

HERPETOLOGY TOUR (AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES OF BULGARIA)

Suitable period: After 7th of May

Day 1

Arrival at Sofia airport and transfer to Melnik, about two and a half hours. Accommodation for the next four nights.

Days 2, 3 and 4

During these three days we will spend the time exploring different sites - Kresna Gorge, Rupite, Kozhukh Hill.

We will have short transfers. Beside the common species, here we expect to find also some rare species - *Syrian Spadefoot Toad*, *Yellowbelly Toad*, *Balkan Stream Frog*, *Kotschy's Gecko*, *Balkan Green Lizard*, *Erhard's Wall Lizard*, *Worm Snake*, *Dahl's Whip Snake*, *Leopard Snake*, *Four-lined Snake*, *Montpellier Snake*, *Cat Snake*.

We can also find both species of tortoises - *Hermann's* and *Spurthighed*, as well as the *Balkan Terrapin*.

Day 5

During this day we will have a long transfer (about four hours) to our next hotel in Smolyan, in the Western Rodopi Mountain for a two-nights stay. We will have a few stops on the way. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in the hotel.

Along the road we expect to see some mountain species - *Fire Salamander*, *Alpine Newt*, *Spring and Common Frogs*, *Slow Worm*, *Sand Lizard*, *Viviparous Lizard*, *Aesculapian* and *Smooth Snakes*, *Adder*.

Day 6

We will spend a day at Smolyan Lakes and high mountain zone of the Western Rodopi Mountains.

During this day we expect to see some common and mountain species - *Fire Salamander*, *Alpine Newt*, *Spring and Common Frogs*, *Slow Worm*, *Sand Lizard*, *Viviparous Lizard*, *Aesculapian* and *Smooth Snakes*, *Adder*.

Day 7

On this day we will have a long transfer (about three and a half hours) to the town of Haskovo, in the Eastern Rodopi Mountain. We will have a few stops on the way. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in the hotel, which will be our base for the next three nights.

Days 8 and 9

During these two days we will explore different sites in the area – near Harmanli and Mandritsa Village. The species we can see there are *European Glass Lizzard*, *Snakeeyed Lacertid*, *Worm Snake*, *Sand Boa*, *Dahl's Whip Snake*, *Blotched Snake*, *Montpellier Snake*.

Day 10

Transfer to our next hotel in Strandzha Mountain.

We will stop close to the Turkish border where we expect to see *Worm Snake*, *Sand Boa*, *Dahl's Whip Snake*, *Blotched Snake*, *Montpellier Snake*. Arrival late in the afternoon. Accomodation for one night.

Day 11

Short transfer to the Black Sea coast - Primorsko.

Again we will have several stops on the way in Strandzha Mt (Strandzha Nature Park) and will look for reptiles and amphibians, especially *Snakeeyed Skink*, *Meadow Lizard*, *Aesculapian Snake* and some other species. Arrival late in the afternoon. Accomodation for the next three nights.

Days 12 and 13

During these days we will explore the South Black Sea coast. We will make short trips every day. We will visit also Maslen Nos peninsula, Ropotamo river, as well as the sand dunes near Arkutino. This is the only area where the *Reddish Wip Snake* occurs in Bulgaria. We can have another evening trip looking for the *Syrian Spadefoot Toad*.

Some other species we expect to see – *Firebellied Toad*, *Snakeeyed Skink*, *European Glass Lizzard*, *Kotschy's Gecko*, and *Blotched Snake*.

Day 14

Transfer to Sofia/Burgas airport with several stops on the way. Departure.

Group size: 4-14 persons 1050 EUR

Individual: 2-3 persons 1295 EUR

Deposit: 200 EUR

Single room supplement: 170 EUR

Price includes: Transport with comfortable bus and coach, accommodation in good hotels with private facilities, full board, professional guide and all entrance taxes.

The price does not include: Airfares, travel insurance, alcohol drinks and cigarettes, room service, telephone calls.