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## Peloponnese, 20. - 27.10.2012

A herping trip to Peloponnese in autumn? We were rather skeptical about such an end-of-season tour. Anyhow, we couldn't resist to join Dutch / Belgian / German team for this trip: together with Bobby Bok, Jürgen Gebhart, Gertjan Verspui, Kenny de Boeck und Ronald de Vries we were driving all over Peloponnese for one week. Finally, despite of dry late-summer weather, we found almost 40 species: a quite successful trip...



Peloponnese team: Gertjan Verspui, Kenny de Boeck, Bobby Bok, Jürgen Gebhart, Ronald de Vries, Birgit Oefinger, Peter Oefinger

20.10.:

Whereas our flight from Düsseldorf was in time the others were delayed. We decided not to wait for them but to proceed directly towards western Peloponnese. During our way we had a stopover to photograph some lizards in the Feneos area. After sunset we finally reached Kalogria where our colleagues also arrived at late night (they had done a side trip to the mountains, too).



Female *Podarcis erhardii* with king-size prey...



Pyrenees, 2008 - 2016



Sicily & Aeolian Islands  
6.6.2016



Spain, 2011-19.2015



11.7.2015



Spain, 29.9.2014-14.9.2014



Mallorca / ...



...yummy, delicious!



*Podarcis tauricus* – the most common lizard in the Feneos basin – watching the scene



Not San Francisco, but the bridge crossing the Gulf of Corinth at Patras



21.10.:

In the morning, we had the pleasure to admire some Pelobates syriacus which were found by our colleagues the night before. Afterwards, we practiced some fieldherping in the Kalogria area – a diversified landscape with lagoons, dunes and rocky slopes. Some hours later we moved to Kaiafa Lake to search for Eryx jaculus – unfortunately without success. At sunset we arrived at our next stay at the west coast. After a tasty dinner we started our first nocturnal field trip in that area.



Pelobates syriacus – this species looks like a skin disease...



Baby-Natrix tessellata



Cooperative model: Testudo marginata



Uncooperative model: Testudo hermanni



Colchicum cupanii



Danaus chrysippus



Wetlands at Kalogria: here, our colleagues introduced us to the art of bird-watching...



...this professional shot shows an ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) – we were impressed...



Kaiafa Lake ...



...home of *Emys orbicularis*...



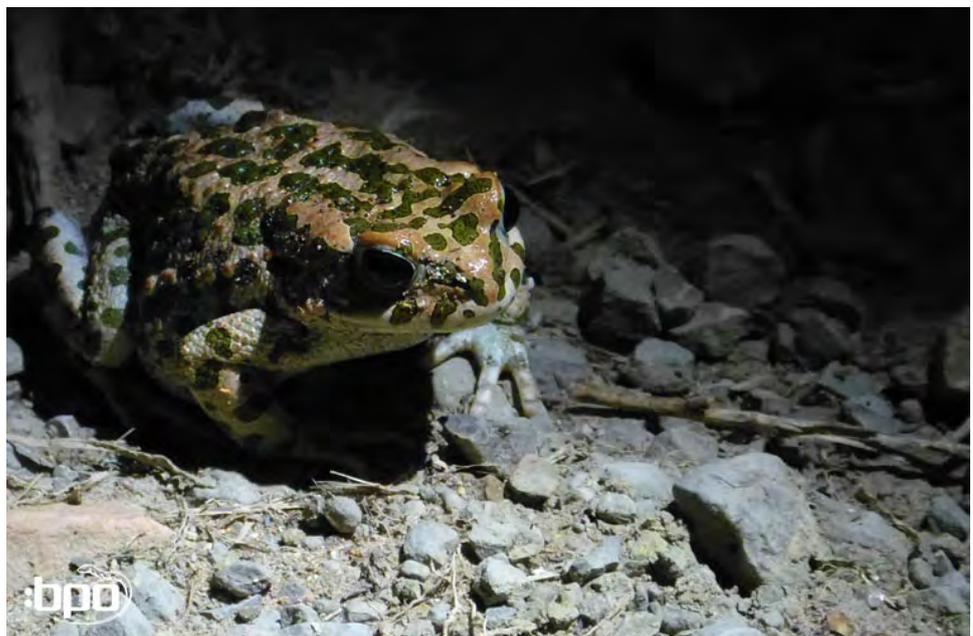
...and *Ablepharus kitaibelii*



Poor substitute for "real" herps: *Pelophylax epeirioticus*



Sunset at the West Coast: starting signal for a night trip



We came across this *Bufo viridis*...



...and some *Hemidactylus turcicus*.



This juvenile *Zamenis situla* was active in the darkness as well.

22.10.:

The day started with a photo session: our models were a juvenile and a subadult *Malpolon insignitus*. Afterwards, we enjoyed a couple of hours at the beach. In the afternoon, we spent some more time searching for chameleons – a difficult but finally successful undertaking. The highlight of that day was another night excursion – this time, we visited a population of introduced geckoes (*Tarentola mauritanica*).



Malpolon insignitus



Malpolon photography



Baby Malpolon with Birgit



The blue lagoon – a real holiday picture, finally...



Mandragora autumnalis with Papilio machaon



Chamaeleo africanus...



...and photographers



Night-time burglars – searching for:



*Tarentola mauritanica*

23.10.:

After some ineffective snake hunting we left the Peloponnese west-coast towards Mani Peninsula. There, we left our colleagues for a side trip to Gythio. Although we had some rain in that area we were able to find herptiles in a nice coastal habitat.



*Algyroides moreoticus* warming up in the morning sun



Beach at Gythio...



...with *Ophiomorus punctatissimus*



Snake on the beach: *Hierophis gemonensis*



Juvenile *Hellenolacerta graeca* with blue tail

24.10.:

Criss-cross through Mani Peninsula – without remarkable findings. In the evening we arrived at our next stay in Kardamili where we met our team again.



Our only shot of *Madiodactylus kotschy*



*Scilla autumnalis*

25.10.:

Herping on Mani – second try; even the complete team didn't succeed; no spectacular findings. Therefore, we decided to leave for the Stymphalos / Feneos area in the afternoon, where we hoped to find more animals. The ride to the north took many hours (never underestimate the distances...).



Road block on Mani



Flowers instead of herps: *Cyclamen graecum* and...



...*Crocus boryi*



Finally, our arrival at Stymphalos

26.10.:

Despite of dense morning fog in the Feneos-Basin, we started hunting for lizards. After the fog lifted we found plenty of herps – for us, the most productive day of the trip!



Anguis cephalonica and photographers



 Salamandra salamandra



 Beautiful Podarcis tauricus...



 ...and another one: this species is quite variable



Podarcis muralis climbing on a tree



A gorgeous species, even in late autumn: Podarcis peloponnesiacus



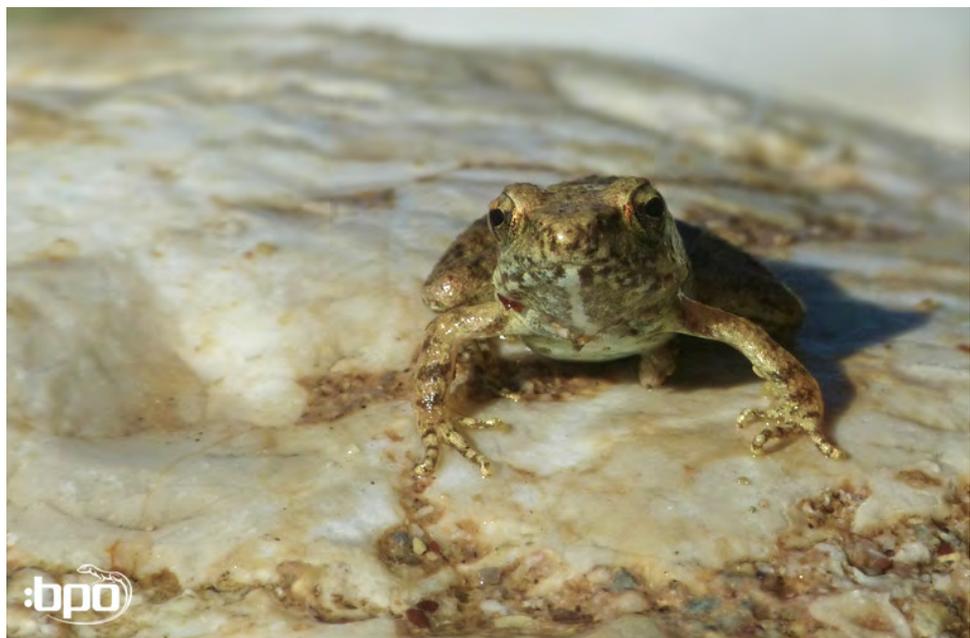
The second slow worm species: Anguis graeca



The result of Birgit's patience: portrait shots of Podarcis erhardii...



...we love subspecies livadiacus!



A juvenile Rana graeca



*Algyroides nigropunctatus* – usually preferring shade – was basking on tree trunks in the evening sun.

27.10.:

After the lizard-biased day at Feneos we went to Stymphalos Lake for snake hunting. A grass snake habitat didn't bring grass snakes but *Telescopus fallax* instead, which was subject of an extensive photo session. Later on, we also found an adult grass snake at another part of the lake. In the afternoon, we decided to visit a habitat of *Chalcides ocellatus* on Argolis Peninsula. We spent the last night at the Corinth isthmus – the next morning we had our return flight to Düsseldorf.



*Telescopus fallax*



Happy photographers



*Sternbergia lutea*



*Natrix natrix persa*



Photographers, spoiling the shepherd's day



*Chalcides ocellatus*



Nice surprise at the end of a beautiful journey: adult *Zamenis situla*