

REPORT OF THE RECENT ZOOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS (1978-1985)
CONCERNING THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ISLANDS, ESPECIALLY OF GREECE

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More than 300 publications containing references to the fauna of the eastern mediterranean islands have appeared in scientific journals since 1978. This report concerns mainly the islands of Greece since they are the majority among the islands of the eastern Mediterranean.

A large number of these references, more than 100, are not exclusively devoted to the fauna of the islands but include revisions of species or families or papers on the fauna of Greece or larger regions. However, they were included in this report since the researcher who wishes to find references on the presence of a particular group in the islands will find them useful.

Of those references that are exclusively devoted to the fauna of the islands, the majority (36%), deal with the island of Crete. Crete is after Cyprus, the second largest island of the eastern Mediterranean and the largest in Greece. It also attracts a very large number of tourists. Some of them certainly combine their vacation with collecting or observing the fauna of Crete. This fact is also evident from the large number of references from Rhodes and Corfu which are also traditional tourist centers. It must be noted here that the majority of papers on the fauna of Greece comes from non-Greek researchers, mainly German-speaking.

The Cyclades islands, a group of more than 20 medium size and many more smaller islands, has also attracted many researchers (17% of the references). The Ionian islands on the western coast of Greece concern 15% of the references. The most studied island of the Ionians is Corfu which is also the most visited. The Dodecanese in the south-east Aegean concern 13% of the references. The largest island of this group is Rhodes which has also most of the references. Finally, 11% of the references are about the fauna of the larger islands of the north and east Aegean, 5% about the Northern Sporades group and 3% about the islands of the Saronic gulf near Athens.

If we look at the groups of animals studied, the birds involve 13% of the total number of references. A large percent of these references

concern the biology and ecology of Falco eleonora and Calonectris diomedea by a group of German researchers in unspecified islets of the Aegean. Many references (11%), have been written about the reptiles and amphibians of the eastern mediterranean islands. These groups show interesting patterns of speciation. For example, Cyrtodactylus kotschy has 35 subspecies in the Aegean. The Coleoptera, the largest group, concerns 10% of the references while the Lepidoptera concern 9% and the Mollusca 8%. Finally, the remaining 49% of the references are scattered among the other groups of animals.

An interesting observation is that although the number of articles has increased dramatically over the last thirty years, their content has not changed significantly. Most of them are descriptions of new species or new records for the islands. Only a small number are concerned with zoogeographical relations and even fewer offer explanations for the presence of some species in particular islands. Although recent evidence on the palaeozoogeography of the islands has thrown some light on their evolution, we are still lacking the ecological, palaeoecological, evolutionary, genetic and geological data that will enable us to provide a firm synthesis of the insular fauna of past and present.