

Proposal to renew the KOTEL AVIARY for the release of Eurasian Black vultures
January 2018, MH, JA and RN

Actual situation – see “feasibility study for the Black vulture reintroduction in Bulgaria – notes and preliminary conclusions of the visit from 1-4 October 2017

Instruction and sketches for improvement of the release cage to be provided by VCF

Location



Situation of the aviary





Improvements required

The actual aviary is being rebuilt at the moment as it was in a very bad state. During the visit in October it was discussed that:

1. Enlarge the size of the actual aviary, in particular
 - a. **make it deeper**, 2 times the actual depth, by extending it over the rocky platform
 - b. **make it higher**, with perches on 4 m high, can be up to 6 meters in the front and 2m high above the rocks
 - c. **make it bigger** by adding a separate additional cage, minimum 5 m wide
 - d. **provide a sheltered area** in the back
2. **provide a bathing pool** bigger than the one which is there now, in each separation, which can be easily cleaned and provided with fresh water, at least twice a week, in summer more often.
 - 210 cm x 130cm wide (oval shape) and 30-35 cm deep, with a gentle slope
 - ➔ in the bigger aviary a pool of minimum 300 x 130cm wide should be installed (oval shape and gentle slope)
3. **provide horizontal perches** in the front of the aviary -the whole length and on the sides, as high as possible, at 4m high;
 - diameter of the perches should be minimum 10 cm and of natural wood
4. **provide a release door** at the height of a perch so the bird can sit near to the open door and then go for a "soft "release (can be also on the ground)
5. provide in the back, in the sheltered area, **3 - 4 visual barriers**; make separations through the use of wooden panels; this is not required for the separation aviary; birds should be able to lie down in these shelters (rock can act as platform; if necessary, provide a platform)
6. **no use of inner poles** in each part of the aviary
7. **roof should be 3m deep**

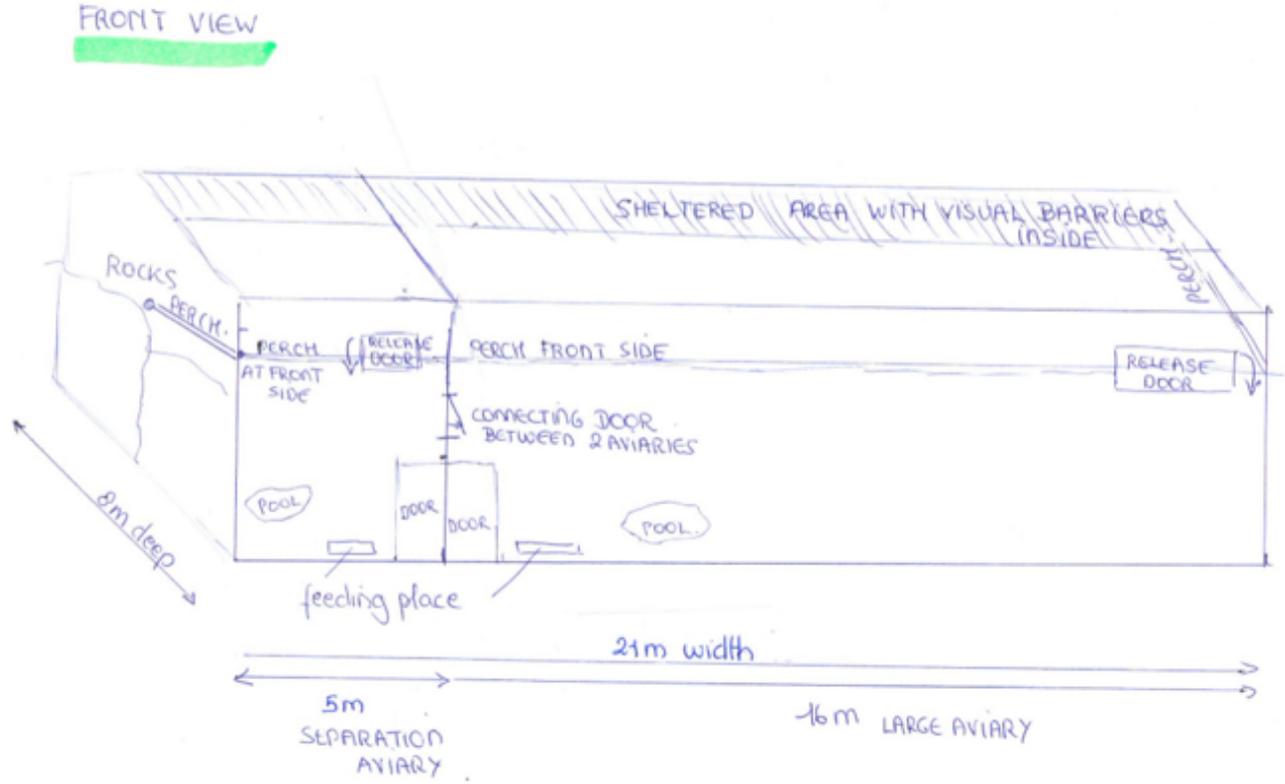
The remarks are summarized in the following sketch, on basis of the dimensions provided in the email of 14/12/2017

Additional recommendations:

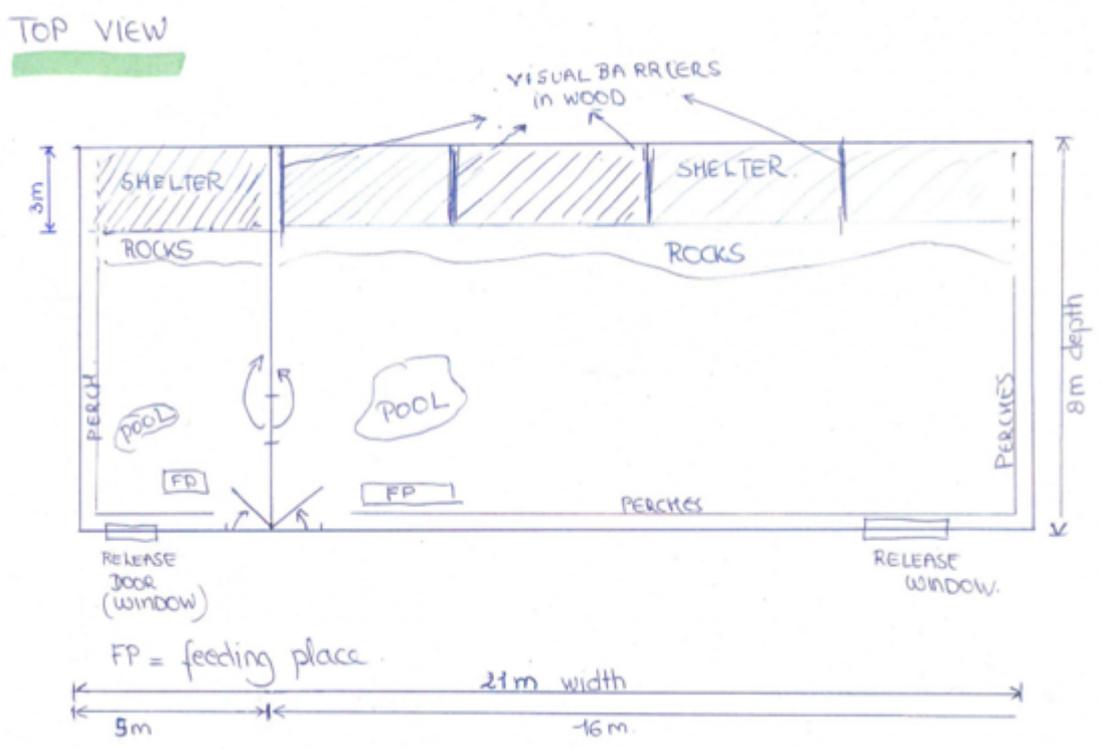
1. Construction should be strong enough to resist snow pressure → wire is installed at the inside of the metal construction

2. Use of metal wire with mesh 40 x 40 mm to prevent entrance by predators as martys and foxes
3. Put the wire of sides of the aviaries 50 cm into the ground so that predators are not able to dig a way under the sides into the aviary ; you can also extend the wire mesh on the ground and cover it with 20 cm of earth.

Front View of the newly constructed aviary



Top View



On 14 December 2017, we received an email from Emilyan that the aviary in Kotel was being re- build and as such we provided the above mentioned remarks and added the following remarks:

*“About the aviary in Kotel.; . It is planned to be build on the place, where the old one was, but larger in all dimensions (it will be in total 20*8*4.5 m). Also two parts of the aviary are foreseen to have a smaller soft-release part. You may see the picture attached with the situation of the aviary in the landscape and soon you will have some pictures from the new construction.*

So, I hope the skeleton of the aviary will be ready by the end of the week, and if possible fully built until the end of the year. I will keep you posted with any developments and will expect in-time advises and comments. We also keep consulting with the Green Balkans experts from the Center in Stara Zagora - Ivaylo Klisurov and Rusko Petrov”.

Our comments by returning email on 19 December:

Thank you for sending the information on the building of a new aviary in Kotel.

The dimensions are good , although 4,5 m high is the minimum height as the birds love/prefer to sit on the highest point .Especially the front side of the aviary which is closest to the path should be high, in the back this is less important and there is the rock as well which has already a certain height.

We indeed discussed to foresee a separation cage for a bird to use to separate or release a bird. Can you provide us with the dimensions for these ?

Furthermore we discussed the following points:

- 1. provide a bathing pool (bigger than the one which is there now) in each separation, which can be easily cleaned and provided with fresh water , at least once a week . In the zoo we have pools of 200 cm wide (round or oval of shape) and 25 cm deep, with a gentle slope.*
- 2. provide horizontal wooden perches in the front of the aviary -the whole length and on the sides , as high as possible , at 4m high; diameter of the perches should be minimum 10 cm*
- 3. provide a release door at the height of a perch so the bird can sit near to the open door and then go for a "soft "release*
- 4. no use of inner poles in each part of the aviary*

Thank you for keeping us posted . I will be happy to follow up the progress and give help and advises. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions .

MH, JA, RN, 25/01/2018