

Project Update: June 2017

A. Introduction:

Marmaris salamander (*Lyciasalamandra flavimembris*) is an endangered endemic species and found in Northwestern part of Muğla province of Turkey. Naturally, it's founded under natural coniferous forests, within the altitudes range of 30-600 m and not in modified habitats. The major threat of Marmaris salamander' population is habitat loss due to forest fires, urbanisation and climate change.

B. Methodology / approaches

To monitoring current population status, study area was divided 10 km² grids and will visited the activity season (November – February) of Marmaris salamanders. After determining distribution of the species, we will select three quadrats (10 km x 10 km) from different dominant habitats (e.g. open, scrubs, and forest) and monitor in winter and autumn. In these quadrats, all the individuals will be marked with Visible Implant Elastomer (VIE) and we will use capture-recapture method to obtain data and estimate population size and density. To understand habitat preferences of Lycian salamanders, we will test different variables (in each transects) in the salamander's habitat. These data will be helping us to link between environmental variables and presence and/or abundance of salamanders. To understand reproduction activity, we will observe phenology and breeding season of the individuals in natural habitats and all data recorded properly.

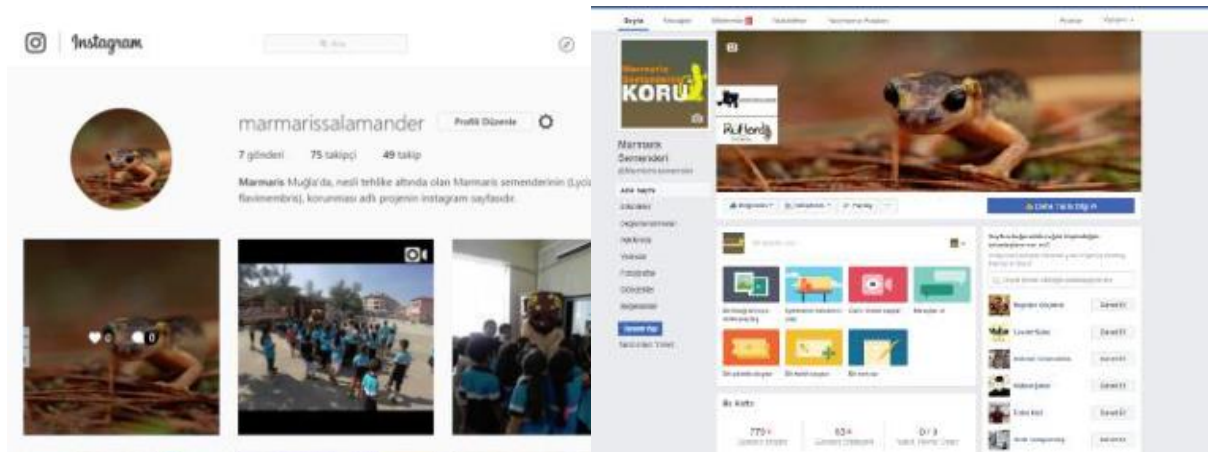
To arrange awareness raising activities, we'll perform face to face interviews with locals with a questionnaire and will contact local communities (villagers, farmers, and landowners), NGOs and regional governments (municipalities, national park staffs, and forest service's) throughout the project. Besides adult awareness activities, we will provide training to primary school students. In this training and studies, firstly we will determine readiness of green consciousness of children (between in 6-10 ages) and examine with brainstorming and verbal surveys methodology.

C. Results

As mentioned in the previous report, the biological survey were stopped due to of Marmaris salamander in aestivation. For this reason, on this report, we will talk about the awareness study we have done.

1- Social media accounts

Social media accounts were opened to promote Marmaris salamanders and our project. We were able to reach a lot of people through this channel without increasing our number of followers yet.



Picture 1: A- Instagram account of Marmaris Salamander (<https://www.instagram.com/marmarissalamander>) B- Facebook account of Marmaris salamander (<https://www.facebook.com/Marmarissemenderi/>).

2- Banner and brochures

Banners and brochures are ready for printing. They will be distributed in many places after printing the next weeks.



3- General Meetings

We attended the Rufford Small Grants Mediterranean Conference ("Nature connects to harmony of civilizations") in Turkey which also supported by Natura Society 15th and 16th May, 2017 in Koycegiz, Turkey. In these conference, we made a presentation explaining the purpose of our project and what stage it is now.



Picture 2: While presenting at Conference ("Nature connects to harmony of civilizations)

In addition, we held a meeting with Marmaris municipality officials and vice president for Marmaris Salamander Festival (promotion day) event which is one of the activities of our project. As a result of this meeting, we decided to do the festival at the science school that the municipality will allocate. The municipality will also support us with the announcement of this event. In this 1-day event, as we say in our project application, a variety of games will be organised for the children and adults to identification and win over of Marmaris salamander. We will have a theatre show and a mini concert with our other volunteer supporters at these event.



Picture 3: After meeting with Marmaris municipality officials and vice president

4- School meetings

The permission letter from the Ministry of National Education was taken for the awareness studies we conducted on the schools. After that, we made a presentation introducing Marmaris salamander about 200 students of in three different schools where children live in the same habitat/area with the salamander. In this first presentation we was aim to measure children's recognition and non-recognition of the Marmaris salamander, in other words we did pre-tested. We designed a costume to attract and improve attention of children. We made this presentation by wearing this costume. With this costumed presentation, children can see the salamander in 3D size and feel like talking to a creature like themselves. (You can find a mini video of event on Marmaris salamander Facebook and Instagram account).



Picture 4: While presenting at school

As a result of preliminary test, 98% of 200 students do not heard Marmaris salamander name; 8% of 200 students saw the species; 55% of them think it's a lizard; 17,5% of them think that it's a snake; 12,5% of them thinks it's a frogs/newt; 2,5% thinks other groups like dinosaurs; 82,5% of them think it has a poison.

