

THE HERPETOFAUNA OF MT. HERMON AND ITS ALTITUDINAL DISTRIBUTION¹

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Mt. Hermon is currently accessible to Israeli biologists up to 2224 m. The mountain's herpetofauna and its altitudinal zonation are of interest for several reasons. Our data, from material in the Zoological Museums of the Hebrew University and of Tel Aviv University, are as yet unsystematic. We only present them as a necessary addendum to a recent partial checklist (Hurvitz, 1980).

Hereinafter our extreme-elevation data are followed parenthetically by comparable quotes from Hurvitz (1980). NM = not mentioned by Hurvitz; NDG = listed by Hurvitz, but no details given; NND = no new data; * = restricted (in Israel) to Mt. Hermon heights; ** = endemic to Mt. Hermon (unmarked taxa occur in the Mediterranean of Israel).

Salamandra salamandra NND (NDG)

Bufo viridis 1930 m ("all altitudinal zones")

Hyla arborea NND (NDG)

Testudo graeca 1500 and 1700 m (NM, although ♀ from 1400 m belonging to Bet Usishkin was photographed by us on 22.V.1973)

*Cyrtodactylus amictopholis*** 1350-2370 m (NDG but Hoofien, 1980: down to 1300 m)

C. kotschy NND ("up to 1000 m")

Hemidactylus turcicus NND ("up to 1000 m")

Ptyodactylus h. puiseuxi 1430 m ("up to 1000 m")

*Agama rudrata** NND ("once at 1200 m") (eastern steppe form)

A. stellio 1650 m ("Hermon foothills")

Chamaeleo chamaeleon NND ("up to 1000 m")

Ablepharus kitaibelii 1415 m (NM)

Chalcides ocellatus NND ("up to 1000 m")

C. guentheri 1415 m (NM)

Eumeces schneideri 920 m ("up to 1000 m")

¹ Prepared for the 1980 meeting of the Zoological Society of Israel but not presented due to the inability of both authors to attend.

² The wall lizards of Mt. Hermon are here tentatively assigned to *Lacerta laevis* (rather than *danfordi*), but their taxonomic status is currently being reviewed by the first author and Mr. J.H. Hoofien.

- Mabuya vittata* 2000 m ("up to 1000 m")
Lacerta laevis sspp.² 1415–2224 m ("*Lacerta danfordi* 1400–2814 m; *L. laevis* NDG")
L. trilineata 1100 m ("up to 1000 m")
Ophisops elegans 2000 m ("up to 1000 m")
Typhlops vermicularis 1415 m ("up to 1000 m")
Eryx jaculus 1500 m ("1500 m")
Coluber jugularis 1700 m ("up to 1000 m")
C. ravergeri nummifer NND (NDG but Hoofien, 1968: 920 m)
*C. r. ravergeri** 1500 and 2100 m ("2000 m")
C. rubriceps 1500 m ("*C. najadum* up to 1000 m")
Eirenis modesta 1600 m (NDG but Hoofien, 1968: 1450 m)
E. rothi 2000 m (NM)
*Elaphe hohengeri** NND ("900–1600 m")
*E. quatuorlineata** 1800 m ("1230–1700 m")
Natrix tessellata 1100 m (NM)
Malpolon monspessulanus 2200 m ("up to 1000 m")
*Vipera bornmuelleri** 1800–2000 m ("1500–2814 m")
V. x. palestinae 1600 m ("up to 1000 m")

The fact that *C. r. nummifer* and *C. r. ravergeri* retain their pholidotic and coloration distinction throughout their apparently parapatric boundary from Turkey (Baran, 1976) to the Hermon (Hoofien, 1968) argues their specific status.

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