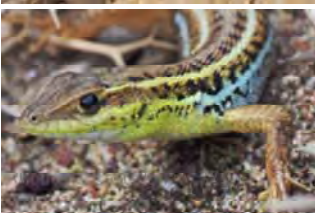


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Montenegro, 27.07. - 04.08.2012

Montenegro is a herping hotspot - numerous trip reports on various internet pages give an idea of that. The small Balkan country is a must for all herpers! End of Juli 2012 Peter (without Birgit this time) joined four Dutch colleagues for a Montenegro trip: Bobby Bok, Bart Misana, Sander Schagen, Ronald Zimmermann. Despite of hot temperatures 32 species were found. During our fast-track trip we rushed through this beautiful country – some of the places visited would have deserved a longer stay and will hopefully be destinations for future trips.



Montenegro-Team: Ronald, Bart, Bobby, Sander, Peter

27.07.

After a 10 hours stopover at Belgrade airport – enough time for some airport herping (we found *Lacerta viridis* at least) – Bobby and Peter arrived at Podgorica in the late evening and met the other guys at our first accommodation in Ulcinj after midnight. A first night excursion wasn't too successful; we only saw *Hemidactylus turcicus* and some frogs.

28.07.

In the early morning we started herping near Ulcinj – a good start with *Pelophylax ridibundus*, *Testudo hermanni*, *Podarcis melisellensis*, *Podarcis muralis*, *Natrix natrix*, *Natrix tessellata* and *Vipera ammodytes*. Afterwards we went to Sasko Jezero, a lake with a population of Albanian pool frogs (*Pelophylax shqipericus*). In the evening we rushed to our next accommodation at the coast near Sveti Stefan. During another night excursion we came across *Telescopus fallax* and some *Hemidactylus turcicus*.



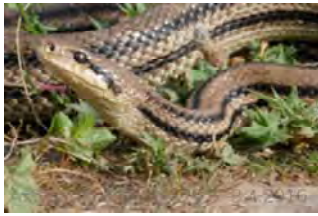
Welcome to the playground! The Dutch colleagues in a forest full of snakes, lizards and tortoises...



Pyrenees, 2008 - 2016



Sicily & Aeolian Islands, 2016
6.6.2016



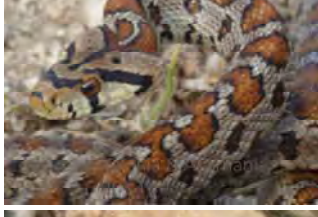
Spain, 2015 - 1.9.2015



1.7.2015



Spain, 29.8.14.9.2014



The first lizard: Podarcis melisellensis...



...and another one – less colorful than in spring but still pretty



Podarcis muralis occurs in the same habitat as Podarcis melisellensis



Andalucia, 10. - 18.03.2012



A beautiful Vipera ammodytes



Another Vipera ammodytes



Not rare, but beautiful: Sympetrum sanguineum



Bobby hunting for Pelophylax shqipericus



Result of a night excursion: Telescopus fallax

29.07.

We left the coast and drove to Lovcen National Park for photographing lizards. Though Dalmatolacerta oxycephala was common at the karstic rocks of Lovcen, these lizards were extremely shy and difficult to photograph. At least Lacerta viridis and Anguis graeca also were found there. At the next spot we had an extensive photo session with some Dinarolacerta mosorensis. Afterwards, we had lunch at Kotor – it was too hot for herping. The next destination was Cetinje, where we found a convenient accommodation. In the late evening we explored a habitat of Triturus macedonicus but only found a dead specimen and Lissotriton vulgaris.



Acrobatic Dalmatolacerta oxycephala



Great photo model: Juvenile Lacerta viridis



Anguis graeca



A highlight of the Adriatic herpetofauna: *Dinarolacerta mosorensis*...



...some these lizards have bright yellow undersides



Another *Dinarolacerta mosorensis*...



...some males have citreous throats



Eryngium amethystinum



Afternoon snack at Kotor



Bobby's headlight witnesses another night trip – searching for newts

30.07.

Our next station: Kolasin. In the beautiful mountains south of Kolasin we found *Dinarolacerta montenegrina* and *Bombina variegata*.



Bobby as temporary inhabitant of a *Bombina* habitat



Like a scenery from "Lord of the rings": Mountains at the Albanian boarder



Montenegrinan specialty: *Dinarolacerta montenegrina*



Close-up of *Dinarolacerta montenegrina*



Dinarolacerta montenegrina looks similar to Dinarolacerta mosorensis – in practice, differences mentioned in literature like existence of vertebral bands or number of postnasal scales turned out to be not very reliable.



Another Dinarolacerta montenegrina with bright yellow throat



Refreshment in a mountain lake

31.07.

Exhausting, but successful hike in the mountains with *Ichtyosaura alpestris*, *Bufo bufo*, *Podarcis muralis*, *Lacerta agilis*, *Natrix natrix* and *Vipera ursinii*



Biogradska NP



Lycaena virgaureae



Female *Lacerta agilis bosnica* – sunbasking



Vipera ursinii



Natrix natrix persa with atypical pattern

01.08.

Another field trip at Kolasin: We weren't very successful searching for *Vipera berus* – no pictures made. We had to be content with *Rana temporalis* and *Zootoca vivipara*. Our next destination was the Mitrovica canyon where we started another attempt for photographing *Dalmatolacerta oxcephala*. A great photo session, this time! We also found *Podarcis muralis*, *Algyroides nigropunctatus* and *Lacerta viridis*. In the evening we moved to our next station: Zabljak at Durmitor NP.



The colleagues photographing *Rana temporalis*



Zootoca vivipara



Mitrovica river – of course we jumped in...



Very co-operative *Dalmatolacerta oxycephala*



A beautiful *Dinarolacerta oxycephala*



Algyroides nigropunctatus



Nosy Lacerta viridis



Arrival at Durmitor NP

02.08.

Near Zabljak we tried again for *Vipera berus* – successful this time. The area was also inhabited by *Lacerta agilis* and *Dinarolacerta mosorensis*. After a splendid field trip we moved to our next station – Virpazar at Skadar Lake. The next night excursion merely brought *Bufo bufo*.



Mountains at Zabljak



Parnassius apollo



At Durmitor, *Dinarolacerta mosorensis* is less colorful than at Lovcen



Yawning *Dinarolacerta mosorensis*



Vipera berus bosniensis



Polyommatus damon



Lacerta agilis bosnica (male)...



...and another one

03.08.

Hot – hot – hot! – The high temperatures at Skadar Lake had a negative impact on our herping activities: We only found *Lacerta trilineata*, *Testudo hermanni*, some juvenile *Dalmatolacerta oxycephala* and *Pelophylax shqipericus*. A sidestep to the coast in the afternoon didn't bring spectacular results. On our way back we found some *Lissotriton vulgaris*.



At Skadar Lake

*Lacerta trilineata*



A pair of Testudo hermanni crossing the road



Lindenia tetraphylla



Some butterflies: Limenitis reducta (Blauschwarzer Eisvogel)



Apatura metis



Iphiclydes podalirius



Leptotes pirithous



Pelophylax shqipericus



Lissotriton vulgaris graeca...



...in its natural habitat



Bye bye, Montenegro!

04.08.

Return flight at 6:20 a.m....

Species list:

1. Salamandra salamandra (larvae)
2. Triturus macedonicus (dead)
3. Ichthyosaura alpestris
4. Lissotriton vulgaris
5. Bombina variegata
6. Bufo bufo
7. Hyla arborea (larvae)
8. Pelophylax ridibundus
9. Pelophylax shqipericus
10. Rana temporaria
11. Rana dalmatina
12. Testudo hermanni
13. Hemidactylus turcicus
14. Algyroides nigropunctatus
15. Dalmatolacerta oxycephala
16. Dinarolacerta mosorensis
17. Dinarolacerta montenegrina
18. Lacerta agilis
19. Lacerta viridis
20. Lacerta trilineata
21. Podarcis muralis
22. Podarcis melisellensis
23. Zootoca vivipara
24. Anguis graeca
25. Pseudopus apodus (dor)
26. Zamenis longissimus (skin)
27. Natrix natrix
28. Natrix tessellata
29. Telescopus fallax
30. Vipera ammodytes
31. Vipera berus
32. Vipera ursinii

The home of European lizards - by Birgit & Peter Oefinger!