“**Nightflyers of Tounj 2024**” is a research and education project by Section for bats of Biology Students Association - BIUS, with its main goals being inventarisation and exploration of bat population diversity in the greater Tounj area and education of general public about the problem of endangerment of bats and their roosting spots. Project goals will be achieved by education of college students, high school students and local community through promo material, educational lectures and workshops open to the public, and also through the presentation of the results gathered during the field research. The greater Tounj area, i.e. Oštarije-Tounj area, is located between Ogulin-Plaški valley to the west and Una-Korana plateau to the east (Bočić 2011). That area is typically known as the area of shallow karst with both karstic and fluviokarstic characteristics. It represents transition zone between Dinarides in the southwest and Peripannonic region in the northeast (Rekić 2020). Therefore, it is characterised by vast majority of karstic phenomenon, whereby the most dominant are caves (Bočić 2011), which provide potential roosting spots for large amount of bat species and colonies present within the territory of the Republic of Croatia. As all bat species within the territory of the Republic of Croatia are protected by the law, in which some of them are even classified as endangered species by The Red Book of Mammals of Croatia (Antolović i sur. 2006) and IUCN's Red List, it is necessary to officiate researches of inventarisation and monitoring of bat populations, as well as constant education of general public about the need of bat habitat protection and tranquillity maintaining near their roosting areas. Here is the list with some of the key species we can encounter within the research area:

- *Miniopterus schreibersii* Kuhl, 1817 (Schreibers's long-fingered bat)
- *Myotis capaccinii* Bonaparte, 1837 (long-fingered bat)
- *Myotis myotis* Borkhausen, 1797 (greater mouse-eared bat)
- *Rhinolophus euryale* Blasius, 1853 (Mediterranean horseshoe bat)
- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* Schreber, 1774 (greater horseshoe bat)
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros* Borkhausen, 1797 (lesser horseshoe bat)

Project's time period: from March 1st 2024 to December 31st 2024 (field work: June, July and August 2024)

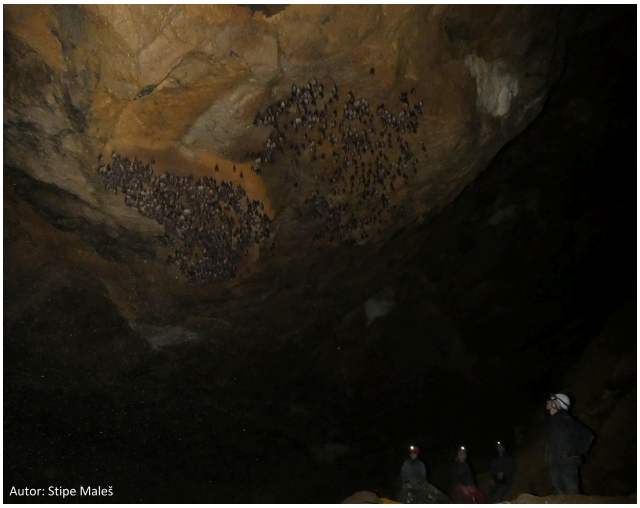

Figure 1. Bats and bat-people in the cave "Špilja u kamenolomu Tounj" (source: Stipe Maleš)

Figure 2. Hibernating colony of the greater horseshoe bat (*R. ferrumequinum*), Špilja u kamenolomu Tounj (source: Stipe Maleš)

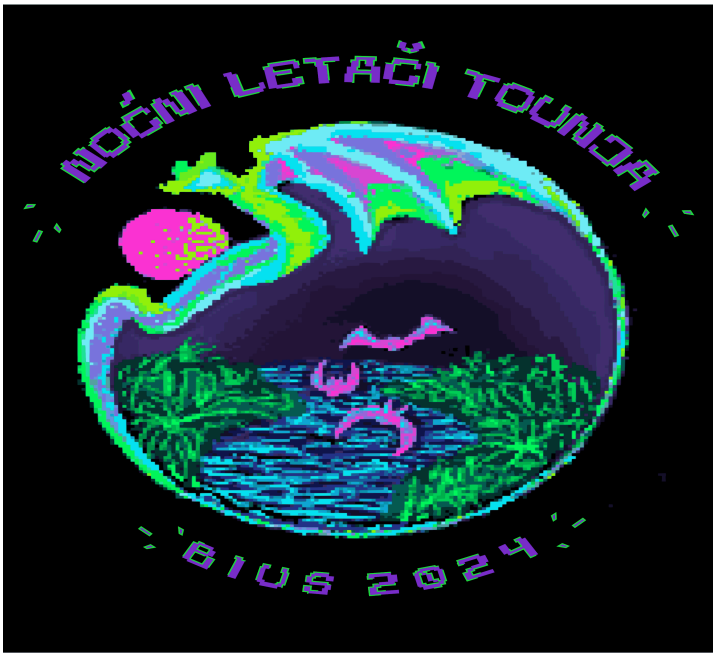

Figure 3. Project logotype (source: Dora Antonina)

To answer your question „How can I contribute to the project?“ and for more information in general be sure to contact project organisers:

- Toni Kočevar (toni.koccevar@gmail.com)
- Marina Hajdarović (marina.hajd@gmail.com)

or you can just follow section's Instagram or TikTok profile.

To se all observations, be sure to join the project in iNaturalist application!

For our promo video, be sure to check out Association's YouTube channel.

See you soon, preferably in the afternoon 🦇!

LITERATURE:

- Antolović, J., Frković, A., Grubešić, M., Holcer, D., Vuković, M., Flajšman, E., Grgurev, M., Hamidović, D., Pavlinić, I., Tvrtković, N. (2006). Crvena knjiga sisavaca Hrvatske. Ministarstvo kulture, Državni zavod za zaštitu prirode, Zagreb, 127 pp.
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- Rekić, E. (2020). Geomorfološka i hidrološka obilježja manjih ponornica - primjeri s kordunskog krša. Diplomski rad, Sveučilište u Zagrebu, Prirodoslovno-matematički fakultet.

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