

## Chelonians in herpetological collection of the Natural History Museum in Split, Croatia

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The Natural History Museum in Split was founded on March 10, 1924 (Ževrnja *et al.* 2004). From the very opening of the Museum, its founder, the first director and curator Mr. Umberto Girometta, started to congregate materials for the herpetological collection, the integral part of which is also the collection of chelonians. His endeavours to establish the herpetological collection were continued by Mr. Novak and Mr. Cvitanić, also curators and directors in Museum. The present-day collection of amphibians and reptiles of the Natural History Museum in Split is the result of dedicated work and material collection between the 1920-ies and the end of 2014.

During June 2013 and July 2014, the entire herpetological collection of the Natural History Museum was analysed, including the collection of chelonians. Most of the samples are dermoplastic preparations; only a small part of the material is stored in alcohol or formalin. While analysing the collection, we used the “Book of inventory: vertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals” of the Natural History Museum in Split, and to identify certain species we used the available literature (Arnold & Burton 2002; Marković 2004; Cox *et al.* 2006; Tvrtković *et al.* 2006; Jelić *et al.* 2012).

Analysis of the herpetological collection of the Natural History Museum in Split revealed that chelonians are represented with 29 specimens under 22 inventory numbers (Table 1). In this collection, therefore, there are samples of 4 families, 5 genera and 5 species of turtles and tortoises. The largest number of specimens was collected by Girometta, U., Cvitanić, A., Ževrnja, N. and Milat, T., in Dalmatian area. Some of them were wild-caught, and several originated from the local zoo. However, 13 samples (45%) lack the information about the collector, and for 11 samples (38%) there is no information on the place of origin. Dates of collection are missing for 14 (48%) specimens. For 10 specimens (34%) there are no data about their collectors, or the collection dates, or the localities where the specimens were collected. The oldest specimen was contributed collected in 1927, and the most recent in 2014.

**Table 1.** Chelonians in herpetological collection of the Natural History Museum Split.

Species	Inventory number	Locality	Date	No. of specimens	Collector
<i>Caretta caretta</i> <sup>1</sup> (Linnaeus, 1758)	59	Šibenik	/	1	Girometta, U.
	60	/	/	1	Girometta, U.
	61	/	/	1	/
	62	/	/	1	/
	63	/	/	1	/
	222	/	/	1	/
	223	/	/	1	/
	224	/	/	1	/
229	/	/	1	/	
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> <sup>2</sup> (Vandelli, 1761)	66	Pelješac	1956	1	Cvitanić, A.
<i>Trachemys scripta</i> <sup>3</sup> (Schoepff, 1792)	231	Zoo Marjan, Split	/	1	/
	235	Zoo Marjan, Split	1999	1	Ževrnja, N.
	333	Zoo Marjan, Split	2014	1	/
<i>Emys orbicularis</i> <sup>3</sup> (Linnaeus, 1758)	41	Stobreč	1927	1	Girometta, U.
	227	/	/	1	/
	232	Zoo Marjan, Split	/	1	/
	314	/	/	1	/
<i>Testudo hermanni</i> <sup>4</sup> Gmelin, 1789	225	Zoo Marjan, Split	23 March 2000	2	Ževrnja, N.
	226	Zoo Marjan, Split	16 April 2000	1	Ževrnja, N.
	228	/	/	1	/
	335	Zoo Marjan, Split	2013	1	Milat, T.
	336	Zoo Marjan, Split	2014	7	Milat, T.

<sup>1</sup> family Cheloniidae, <sup>2</sup> family Dermochelyidae, <sup>3</sup> family Emydidae, <sup>4</sup> family Testudinidae.

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