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Aqaba, Jordan, 20–23 October 2008


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**ANIMAL BIODIVERSITY
IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

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EDITED BY EIKE NEUBERT, ZUHAIR AMR,
STEFANO TAITI, BURÇIN A. GÜMÜŞ



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EDITED BY FRIEDHELM KRUPP, LYTTON J. MUSSELMAN,
MOHAMMED M.A. KOTB, ILKA WEIDIG



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ANIMAL BIODIVERSITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Despite prevailing arid conditions, the diversity of terrestrial and freshwater animals in the Middle East is amazingly high, and the region's position at the crossroads of the Palaearctic, Afrotropical, and Oriental Realms results in an exceptional biogeography. Marine biodiversity of the Arabian Sea Region is among the highest on Earth. This special issue of *ZooKeys* contains a collection of 15 papers presented during the First International Congress: Documenting, Analysing and Managing Biodiversity in the Middle East, which was held in Aqaba, Jordan from 20 to 23 October 2008. Contributions address a wide range of themes and taxa, including an introduction to the Middle Eastern Biodiversity Network, the diversity of macrozoobenthos in the Gulf, intertidal scale worms, terrestrial isopods, terrestrial mollusks of Turkey, the insect fauna of the United Arab Emirates, biodiversity and zoogeography of weevils, a new species of tooth-carp, mapping terrestrial reptile distribution, phylogeny and taxonomy of vipers, bird migrations, effects of farming on birds, and mammals in Turkey and Syria. This special issue will be of great value to anyone interested in biodiversity research and conservation, particularly to scholars of zoology, biogeography, and ecology, as well as decision makers in the Middle East.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Documenting, analysing and managing the animal biodiversity in the Middle East – a challenge for the future by *Eike Neubert* ♦ The Middle Eastern Biodiversity Network: Generating and sharing knowledge for ecosystem management and conservation by *Friedhelm Krupp, Masaa Al-Jumaily, Michel Bariche, Maroof Khalaf, Masoumeh Malek, Bruno Streit* ♦ Winter species composition, diversity and abundance of macrozoobenthos in Kuwait's waters, Arabian Gulf by *Faiza Al-Yamani, Natalya Boltachova, Nikolai Revkov, Mikail Makarov, Vladimir Grintsov, Elena Kolesnikova, Galyna-Vantsetti Murina* ♦ First record of the family Pseudocerotidae (Platyhelminthes, Polycladida, Cotylea) from the Persian Gulf, Iran by *Zahra Khalili, Hassan Rahimian, Jamile Pazoiki* ♦ Intertidal scale worms (Polychaeta, Polynoidae and Sigalionidae) from the northern coasts of the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman by *Abyieh Bonyadi Naeni, Hassan Rahimian* ♦ New species and records of terrestrial Isopoda (Crustacea, Oniscidea) from Socotra Island, Yemen by *Stefano Taiti, Ilaria Checcucci* ♦ The biodiversity of the terrestrial malacofauna of Turkey – status and perspectives by *Burçin Aşkın Gümüş, Eike Neubert* ♦ Increasing knowledge of the entomological fauna of the United Arab Emirates and the role of private collections by *Brigitte Howarth, Michael P.T. Gillett* ♦ Review of the biodiversity and zoogeographical patterns of the weevils (Coleoptera, Curculionidae) in Israel by *Ariel-Leib-Leonid Friedman* ♦ A new species of tooth-carp, *Aphanius mesopotamicus*, from Iran and Iraq (Actinopterygii, Cyprinodontidae) by *Brian W. Coad* ♦ Mapping the terrestrial reptile distributions in Oman and the United Arab Emirates by *Andrew S. Gardner* ♦ Recent advances in phylogeny and taxonomy of Near and Middle Eastern Vipers – an update by *Nikolaus Stümpel, Ulrich Joger* ♦ Spring bird migration phenology in Eilat, Israel by *Reuven Yosef, Mikhail Markovets* ♦ How extensive is the effect of modern farming on bird communities in a sand dune desert? by *Fares Khoury, Mohammed Al-Shamlith* ♦ Mammalian fauna of the Termessos National Park, Turkey by *Anna M. De Marinis, Marco Masseti* ♦ Carnivores of Syria by *Marco Masseti*

ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

On a global scale, the Middle East is the only transition zone between three major biogeographic units, the Palaearctic, Afrotropical, and Oriental Realms, resulting in an exceptional biogeography and unique biological diversity, which are increasingly impacted by anthropogenic threats and climate change. This special issue of *BioRisk* contains a collection of 15 papers presented during the First International Congress: Documenting, Analysing and Managing Biodiversity in the Middle East, which was held in Aqaba, Jordan from 20 to 23 October 2008. Contributions address a wide range of themes, including success and limits of re-colonisation of the Mediterranean with tropical marine species, biodiversity networks, ecological challenges of rapid urbanization in the United Arab Emirates, habitat mapping for protected area design, diversity of cyanobacteria in hot springs, variability and diversity of phytoplankton in the Gulf, diversity and distribution of lichens, a complex *ex situ* – *in situ* approach for conservation of endangered plants, and the Key Biodiversity Areas Programme implemented by Nature Iraq with various examples of phytoplankton, fish and bird studies. This special issue will be of value to anyone interested in biodiversity research and conservation in the Middle East including botanists, zoologists, ecologists, conservationists, and decision makers as well as those who care about global climate change and its effects on biological diversity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The effects of climate change on biodiversity: Pressing issues and research priorities by *Friedhelm Krupp, Lytton J. Musselman, Mohammed M.A. Kotb, Ilka Weidig* ♦ Tethys returns to the Mediterranean: Success and limits of tropical re-colonization by *Francis Dov Por* ♦ The biodiversity network BioFrankfurt: An innovative strategic approach to integrative research, conservation, and education by *Jenny Kruttschinn, Bruno Streit* ♦ Urbanisation in the United Arab Emirates: The challenges for ecological mitigation in a rapidly developing country by *Andrew S. Gardner, Brigitte Howarth* ♦ The Key Biodiversity Areas Project in Iraq: Objectives and scope 2004–2008 by *Clayton Rubec, Azzam Alwash, Anna Bachmann* ♦ Habitat mapping project of the proposed Iraqi Marshlands National Park area by *Nabeel A. Abdulhasan* ♦ Morphological, phylogenetic and physiological diversity of cyanobacteria in the hot springs of Zerka Ma'in, Jordan by *Aharon Oren, Danny Ionescu, Muna Y. Hindiye, and Hanan I. Malkawi* ♦ Space-

time variability of phytoplankton structure and diversity in the north-western part of the Arabian Gulf (Kuwait's waters) by *Igor Polikarpov, Faiza Al-Yamani, Maria Saburova* ♦ Biodiversity of free-living flagellates in Kuwait's intertidal sediments by *Maria Saburova, Faiza Al-Yamani, Igor Polikarpov* ♦ Key Biodiversity Areas: Rapid assessment of phytoplankton in the Mesopotamian Marshlands of southern Iraq by *Ghasak S. Al-Obaidi, Suad K. Salman, Clayton D.A. Rubec* ♦ Lichens of Israel: diversity, ecology, and distribution by *Marina Temina, Eviatar Nevo* ♦ Complex *ex situ* - *in situ* approach for conservation of endangered plant species and its application to *Iris atrofusca* of the Northern Negev by *Sergei Volis, Michael Blecher, Yuval Sapir* ♦ Key Biodiversity Areas: Rapid assessment of fish fauna in southern Iraq by *Ibrahim M. Abd, Clayton Rubec, Brian W. Coad* ♦ Structure and ecological indices of fish assemblages in the recently restored Al-Hammar Marsh, southern Iraq by *Najah A. Hussain, Abdul-Razak M. Mohamed, Sajed S. Al Noo, Falah M. Mutlak, Ibrahim M. Abed, Brian W. Coad* ♦ Key Biodiversity Areas: Rapid assessment of birds in Kurdistan, northern Iraq by *Korsh Ararat* ♦ A summary of birds recorded in the marshes of southern Iraq, 2005–2008 by *Mudhafar Salim, Richard Porter, Clayton Rubec*

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