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## Northern Spain, 02. - 13.09.2011

Our herpetological trip to the northwest of Spain included three major stations: the mountains west of Leon, the Atlantic coast south of A Coruña and the Picos de Europa. Our starting point was the airport of Bilbao. At the end of our 12-day trip – travelling 2800 km by car (never underestimate the distances in Spain!) – we had seen 6 new species and 6 new sub-species. For valuable tips on the local herpetofauna, we would like to thank Andre Schmid, Benny Trapp, Frank Deschandel, Jan van der Voort and Matthieu Berroneau.



Subtle prelude: Podarcis liolepis at the motorway service between Bilbao and Burgos

02.09.

From Bilbao airport we made our long trip to Puebla de Sanabria (west of Leon) – in that area we wanted to find Iberolacerta galani.



After a 5 hours trip we finally arrived in the mountains of Sanabria

03.09.

Photo tour in the mountains, initially at 1700 m altitude. There we found Iberolacerta galani, Natrix maura and Rana iberica. In lower altitude (1400m) we were able to photograph Podarcis bocagei, Lacerta schreiberi and Timon lepidus. Further down at 1200 m altitude we came across Podarcis hispanicus morphotype 1a (Iberian wall lizard) and, again, Timon lepidus.



Pyrenees, 2008 - 2016



Sicily & Aeolian islands  
6.6.2016



Spain, 2015 - 19.9.2015



Spain, 2015 - 11.7.2015



Spain, 29.8. - 14.9.2014



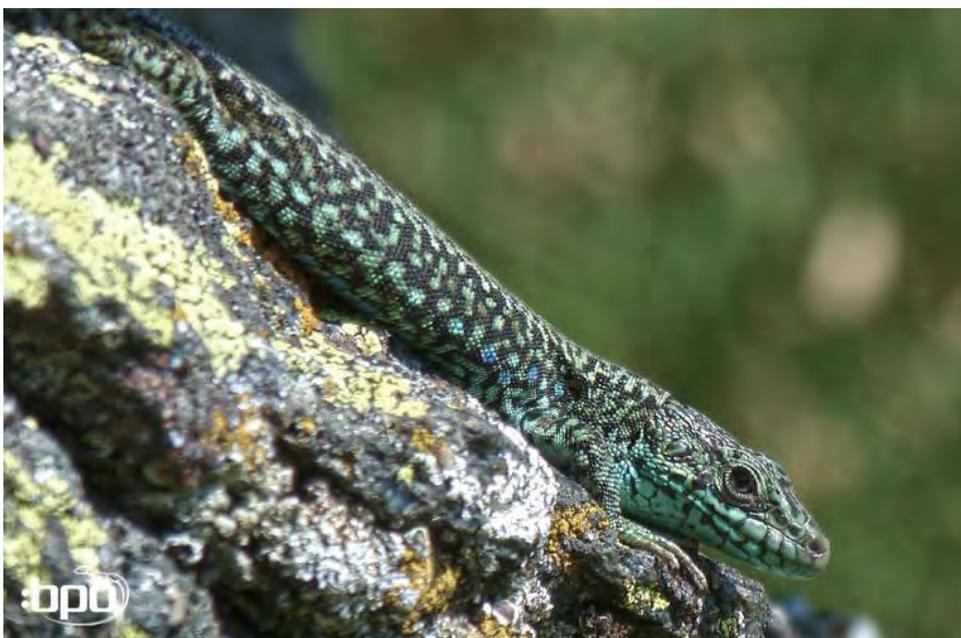
Mallorca / ...



Habitat of Iberolacerta galani



A female Iberolacerta galani ...



...and a male...



This species' coloration is quite variable: a specimen with a yellow belly...



...and a greenish animal



Among numerous Iberolacertas we also found this *Natrix maura* basking

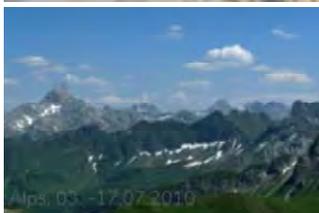
Northern Spain, 03.14.11



Aegean Islands, 28.05.13.06.2011



Central Spain, 25.09.09.10.2010



Spain, 05.17.07.2010



Spain, November 2008



Podarcis bocagei warming up on a dry stone wall



Perfectly illuminated by the afternoon sun: another Podarcis bocagei



With a little patience, we managed to get this shot: Timon lepidus



At Lago de Sanabria we found Podarcis hispanicus type 1a in high population density



Nosy guy: Podarcis hispanicus



Again: Timon lepidus



Tired of hunting lizards ...

04.09.

Unsuccessful tour to other *Iberolacerta* habitats, due to cloudy weather in the mountains. In the deeper altitudes, our findings were little spectacular at first – some *Psammodromus algirus* and *Lacerta schreiberi*. But in the afternoon we found some interesting species: *Coronella austriaca*, *Natrix maura* and *Salamandra salamandra*.



Not the best weather to search for *Iberolacerta galani*!



The whole Schreiber family; male *Lacerta schreiberi* ...



... the mother ...



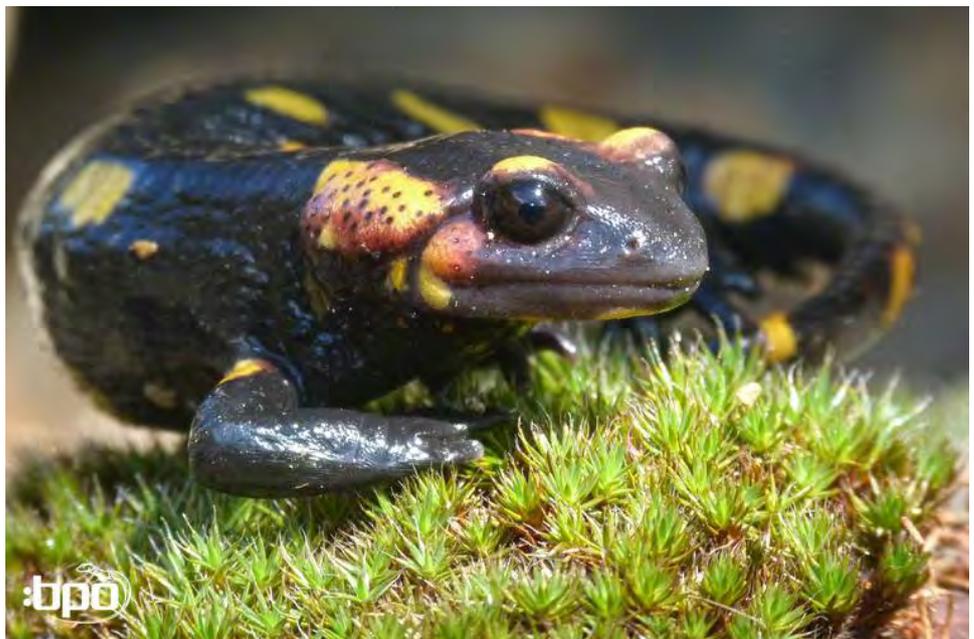
...and one of the offspring



Juvenile *Coronella austriaca acutirostris*



Very angry *Natrix maura*



*Salamandra salamandra gallaica / bejarae* - the subspecies status could not be clarified so far

05.09.

Moving to another location: From Puebla de Sanabria we went to our second station at the Atlantic coast near A Coruña – crossing the Portuguese border for a side trip in order to find *Chioglossa lusitanica*. There, we also came across *Lacerta schreiberi*, *Rana iberica* and *Pelophylax perezii*.



*Chioglossa lusitanica*: This species looks and moves like an *Ablepharus* – a very swift salamander.

06.09.

Fantastic mountain tour on the Atlantic coast south of A Coruña, where we visited an isolated population of *Iberolacerta monticola*. The mountains are also populated by *Lacerta schreiberi*, *Timon lepidus*, *Podarcis hispanicus* morphotype 1a and *Podarcis bocagei*. The population density is remarkably high in these mountains.



Great view to the end of the world: Cap Finisterre



Spectacularly patterned *Podarcis hispanicus* morphotype 1a – resembling to *Apathya cappadocica*



The males of *Podarcis hispanicus* are sometimes green-backed in that area



*Timon lepidus*: sharing it's habitat with ...



... Iberolacerta monticola!



The males of this rock lizard population showed a strong green coloration



Group picture with our granite buddy...

Herping in a coastal habitat with *Chalcides bedriagai*, *Chalcides striatus*, *Podarcis bocagei*, *Psammodromus algirus* and *Timon lepidus*. We missed *Chalcides striatus* that day, but found numerous *Chalcides bedriagai*.



Beautiful beach – fog inclusive!



*Chalcides bedriagai* (subsp. *pistaciae*) at the northern limit of its distribution range



Group picture: one of these four is not a skink...



Tiny juvenile *Psammodromus algirus*

08.09.

Next attempt to find *Chalcides striatus* in another section of the coast - successful this time. Also *Coronella girondica* is supposed to occur there but we didn't find it.



Beautiful eyes: *Bufo bufo spinosus*



Anguis fragilis



Chalcides striatus



"Get closer, Baby!" - Portrait of Chalcides striatus ...



...and, again, Chalcides bedriagai



Cooperative photo model #1: Timon lepidus



"Jurassic Park": the Atlantic coast looks like the setting of a Steven Spielberg movie.

09.09.

Moving to our third station, from the west coast to the Picos de Europa – with stopover at a lookout point in Asturia. There, we found *Iberolacerta monticola* and *Salamandra salamandra bernardezi*.



Female *Iberolacerta monticola* at the tourist car park



*Salamandra salamandra bernardezi*

10.09.

Intensive search for *Salamandra salamandra alfredschmidti* – at the first habitat we failed but at the next place, we were successful.



*Salamandra atra* with characteristic coloration ...



... and a yellow one (Tendi morphe) – we found more yellow specimen than characteristically colored animals



*Podarcis muralis* is omnipresent in this part of Spain



Somewhere in the Picos de Europa ...

11.09.

During the first hours of an excursion in the southern part of the Picos de Europa we only found *Podarcis muralis*. In the afternoon we came across *Vipera seoanei* and *Zootoca vivipara*.



Cooperative photo model #2: *Vipera seoanei*



Zootoca vivipara louislantzi inhabiting dry stone walls – together with Podarcis muralis



Evening in the Picos de Europa

12.09.

We drove to Covadonga and the Lagos de Covadonga - this beautiful mountain area is crowded of tourists. We wouldn't recommend going there at weekends (we actually have been there on a Monday). The mountains are populated by Iberolacerta monticola and Podarcis muralis and Zootoca vivipara as well.



At the Lagos de Covadonga: due the warm weather it was difficult to get good pictures of the lizards ...



... but Birgit practiced her special lizard whisperer technique and convinced the animals to pose in front of the camera



"I am the greatest!" - Male *Iberolacerta monticola*



Another Iberolacerta monticola sleeping in the sun.

13.09.

Return to Bilbao with a stop at a coastal place north of Bilbao place with an introduced population of Podarcis pityusensis. In the evening: Return flight to Dusseldorf.



Wild Atlantic Coast: an unusual habitat for Podarcis pityusensis



"Podarcis pityusensis on the rocks"...



... A beautiful specimen



A large male



"My big fat pityusensis" - well fed animals!



A pair of *P. pityusensis*

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