

IMAGES OF WILDLIFE • BRUTUS ÖSTLING PHOTOGRAPHY

Newsletter # 12 • November 2010



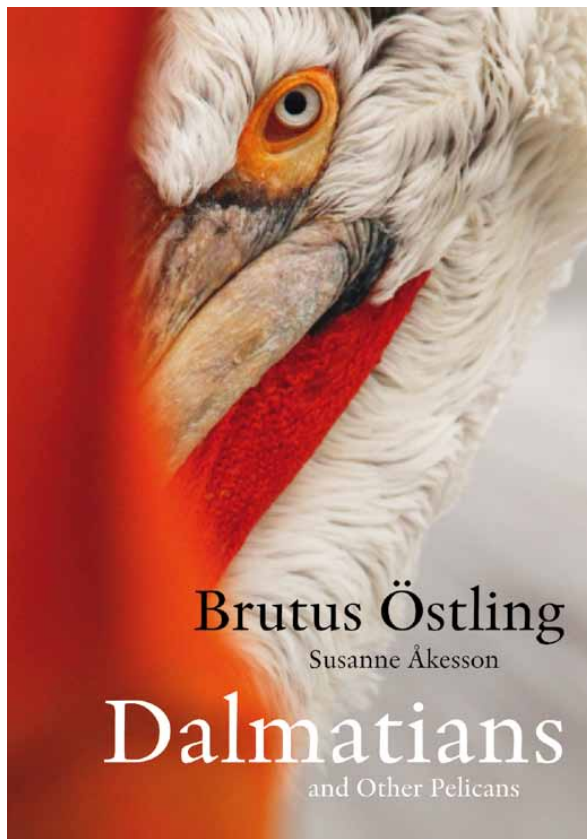
DALMATIANS AND OTHER PELICANS

I took three trips to northern Greece: the first one in January together with three other photographers; the second in February with my daughter Alice — both in order to take pictures of the Pelicans when their pouch had assumed the strongly red colour on the eve of mating. The third and last trip was made in April, this time to get snapshots of other breeding species, especially the thousands of Cormorants breeding in the delta that constitutes the mouth of the river into Lake

Kerkini. A short report from the first trip follows.

The book is sold in the bookshops but you can also order it from the publisher — in that case, I sign the books — or from one of the net booksellers. (See at the end of this newsletter.)

The book is also available in English from the same publisher and can be bought from the publisher – I will sign all of them. (See at the end of this newsletter.)





*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV,
400/2.8 L IS USM. ISO 1250. Aperture 5, 1/800 s. Manual
exposure.*

*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Partial enlargement. Canon
EOS 1D Mark IV, 85/1.2 L USM. ISO 125. Aperture 7.1,
1/800 s. Manual exposure.*



*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV,
15/2.8 fisheye. ISO 2000. Aperture 10, 1/1000 s. Manual
exposure.*



— *You do not use normal zoom, or super wide-angle, every day for birds — without a remote shutter release!*

Pelicans are large birds, and the Dalmatian Pelican is, moreover, certainly the largest of the eight Pelican species in the whole world. When stretching, it is higher than this photographer, and it may weigh up to 15 kilos (approx. 33 lbs).

The Brown Pelican, which I have snapped frequently before both in Florida and in California, weighs slightly less than three kilos (approx. 6.6 lbs) and is still not a small bird. Just as in the Californian subspecies of the Brown Pelican, the pouch of the Dalmatian Pelican assumes a strongly red colour when breeding-time is approaching in January—February.

The Dalmatian Pelican, if not under immediate threat of extinction, is vulnerable. There are

no more than a total of approximately ten thousand Dalmatian Pelicans in the whole world.

With the help of EU funding, a breeding platform for the Dalmatian Pelicans was therefore built about a year ago here at Lake Kerkini in northern Greece, and it was not long before the pelicans started breeding on the platform. In no time, however, it was crowded. For this year's breeding, therefore, another platform was built -- though twice the size.

Along the shores of Lake Kerkini, professional fishermen traditionally lay out their nets. The Cormorants are their worst enemy, since they tend to tear the nets while trying to get at the fish. If a Cormorant approaches, you will immediately hear some fisherman or other shouting at the top of his voice to frighten it away. Sometimes I hear a couple of warning shots being fired into the air, and next day the empty shells are lying on the ground in

the next bay, where some fishermen have dropped anchor.

As to the Dalmatian Pelicans, the attitude of small-scale fishermen is completely different. They seem to have an almost affectionate relationship with the pelicans, with their enormous bills and the pouch underneath. The fishermen give them all fish offal, but also some of their edible and salable catch; at least smaller fish are thrown in when hungry pelicans flock around the small fishing-boats. No doubt the professional fishermen contribute positively by their feeding to the Dalmatian Pelican's survival here.

When shooting action pictures you will want a lot of light, and on the first two days of my first trip in January, the sun is shining all day. In winter sunshine may be a scarce thing, even in northern Greece. The next three days are cloudy, but for half an hour the

sun shows and now and then the light is agreeable.

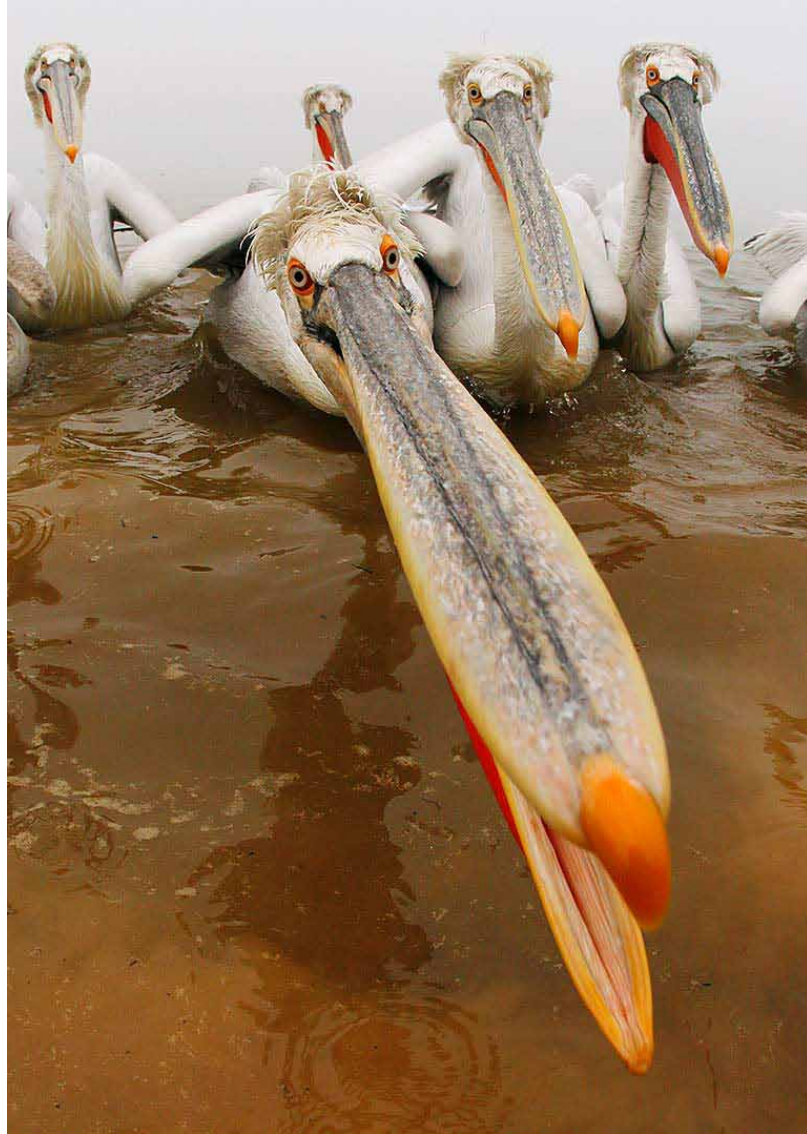
Six to eight degrees below zero Centigrade (approx. +21—+18 degrees Fahrenheit) is not what you are used to associate with Greece, and when on top of that the wind gets up, you feel the cold going right through you after an hour of photographing. I have put on four massive layers on both the upper and lower part of my body—as well as a thick, quilted down jacket on the outside.

But when taking photos I forget the cold, there is no time to think of such things when the pictures are just flooding in. It is only afterwards that you feel how you get chilled to the marrow when sitting still or lying on the ground for a couple of hours without a break, when it is below the freezing point and a wind is blowing.

As I said before, I made three trips to northern Greece during the winter and spring of 2010. But I also took a trip to the US to take photos of the Brown Pelican and the American White Pelican, which is not immediately threatened, but still vulnerable. This was before the oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. How this disaster is going to influence the future situation of the pelicans, we do not yet know for sure. The only thing we know is that an incredibly great number of birds have been affected (and that we know from research that the chances even for those pelicans that have been caught and cleaned from oil are bad in spite of that, when it comes to long-time survival).



*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV, 15/2.8
fisheye. ISO 1250. Aperture 10, 1/1000 s. Manual exposure.*



*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV,
15/2.8 fisheye. ISO 1250. Aperture 10, 1/1000 s. Manual
exposure.*



*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV,
16-35/2.8 at 24 mm. ISO 500. Aperture 10, 1/1000 s. Manual
exposure.*

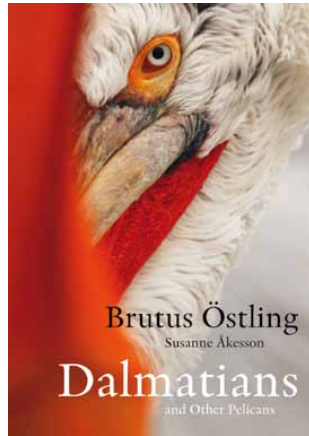




*Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark
IV, 16-35/2.8 at 35 mm. ISO 500. Aperture 10, 1/800 s.
Manual exposure.*



BUY “THE DALMATIANS” DIRECTLY FROM THE PUBLISHER!



You get a copy signed by Brutus Östling
for EURO 23.-- plus freight

This book is also available in Swedish.

Please mail your order to
order@symposion.se

and write “ordering from newsletter”,
in order to get it at the right price and a signed copy.

The Brutus Östling Bird Calendar for the year 2011
can be bought the same way, but the freight may
be a little bit expensive for people outside of Sweden.

Brutus Östling has recently been appointed a Canon Ambassador.

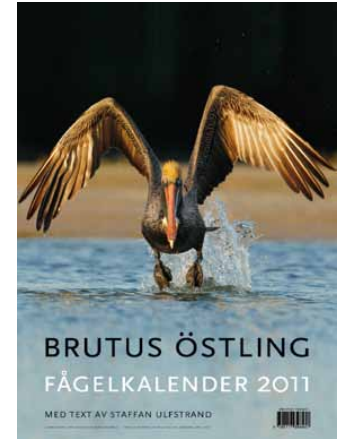
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<http://cpn.canon-europe.com/content/ambassadors.do>

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Dalmatian Pelican, February. Canon EOS 1D Mark IV, 16-35/2.8 at 27 mm. ISO 1600. Aperture 10, 1/800 s. Manual exposure.

