Red-breasted Geese to be monitored using GPS for the first time

Title A project aiming to monitor the behaviour and movements of the endangered Red-breasted Goose, *Branta ruficollis,* has received a boost. Ornithologists from the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB/BirdLife in Bulgaria) and the Trust for Waterfowl and Wetlands (WWT) have successfully captured, banded and attached miniature GPS transmitters to six individual Red-breasted Geese, which were caught along with 30 Greater White-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons*. BSBP is the first group in the world to study this species using GPS, which has proved succesful in monitoring species with similar behaviour and migration patterns. Data will be recorded by satellite as the birds move around their traditional wintering sites near the Shabla and Durankulak lakes, as part of the project ?Conservation of the wintering population of the Red-breasted Goose?, funded by Life + Programme of the EU. Through the project it is hoped that scientists will learn much more about this species, enabling them to set out appropriate conservation measures. In addition, the satellite data gained may contribute to the establishment of agro-environmental schemes for farmers in the region. To date, BSPB teams carrying out coastal area monitoring in Dobruja have counted the winter arrival of 6,000 Red-breasted Geese and 80,000 Greater White-fronted Geese. With a coming cold spell BSPS expect that this number will increase significantly, with Red-breasted Geese numbers predicted to enter the tens of thousands. www.bspb.org