

AN ENQUIRY REGARDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF *TESTUDO MARGINATA* ON MAINLAND GREECE

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I recently undertook an herpsearching holiday to Epirus, N.W. Greece, between 7th and 21st May 1984. Staying in the village of Parga on the Ionian coast, I made daily trips searching the surrounding countryside up to an altitude of 700-800 metres.

On these walks I observed and photographed a substantial number of *Testudo marginata*; a total of fifteen animals altogether.

This surprised me because according to the distribution map comprised by Arnold, Burton & Ovenden (1978), *T. marginata* does not occur this far west in Greece. The text gives the northernmost extent of the range as Mount Olympus, but doesn't say how far west this extends. As this is the only reference work I have access to, and there is always the possibility of a misprint, I was wondering if any interested members could confirm the distribution of *T. marginata*.

A possibility that has occurred to me is that of an introduction into this area. If this has occurred the species has established itself fairly profoundly in the vicinity of Parga (see map) and also further afield as one animal was found on the road to Igoumenitsa between Margarition and Karterion.

Another interesting point regarding the distribution of *T. marginata* is the observations of Loumbourdis & Kattoulas (1983) who have sighted this species "about 100km further north than the previously stated northernmost limit of the species range in Greece".



Sightings of *T. marginata* in Epirus, N.W. Greece, 7-21 May '84. *T. hermanni* were also seen in the same area, but apart from * all *T. marginata* were observed at a higher altitude, up to 700-800 metres around Parga.

Bearing this in mind, I was considering the possibility that if my sightings were to be confirmed as an extension of range then it would follow that the range of *T. marginata* might possibly be extended to cover most of mainland Greece.

Other species also seen were:

Bombina variegata

Bufo bufo

Rana dalmatina

Rana ridibunda

Emys orbicularis

Mauremys caspica

Algyroides nigropunctatus

Lacerta trilineata

Podarcis taurica

Anguis fragilis

Ophisaurus apodus

Malpolon monspessulanus

Coluber najadum

Coluber gemonensis

Elaphe quatuorlineata

Elaphe longissima (Paxos)

Natrix natrix

Vipera ammodytes

REFERENCES

- Arnold, E.N., Burton, J.A. & Ovenden, D.W. (1978). *A field guide to the reptiles and amphibians of Britain and Europe*. London: Collins.
- Loumbourdis, N.S. & Kattoulas, M.E. (1983). A northernmost locality for *Testudo marginata* Schoepff 1792 in Greece (short note). *British Journal of Herpetology* 6: 348-349.