

Project Update: June 2013

Despite a rainy and cold spring, the first field trip of our project was very successful. In the visited area of southern Serbia we noted approximately 15 previously unknown localities inhabited by Hermann's tortoises, and collected over 60 blood samples for the genetic dataset. At two newly discovered tortoise habitats we marked animals and thus started capture-mark-recapture studies. These two populations seem extraordinarily dense. Knowledge gathered in future studies at these localities could serve as a model of healthy Hermann's tortoise populations living in appropriate habitats. Information gained at such models could be crucial for protection of this endangered species.

The next expedition will take place in south-eastern and eastern part of Serbia, which generally lack data on existence of Hermann's tortoises.

