

PHYLOGENY AND BIOGEOGRAPHY OF ADRIATIC LIZARDS - A CONTRIBUTION TO THE DINARIC (WESTERN BALKAN) PHYLOGEOGRAPHIC SCENARIO

Martina PODNAR, Werner MAYER, Nikola TVRTKOVIĆ and Eduard KLETEČKI
Croatian Natural History Museum, Zagreb, Croatia

The flora and fauna of the Adriatic coast and especially its islands is under a strong antropogenic influence that caused extremely large Holocene changes in its composition. Thus, all data that still can be obtained from natural population remnants are of major importance. Together with the fossil and sub-fossil records, they can be used to reconstruct the history of colonisation of the Dinaric region. The distribution of endemic subspecies, and some congruent patterns of intraspecific variability imply the existence of the two main centres of diversity for the mainland species: one located at the region of Kvarner and a second in Dalmatia. These regions probably were also two distinct glacial refugia. The fact that today as many as 12 lacertid species inhabit the east Adriatic coast opens the possibility, through a phylogeographic approach, for a significant contribution to the general knowledge about the history of colonisation of this area.

*Preliminary results of investigations of Adriatic populations of *Podarcis sicula* and *P. melisellensis* based on the analysis of mitochondrial (mtDNA) markers will be presented. The contribution of these data to the elucidation of the colonisation pathways during and after the Pleistocene will be discussed. Some old, already forgotten records, as well as some new ones will be highlighted.*

Key words: speciation, islands, phylogeny, lizards, Lacertidae