

Project Update: May 2022

During the autumn and winter 2021, we continued working on educational activities and spreading knowledge about meadow viper in Serbia. In the online conference 'International Toxin Talks', we presented our project, the current outcome of our activities and our interest in future research. We wrote an article on meadow viper and the threatening factors that this species and its habitat undergo, published in the Serbian journal 'Agricultural calendar 2022'.

We organised our third fieldwork at the beginning of May 2022. The main aim was to observe meadow viper activity in the lower altitude localities, where we confirmed their presence. We postponed going to the higher altitude localities during this field trip since they were under snow cover; therefore, the possibility of finding vipers was low. Although the weather conditions were favourable, the activity of other reptile species was low, along with the low activity of Orthoptera, the main prey of meadow vipers. We thoroughly searched three localities, but we didn't report the viper activity. One plausible explanation would be that they are still in hibernation. In our next field trip, we will again survey these localities, along with other favourable places.



Team members searching for meadow viper.

In another locality in Serbia, we organised training for undergraduate students, who will join us in the next field on Mokra Gora Mt. Aleksandra and David learned how to safely capture and manipulate venomous snakes, what information is important to collect after capturing the animal, how to collect and store biological material and how to analyse collected data.



Aleksandra taking head measures of the nose-horned viper



David and Aleksandra listening to a short lecture on data analysis

We also organised a lecture at the Faculty of Biology, University of Belgrade. We had the pleasure of talking about our project with students from the biological society "Josif Pančić". The high attendance and expressed interest in our work point to the possibility of including new people in future research.



Talking about our project with students from the biological society "Josif Pančić".