

# Fauna of the Katun Roads



**Bonellis eagle (*Aquila fasciata*)**

Although Kosovo does not have an official national animal, however the eagle is considered one. It can be found in forests, is a powerful predator, where it takes a fairly wide number of preys such as rabbits, squirrels, and other small birds.



**Wallcreeper (*Tichodroma muraria*)**

This endangered animal mainly occupies the vertical rock faces of large mountains. It can nest between 350 and 3000m altitude, and lives in shaded gorges in mountainous areas, with holes and crevices for nesting and gathering.



**Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus*)**

This species is native to coniferous forests; it's often found in places where disturbances such as fire have caused insect outbreaks since they feed on them. This species has been subjected to threats, which may endanger it in the near future. However, it does not qualify for the higher risk categories.



**Western Capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*)**

This endangered species is considered a pearl of the mountains, due to its unique mating display with their love songs. Nesting habitats of this species are endangered by deforestation, while the species itself is endangered by illegal hunting.



**European badger (*Meles meles*)**

A fun fact about the badger is that they have five powerful toes and long claws. Earthworms are their main source of food in addition they eat rabbits, moths, mice, and hedgehogs. They also eat a wide variety of large insects.



**Blasius' horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus blasii*)**

The intriguing caves of the cross-border area are home to hundreds of animals. Another rare and endangered species which dwells in caves is the Blasius' horseshoe bat. It has a height of 45.5-56 mm and weights 12-15 g.



**Alpine Salamander (*Salamandra atra*)**

A feature that distinguishes them from other salamanders is the four rows of poisonous gland along their body. Neurotoxin venom is synthesized in them. It is a rare and endangered species which is native to mixed forests.



**Common European Adder (*Vipera berus*)**

These impressive mountainous areas of the cross border area are home to animals which are considered dangerous to man. The common adder is one of them, which is a slow snake, with short tail and oval flat head which can grow to around 60 cm. The venom of this snake is hemotoxic, but death only occurs when the blood vessel is bitten.



**Meadow Adder (*Vipera ursinii macrops*)**

It is very similar to the common European adder, however it is smaller about 40 cm. It is seen on high altitudes 1500 to 3000 m, but its venom is not considered life-threatening. The venom causes pain and swelling, fortunately death has not been recorded.



**Balkan Chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*)**

As the name suggests, it is widespread across Balkan countries. With the intensification of agriculture and the movement of people, they had to move to higher altitudes in mountainous areas. They are fed with plants, and both sexes' chamois have horns which differ in size.



**Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)**

A common animal in the mountainous areas is the roe deer, and in the villages of the Rugova canyon there are neighborhoods that bear the name of these amazing creatures. They are intelligent and can smell humans kilometers away.



**Wolf (*Canis lupus*)**

While visiting katun families you can hear stories of their encountering with at least a wolf. Some saw wolves from a safe distance and some saw them in their yard in action stealing their sheep as they gazed in awe. Wolves are social creatures and live in packs, one must be cautious when they see one there might be more.



**Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*)**

There has been a high awareness of protecting wild animals in Kosovo, and this great creature is very common in the mountainous areas. Although it belongs to carnivores, its diet consists mostly of plants, fish and small mammals. It is unusual that you see them in daylight, since they escape from man, but one needs to be careful when encountering mothers with cubs since they tend to be very protective.



**Balkan lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*)**

While exploring the magnificent mountains of Peja, if you happen to see an animal that resembles a big cat or a big wild cat, you are seeing a Balkan lynx. Acknowledge that this is a critically endangered animal, allow the animal to move on without stressing or pursuing it. Leave with the excitement that you just saw a rare creature in its natural habitat.

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# Flora of the Katun Roads



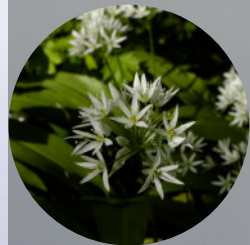
## Gymnadenia Nigra (Nigritella nigra)

The mountains of Kosovo and Montenegro contain many protected plant species. An interesting plant that grows on mountain grasslands at an altitude of 2,000 m is *Gymnadenia nigra*. This flower is dark, shaped into a ball and smells like chocolate. They are common and easy to spot on limestone alpine lawns.



## Agrimony (Narthecijum scaricum)

This extremely rare, endemic and tertiary relic plant species of the Balkans is native to acidic soil with lots of water and moisture. Agrimony is used for various sore from throat, upset stomach, mild diarrhea, diabetes, gallbladder disorders, tuberculosis to cancer. It deserves attention and strict protection.



## Wild garlic (Allium ursinum)

This plant is an extraordinary medicinal with a strong scent of garlic which one can smell before even seeing the plant. Bears use it after their winter sleep, to clean their stomach, bowels and blood. When it blooms it has white flowers make the perfect contrast to its green leaves.



## Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale)

Many people make the mistake for confusing this plant with weed, solely for the fact that it is very common for these areas. However, this plant has a vital position in folk medicine treating diseases such as rheumatism, cleaning the blood and improving digestion.



## Blusher (Amanita rubescens)

This mushroom found in the mountains of the katun roads is edible and tasty, but it should be well cooked. What makes it special is the fact that their flesh to turn pink on bruising, or cutting.



## Chanterelle (Cantharellus cibarius)

These are popular edible mushrooms, which form symbiotic associations with plants, making them very difficult to cultivate. It is one of the most appreciated and the best edible fungi. It has a high content of vitamin C. It is a little hard to digest but very suitable for different types of cooking.



## White Hellebore (Veratrum album)

This native plant is widespread in the mountains of the katun roads. All parts of the plant are poisonous. Nausea and vomiting are most commonly seen after ingestion of the plant.



## Lily of the valley (Convallaria majalis)

This Lily is a woodland flowering plant with sweetly scented, pendant, bell-shaped white flowers borne in sprays in spring. In medicine it is used for heart problems including heart failure and irregular heartbeat. However, one should bear in mind that all parts of it are poisonous and if ingested, the plant can cause abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and irregular heartbeats.



## Wolf's Bane (Aconitum vulperia)

This taxon represents an endemic subspecies chiefly native to the mountains of south and central Europe. All the parts of the plant contain extremely poisonous aconite, and it is probably the most poisonous plant in Europe.



## Spurge Laurel (Daphne mezereum)

It is such a shame that this beautiful flower is also a toxic one. It blossoms in spring and it is often called the forest lilac. It is so very toxic because of the compounds mezerein and daphnin present especially in the berries and twigs. If poisoned, victims experience a choking sensation.



## Alpine Honeysuckle (Lonicera alpigena)

Is a species of honeysuckle native to mountain forests of Central and Southern Europe. This deciduous plant blooms during May and its ripe fruit is dark red and inedible. If ingested in large quantities, respiratory failure, convulsions and coma may occur.



## Belladonna (Atropa belladonna)

This plant looks magnificent in the fall season when its berries ripen. Exactly the time when one should be most careful while gathering other edible fruits. In the ancient times, this poisonous plant that has been used from women to enlarge their pupils, which they found more alluring. This plant can produce vivid hallucinations and delirium.



## Death Cap (Amanita phalloides)

Travelers of the mountains please be careful when it comes to fungi that grows in the mountainous areas of the katun roads. The so-called death cap is just as the name implies deadly, and it is widely distributed. It causes phalloid poisoning which is usually fatal.



## Satan's Bolete (Boletus satanas)

Do not let its beautiful colors fool you, as it is called the Satan's Bolete for a reason. This is a poisonous fungus, with white stem, yellow undercap and turns red lower due to the red net. The flesh has a unpleasant smell and if consumed the symptoms are gastrointestinal in nature.