

Additional material

Social and cultural value

The lake is important for fishery: *Carassius gibelio* and *Cyprinus carpio* are the species of economic value today. In the past, because the ecological conditions were unstable, fisheries' yields varied. Until 1956 of primary value for fishing are *Mugilidae* species, as well as *Neogobius* and *Gobius* species, *Atherina pontica*. Then, the lake was stocked regularly with Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), which is the main species of value for this period. In periods of high salinity, Carp was not presented in the lake and the fishery yield did not usually exceed 380 tonnes. Up to 30 t/year of prawn *Leander adspersa* were also caught in the past.

Nowadays the most economically valuable species is *Carassius gibelio* – with a catch of c. 300 t/year. Since 2001 catch of *Mugil cephalus* is in increase, after clean-up of the canal.

For more than 30 years, a fishfarm industry was developed, just on the border of the western part of the lake. Since last 5 years operations in the fishfarm have been abandoned. Starting from summer 2001 certain pools have been granted on lease and stocked with fish, mainly Carp.

An orthodox monastery “St. Bogoroditza” is placed near the south shore of the lake, and play important role for the people of District of Bourgas. There are a number of archeological records, from the ancient times, roman, Greek and medieval times.

Current conservation education

No visitors' center. Information panels (8) are put along the protected area for the last 3 years (BSBCP “Bourgas Wetlands” Project). Facilities for visiting the pelican's platforms are created within the framework of Bulgarian - Swiss Biodiversity Conservation Program: a wooded tunnel of about 130 m in the reedbeds reach a wooded hide for watching waterbirds and the platforms. Reaching the beginning of tunnel is allowed by boat, with the nearest point village of Dolno Ezerovo.

There are information posters specifically for Lake Vaya and the pelicans, as well as for the neighboring wetlands, which are distributed to schools, centers, hunting societies, etc. Leaflets (two-colored) on some of the world threatened waterbirds in Lake Vaya - White-headed Duck, Pygmy Cormorant, Dalmatian Pelican, are issued (“Bourgas Wetlands” Project, BSBCP). A poster, published within international Balkan Project (BirdLife) on White-headed Duck and Pygmy Cormorant is published in Greece and distributed within the area of Lake Vaya.

Local NGO's (“Bourgas Wetlands” Project of BSBCP, BSPB, Green Balkans - Bourgas, develop educational programs in local schools and within the local hunting and fishery societies. A special attention is given to increase knowledge of the local people (especially fisherman and hunters) on the threats to the globally threatened waterbird species.

“Bourgas Wetlands” Project run students camp and brigade each summer at Lake Atanasovsko and recently in Lake Vaya. Members of the project, universities, NGO's, present lectures on wetlands and their life during 20- days camps.