

Tuesday June 23rd 2009

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Field report - Menorca June 2009

by **Marten van den Berg**

As mentioned in my last year's report on Menorca, I went this year again to this beautiful and relaxed island, with the intention to try to visit some islets not visited by me before. I decided this time to stay a bit longer (10 days on the island), so in the case of days with non-herping weather, there would still be enough time. Well, it became 10 days with perfect conditions; blue skies, temperatures from 24 to 27 C and not to much wind (2-4 Bft.).

We drove the first day to Sant Tomas, to revisit the Escull de Binicodrell. The population of Escull de Binicodrell Petit seemed smaller in numbers then during my 2008 visits. Also the shrub-cover was less, but this gave me a better view on the lizards. I mentioned in my previous report seeing here only brown-colored lizards, even in the juvenile stage. This year the greenish color-pattern seen on Escull de Binicodrell Gros was also seen on the little rock.

[Comments \(6\)](#)

Report quality: **3.6/5**
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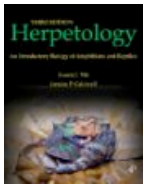
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Male *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Petit 01-06-2009)

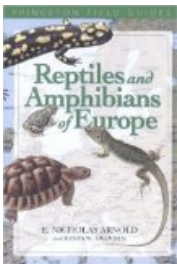
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Female *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Petit 01-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Gros 01-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Gros 01-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Gros 01-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis* (Escull de Binicodrell Gros 01-06-2009)

As you can see on the nectar feeding specimens, most of the *Podarcis lilfordi* subspecies of Menorca are quite small (SVL 5-6 cm).

The second day we drove to Es Grau and were able to rent a kayak to visit Illa d'en Colom and some smaller islets in the area. On the first one, Illot de Sa Cudia, we didn't find any lizards, despite good habitat conditions. Probably the separation from mainland Menorca was too recent. The other two small islets, Illot de Fra Bernat and Illot d'es Moro, were also without lizards.

On the relative big island of d'en Colom we could observe some of the *Podarcis lilfordi brauni* population.



Habitat (Illa d'en Colom 02-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi brauni* (Illa d'en Colom 02-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi brauni* (Illa d'en Colom 02-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi brauni* (Illa d'en Colom 02-06-2009)

The fourth day we rented a kayak in Fornells and revisited the three islets in the bay.



Male *Podarcis lilfordi porrosicolus* (Illot des Porros 04-06-2009)





Male *Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae* (Illa Sargantana 04-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae* (Illa Sargantana 04-06-2009)

The fifth day we went to Illot d'en Tosqueta. It could take a 90 minutes hike through the garigue from Son Parc, but the alternative catamaran trip from Fornells is much more comfortable.



Catamaran with beverages (Illot d'en Tosqueta 05-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae* (Illot d'en Tosqueta 05-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae* (Illot d'en Tosqueta 05-06-2009)

On Sundays you can visit Illa del Rei; all transfers arranged by the volunteers of the foundation restoring the old naval hospital. Actually, I didn't think they would make progress in the restoration, but I was wrong. The departure for the visit is in En Castel at 8:45.



Female *Podarcis lilfordi balearicus* (Illa del Rei 07-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi balearicus* (Illa del Rei 07-06-2009)



Tarentola mauritanica (Illa del Rei 07-06-2009)

The next day we went to the beach at Cala Algaiarens. In the river, dunes and pine forest there is a lot of herping to do. I wanted to see *Emys orbicularis*, but the only turtles I've spotted were *Trachemys scripta* and *Testudo hermanni*.



Cala Algaiarens (08-06-2009)



Testudo hermanni (Cala Algairens 08-06-2009)



Trachemys scripta (Cala Algairens 08-06-2009)

When I finished hiking, and returned to the beach (after dismantling the camera, because people on the beach don't flee when photographed; they react different, I guess...), I saw a *natrix maura* specimen in shallow part of the river. When I was up and ready to make some shots, it was speeding away.



Natrix maura in a blur... (Cala Algairens 08-06-2009)

On Tuesday we rented a kayak in Fornells, put it on the rental-car's roof, and went off to revisit the islets near Na Macaret. The first islet visited was Illot d'en Carbó, which is actually two islets. On the smaller part there is some vegetation, but no lizards. On the bigger part there is a small population. Last year I spotted two complete melanistic specimens, but this year I couldn't retrieve them. The sister islet Illot d'en Carbonet is also without lizards.



Juvenile (typical for most subspecies) *Podarcis lilfordi carbonerae* (Illot d'en Carbó 09-06-2009)



Remains of something larger than a lizard (Illot d'en Carbó 09-06-2009)



Male *Podarcis lilfordi addayae* (Illa Petita d'Addaia 09-06-2009)



Female *Podarcis lilfordi addayae* (Illa Petita d'Addaia 09-06-2009)

Last year I promised to take a closer look at the other herps. Well, I didn't.

Taking photographs of small *Podarcis lilfordi* subspecies is a time-consuming business. The average fleeing-distance was 4 to 5 meters. Only once in a while I got lucky and could take a close shot. Some island surveys lasted 3 hours and only brought 40 pictures, not all of good quality.

Perhaps I'll return later this year to Menorca to fill the last gaps, otherwise it will be Ibiza or Formentera; a lot of islets and subspecies of *Podarcis pityusensis* waiting...

Comments (6)

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Milan Vogrin



Nice photo presentations of subspecies.

23/6/2009 16h03 - (CET)

Peter Oefinger



The diversity of Podarcis in that area is impressive!

23/6/2009 7h52 - (CET)

Frank Deschandol



Thanks for your report, of course the lizard on umbellifer is truly amazing !

23/6/2009 5h16 - (CET)

Marten van den Berg



Not sure. The part in the water was about 3 meters, so it probably could be of some kind of whale. Last year it wasn't there...

22/6/2009 21h45 - (CET)

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Daniel Phillips



Where did those bones come from do you think ?

22/6/2009 21h37 - (CET)

Matthieu Berroneau



Good trip ! Picture of lilfordi eating flower and picture of *Natrix maura* are great !

22/6/2009 21h34 - (CET)