

EUROVENOM

HERPETOLOGY CONFERENCE

The University of Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy in Košice

September 27-28, 2019 • Košice, Slovakia

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Poster section

Is *Trachemys scripta* breeding in Slovakia?

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ABSTRACT

The European pond turtle, *Emys orbicularis* (Linneaus, 1758), is the only native species of the turtle distributed in the southern part of Slovakia, with three reproducing localities (NNR Tajba, Poľany, Mercelová). In addition to this species there is also an introduced turtle *Trachemys scripta* (Shoepff, 1792). This turtle has been observed at many sites with the highest number of records in the western part of the country. In the city of Bratislava, the presence of individuals of this species has been recorded in at least ten locations. In the past, female courtship and dozens of juveniles have been observed at these sites, with the smallest captured turtle being only 2.7 centimeters long and weighing 5 grams. There is also documentation of laying eggs of this species at the Štrkovec lake. The site Chorvátske rameno became our main study site for the large number of individuals observed. Chorvátske rameno is lined with plant macrophytes with gravel subsoil and water reaches depth of 2-3 meters. Due to the number of juvenile turtles observed on this site, we assume their possible reproduction. However, there is a lack of exact and repeated observation of reproduction of this species from Slovakia. The non-native species of turtles have already successfully reproduced in countries such as Austria, Slovenia, Italy and France. Many sites in Slovakia represent suitable conditions for its potential and successful reproduction. Therefore, it is important to monitor *T. scripta* sites and confirm reproduction of this potentially invasive species in Slovakia.

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