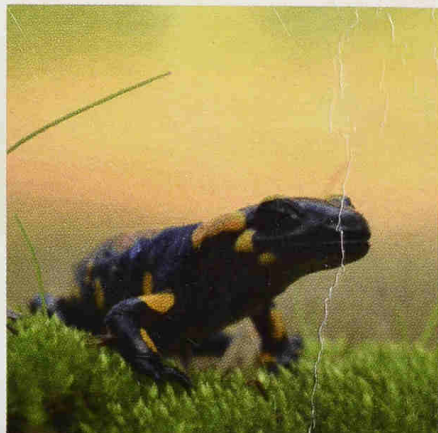
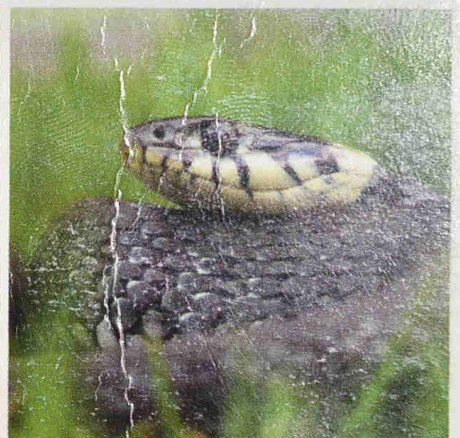




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Diversity and distribution of amphibians and reptiles in Albania

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The Balkan Peninsula is part of the globally important Mediterranean basin biodiversity hotspot, where Albania is one of the least known countries with a high level of amphibian and reptile diversity. Since distributional records of the local herpetofauna are scarce even for common species and summarized works are outdated, we combined all the available literature and museum records as well as unpublished data to a georeferenced database. Moreover, we have organized several expeditions to Albania since 2009 to explore and collect new herpetofaunistic data. Our database contains nearly 4500 records from all the 14 amphibian and 40 reptile species known from the country. With the help of SEH Grant in Herpetology for 2015, Mapping and Distributions we focused to collect more data from rare or poorly known species and mapping gaps. After contracting the records to 10x10 UTM squares we performed spatial analyses to reveal sampling hotspots and coldspots and visualised diversity maps in GIS. We found that Karaburun, Butrint and Ohrid areas are among the richest ones in herpetological diversity but sampling efforts are frequently biased toward such areas. Valamares and Griba mountain regions are among the least known ones. Also, we revealed priority areas for conservation of the local herpetofauna.