

RESEARCH CAMPS FOR STUDENTS IN CICARIJA

Amphibians and reptiles of the Karst edge

The area of the karst edge is characterized by the lack of surface water, which is why in the past the inhabitants of the area created numerous ponds that served as a source of water for feeding livestock, household use and more. Over time, the importance of such water bodies for the population has diminished, but ponds have remained important habitats and breeding grounds for many endangered species of amphibians and other aquatic organisms in an otherwise dry landscape. The different fauna of amphibians, as well as some reptiles, are attracted by the lower lying areas of Istria, where flysch substrates allow the retention of surface water and where we find several watercourses and wetlands. The rocks of the Karst edge are an important habitat and a centre of diversity, as many species are adapted to the warm and dry conditions there.

Participants will be introduced to the methods of herpetological fieldwork, where they will be introduced to living representatives of amphibians and reptiles and learn to recognize different stages of development of amphibians (eggs and larvae in the early spring). They will also be familiarized with the causes of endangerment of these two groups of animals.

The research camp program will be led by experts in the field of herpetology.

Recommended period: April – June

Meeting point and accommodation: Vodice (Croatia), Speleo House

Fieldwork area: wider area of northern Istria; ponds in the area of Zazid and Rakitovac and in the vicinity of Vodice, the valley of Mirna River near the Istrian thermal resort.

Program:

Day 1

The arrival at the meeting point in the afternoon hours. An introductory lecture in the evening.

Day 2

All day fieldwork: amphibian species in ponds

In the evening: work in the laboratory (identifying more demanding specimens / larvae) and a thematic lecture.

Day 3

All day fieldwork: amphibian species of limestone rocks in the vicinity of the Istrian thermal resort

In the evening: closing of the research camp and departure.

Number of participants: up to eight (maximum number per mentor).

Available material: field equipment: water nets and pots and the equipment for handling amphibians, keys and manuals for identifying reptile and amphibian species, stereo microscopes.

Recommended fieldwork equipment: camera, notebook, fieldwork clothing and footwear, extra boots, sun and rain protection.

Meals: Breakfast and dinner will be provided by the organizer and will be served at the accommodation. Participants are responsible for providing other meals.

Price: The price includes guides, material costs, accommodation and two meals (2 x breakfast and 2 x dinner). Price is determined based on the number of participants.

Transportation: It is the responsibility of the participants to organize their own transportation to the meeting point. We recommend the use of personal vehicles for the transport to the field. Transportation of the entire group can be arranged with the event organizer in advance. Transportation costs are covered separately by the participants.

WARNING: Permissions issued by the appropriate bodies of the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Croatia to work with endangered plant and animal species are required for the performance of the program.

