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***THE PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS IN MOLDOVA***. Vol. I – IV.  
Postolache G.-ed., Î.E.P. Știința Publishing House, Chișinău, vol. I – 2016, 174 pp.;  
vol. II – 2015, 180 pp.; vol. III – 2018, 211 pp.; vol. IV- 2017, 178 pp.



The 4 volumes, published in a very special graphic form, with many original illustrations, offer the reader a general picture, but with sufficient concrete elements, of the 262 protected areas and monuments of nature in the Republic of Moldova. Also, the plant species in the Republic of Moldova included in the Global Red List (of which one species in A<sub>(i)</sub>: *Bupleurum falcatum* ssp. *dilatatum*), in the Annexes of the Bern Convention, and in the Habitat Directive (of which 19 sp. in A<sub>(ii)</sub>, e.g. *Iris aphylla*, *Pulsatilla grandis*, *P. patens*, *Colchicum arenarium*, *Echium russicum*, *Schiverekia podolica*, etc.), as well as other National Red List species are listed.

For each protected area, the location, the geographical coordinates, the surface, the year when the legal status was obtained, the land situation are mentioned at the beginning. Then, the following are synthetically described: the site, threatened species, threatened habitats, the way of using the land, the conservation value, actions for conservation, as well as recommendations.

We consider that these volumes can be landmarks for all the countries wanting to achieve a sustainable conservation of the most significant species and types of habitats, as well as useful instruments in the management of conservation and in increasing the awareness of the nature-loving public.

The first volume, entitled *Geological, paleontological, hydrological, pedological monuments of nature*, is the result of the effort of 8 authors (David A., Pascari V., Nicoara I., Begu A., Sandu M., Ursu A., Lazu Ș., Postolache G.), who bring to our knowledge 68 geological and paleontological reserves, 28 hydrological reserves, and 13 pedological reserves, all included in the IUCN category III. What seems interesting and a novelty to us is the fact that hydrological reserves include very many improved springs, an important aspect for a region with warmer and dry climate; then, the fact that 13 reserves are constituted which are intended to preserve 12 types and subtypes of soils, among which the chernozem types naturally predominate.

In the second volume (*Ancient trees*), the author (Postolache G.) presents 430 ancient trees belonging to 11 autochthonous species (of which *Quercus robur* is represented by 204 individuals) and 17 allochthonous species (e.g. *Pinus nigra*, *Celtis occidentalis*, *Calocedrus decurrens*, etc.). Through its size, the “Oak tree of Stephen the Great and Saint” in Cobâlea ranks first among these witnesses of historical periods: 766.5 cm circumference, 244 cm diameter and 754 m<sup>2</sup> canopy projection. Analyzing the health status of these trees, the author proposes to eliminate from the list of protected trees 99 dried or fallen individuals, and to add to the list 25 new individuals that meet the criteria for this category.

Volume III (*Forest reserves*), authored by Postolache G. and Lazu Ș., presents 89 reserves (IUCN category IV) that preserve forests dominated by: beech (two reserves), *Quercus petraea* (33 reserves), *Q. pubescens* (15 reserves), *Q. robur* with *Prunus avium* (8 reserves), riparian forests (10 reserves), as well as 21 landscape reserves with forests situated on rocky substrates. By browsing this volume, the reader can have a picture of the natural landscape in the Republic of Moldova, dominated by forest-steppe and not just steppe formations, as the geographical position of the country would indicate it.

The last volume (IV – *Grasslands and landscape architectural monuments*) is authored by Postolache G., Bucățel V., Lazu Ș., Teleuță A., Miron A., and describes 64 protected areas belonging to the IUCN category IV. Half of these areas preserve grassland habitats, either steppic (8 reserves) or in the meadows of flowing waters (24 reserves), the rest being wet areas (5 reserves), landscape architectural monuments (19 parks, 3 botanical gardens, 1 zoological garden, 3 shelterbelts, etc.).

*Habent sua fata libelli!*

**Vasile CRISTEA**