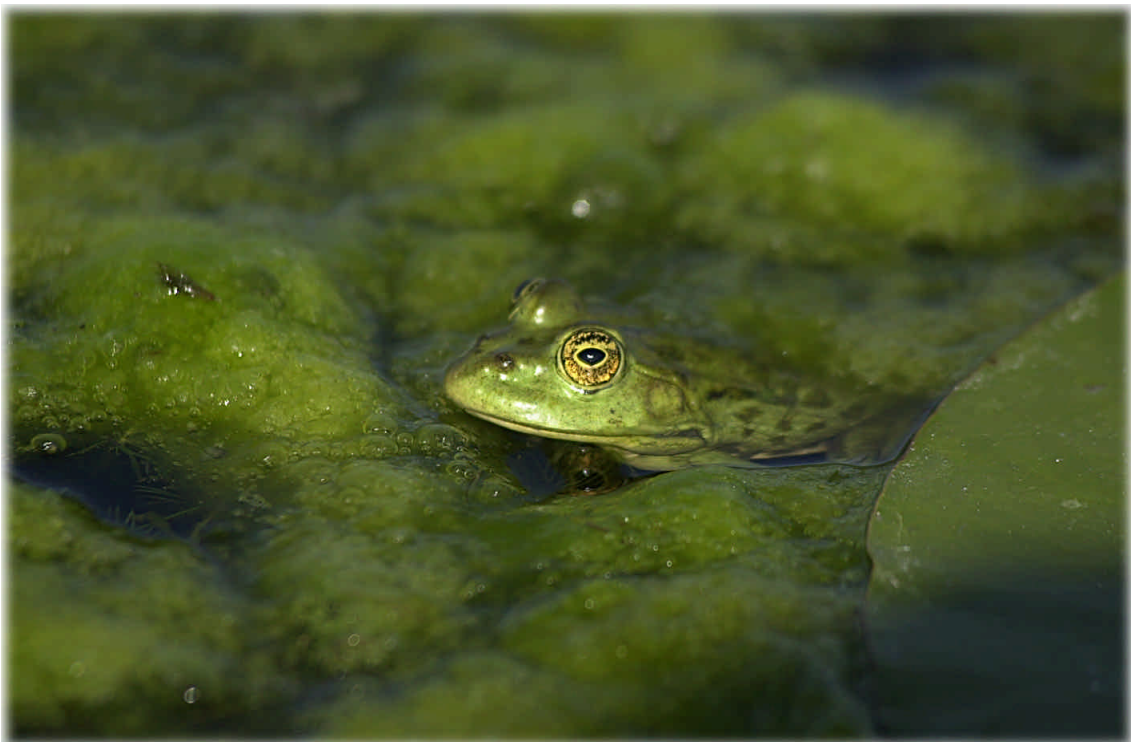
- ⌞ On the 'ecologisti'

Pina Butelkin:

- ⌞ On the 'prohibition period'

Vladimir Butelkin:

- ⌞ On swans and pelicans



A frog on Lake Ligheanca