

“KAČJI PASTIR” [= “DRAGONFLY”], THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF NATURE AND ARTS IN CERKNICA, SLOVENIA

The participants in the Post-Symposium Tour of the 14th International Symposium of Odonatology have spent a day (20 July 1997) with the members of this local society, in the area of the famous intermittent lake of Cerknica (cf. I. MODIČ, 1997, *Delo* 39[164]: 6). They were guided to various dragonfly habitats (36 species have so far been evidenced there) and, in the evening, the society organised for them a memorable concert of authentic Slovene folk songs, performed *a capella* by Mrs Ljuba Jenčič, in the village church of Zelče.

The society “kačji pastir” has been registered only in November 1996. Even so, it can proudly boast of a long list of cultural and nature-reconnaissance activities, among the latter of which are the traditional “barefoot walks” through the swamps and shallow parts of the lake. Needless to say, dragonfly observations represent an important part of these.

The Cerknica region is admirably rich on numerous, mostly very old cultural traditions, many of which are directly related to the lake and its life, the classical (though by no means the first) report on which has been provided in 1687, for the Royal Society of London, by its later Member, the Carniolian (Slovene) polymath J.W. v. Valvasor, and presented in the Society by the well-known astronomer E. Halley (cf. M. ALJANČIČ, 1989, *Proteus, Ljubljana* 52: 131-136).

There are not many societies in the world, combining dragonflies with cultural and general natural history work. One of these is e.g. the Japanese "Tombo to Bunka" (= "Dragonflies and Culture"), operating in conjunction with the Nakamura Dragonfly Kingdom, in Kochi prefecture.



Fig. 1. The emblem of the "Kačji pastir" society.

Those, interested in visiting the Cerknica dragonfly world, are invited to get in touch with the President of the Society, Mr M. KUNSTEK ("Kačji pastir", Dolenje jezero 50, SI-1380 Cerknica, Slovenia).

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