



## Samos, September 2008 / 2009

We had been warned: despite of the high diversity of the herpetofauna on Samos the population density is rather low. Furthermore, late summer is not the best season for herping. Nevertheless we decided to visit this island in September 2008 – in particular, we were interested in *Anatololacerta anatolica*, *Chamaeleo chamaeleon* and *Trachylepis aurata*. In the early morning hours we started herping while we spent the hot hours at the beach. Unfortunately we didn't find *Trachylepis aurata* in 2008 – so, we had a second try in 2009.



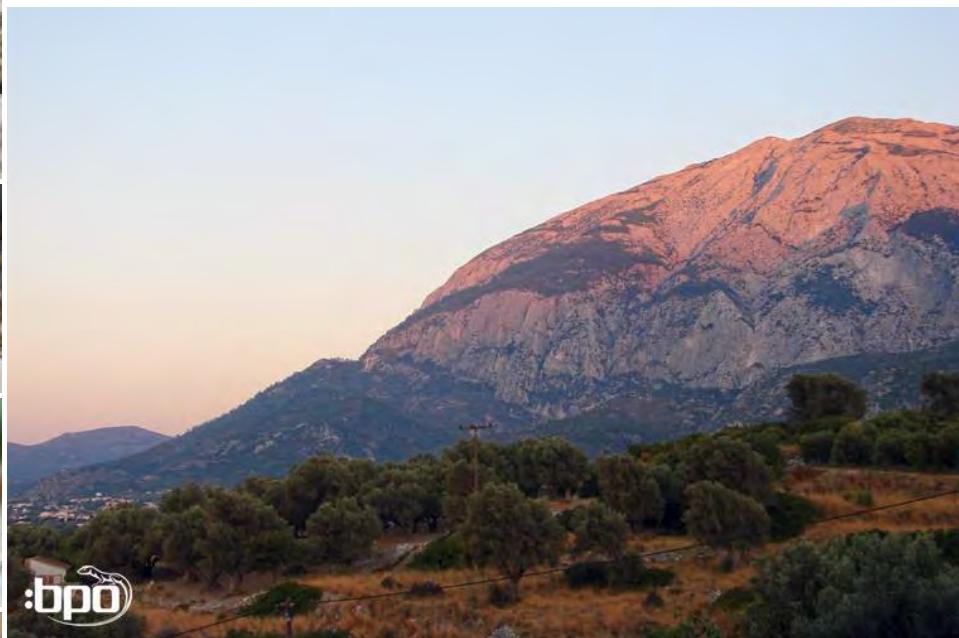
Psili Amos beach

Southeastern Spain, 10.2016  
11.2017

Jonian Islands, 25.5.-5.6.2017



7.4.2017



Sunrise in the Kerkis mountains: starting time for our daily excursions

Day trip to the north: The valley of Valeontates has shady forests and an all-the-year water-bearing brook. There, we came across *Anatololacerta anatolica* and some juvenile *Laudakia stellio* and *Pelophylax bedriagae*.







In the coastal plain between the village of Ileo and the airport we tried to find Chamaeleo chamaeleon. But, except for Ophisops elegans and a juvenile Hemidactylus turcicus we didn't find any reptiles there. At least some insects and flowers...



:bpo

Trithemis annulata in obelisk position



:bpo

Pelopidas thrax which occurs in Europe on some eastern Aegean islands only



Pancratium maritimum



The Moni Evangelistrias is situated at the southern slope of the Kerkis-mountains. The path ascending to the monastery provides some spectacular views to the sea and the surrounding islands. On our way we noticed several *Ophisops elegans*, *Laudakia stellio* and an adult *Eirenis modestus* – the only snake we came across during our stay. At the monastery we once again saw *A. anatolica*.





Juvenile Anatololacerta anatolica with contrasty pattern



View to the islands of Agios Minas, Fourni und Ikaria (l. to r.)

Searching for chameleons, we went to another location. This excursion was the highlight of our trip! At the very beginning, a chameleon crossed our way. Aside from numerous *O. elegans* we subsequently photographed– *Testudo graeca*, *Hemidactylus turcicus* and *Lacerta trilineata*. At a few water holes, we noticed some sun-basking *Mauremys rivulata*.



:bpo

Chamaeleon crossing the road



:bpo

According to the pale, sun-baked landscape, the chameleons showed a greyish colouration



:bpo

A big Testudo graeca



Hemidactylus turcicus



Lacerta trilineata appeared rather secretive, we saw very few sun-basking specimen



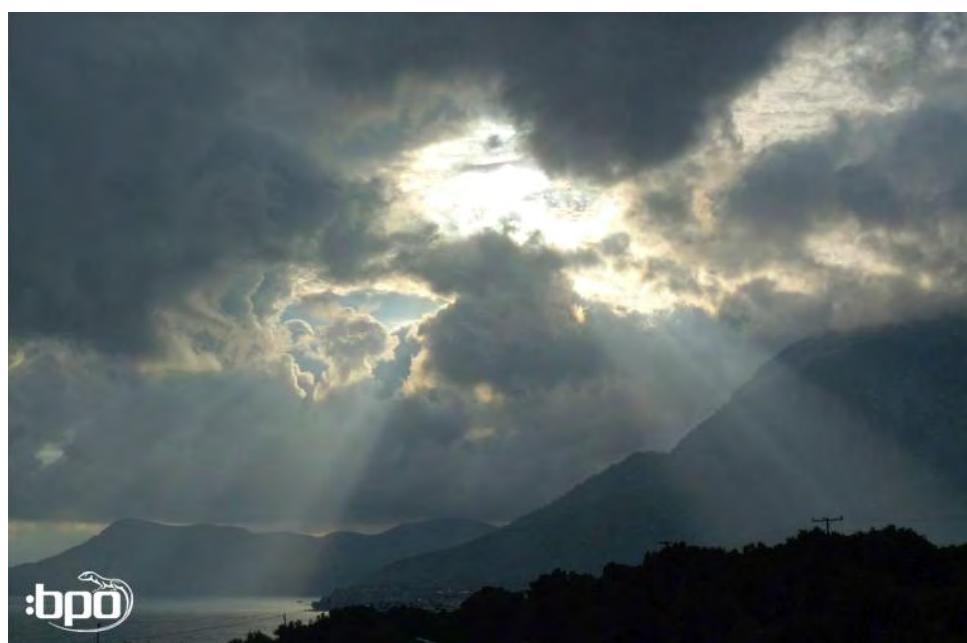
Mauremys rivulata – rapidly disappearing in the water



Orthetrum brunneum

Addendum 2009:

In September 2009 we went to Samos again for searching *Trachylepis aurata*. The weather was quite rainy, that time – but we succeeded with the *Trachylepis*!



Rainy weather...



A beautiful Chamaeleo chamaeleon crossing the road...



...the same specimen some moments later



Juvenile Laudakia stellio



:bpo

Juvenile Ophisops elegans...



:bpo

...und another juvenile on a blade of grass



:bpo

A juvenile Ablepharus kitaibelii with red tail



Another trip in the northern part of the island brought success...



Trachylepis aurata seems to be common on Samos but it is quite secretive in late summer



Close and in situ! Trachylepis aurata...



:bpo

...we could take several pictures...



:bpo

For us, *Trachylepis aurata* is one of the most beautiful lizards in Europe!



:bpo

Farewell to Samos: *Anatololacerta anatolica*

Acknowledgment:

ARJAN VAN DER LUGT (klooplek), DR. JOACHIM RUTSCHKE and SASCHA SCHMIDT for advices about the local

herpetofauna

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