

Book Review:

ANTONIO ROMANO. Atlante degli anfi del Parco Nazionale del Cilento Vallo di Diano e Alburni - Distribuzione, biologia, ecologia e conservazione

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The “Parco Nazionale del Cilento Vallo di Diano e Alburni” (PNCVDA) is the largest and one of the most diverse national protected areas in Italy. It is located in the southern part of the country, in the region of Campania, not far from the boundary with Basilicata and Calabria. The park is really huge, covering more than 180.000 ha, and ranges from the Mediterranean sea coast to the inner Apennine Mountains. From a naturalistic point of view, the PNCVDA is particularly well known for its plant and bird diversities, while the entire region offers to its visitors one of the most genuine and tasty examples of the true “Mediterranean diet”.

In recent years, there have been several herpetological publications in Campania (e.g. Romano et al., 2008, 2010a, b; Guarino et al., 2012), suggesting an increasing interest on these zoological groups inhabiting the southern Apennine environment. Therefore the publication of this Atlas appears as an obvious synthesis of these previous works and updates both the recent regional Atlas of Guarino et al. (2012) and the Italian Atlas that has been published less than 10 years ago (Sindaco et al., 2006).

The “Atlante degli anfi del Parco Nazionale del Cilento Vallo di Diano e Alburni” is completely written in Italian, counts 164 pages and is forwarded by two presentations, the first by the Park's President and the second one by the President of the *Societas Herpetologica Italica*, one of the many Organisations that sponsored the volume.

This book is organised in six main chapters and a Reference list. The first two chapters treat the general

Park features (geology, flora, wildlife and aquatic habitats) and give some biological generalities on amphibians. An identification key for the species inhabiting the Park, both textual and iconographic, is also provided.

The third chapter is dedicated to the historical overview on the previous herpetological studies, while the fourth describes the methodology used to collect field data.

The fifth chapter describes the distribution, ecology and conservation status of the eleven morphospecies found within the study territory: *Salamandra salamandra*, *Salamandrina terdigitata*, *Lissotriton italicus*, *Triturus carnifex*, *Bombina pachypus*, *Bufo balearicus*, *Bufo bufo*, *Hyla intermedia*, *Pelophylax kl. esculentus* & *P. lessonae* (water frogs are treated together), *Rana dalmatina* and *Rana italica*. Each species has its own colour map, an histogram visualising the altitudinal distribution, a pie chart informing about the different kinds of breeding habitats (e.g., running water sites, lakes and marshes, artificial tanks and so on). Moreover, each species is illustrated by many photos describing phenotypic variation of adults, larvae and eggs, together with some examples of the species typical breeding habitats. In general, the species accounts are very informative about the ecology and current species conservation at the global and local level, and it is clear that all this information is truly first hand.

The final chapter is devoted to the analysis of the amphibian community found in the PNCVDA. Different issues are here discussed and analysed: biogeography, altitudinal distribution, ecological niches, diffusion, rarity and the general conservation status of amphibian populations.

The reference list is extensive, as it counts more than 150 entries. This should be a good start for anyone interested in southern Apennine batrachofauna.

In conclusion, the “Atlante degli anfibii del Parco Nazionale del Cilento Vallo di Diano e Alburni” is a well written, informative and should be useful for all herpetologists working in or visiting the Italian Apennines and looking for amphibians in natural or artificial habitats.

The book layout is agreeable and illustrations are printed in high quality. The only minor criticism to this concise but informative volume, is that the typesetting is relatively small, maybe to spare space (but there are large and under-used page margins), while the symbols that are used to describe the species conservation status are so tiny that are difficult to read, for example the “Bern Convention” symbol is so small that becomes almost un-recognisable and the letters under the logo are difficult to read even with a magnifying 20x lens.

This volume may be requested writing to “Parco Nazionale del Cilento e del Vallo di Diano P.zza S. Caterina, 8, I-84078 Vallo Della Lucania (SA), Italy or by email: l.deriso@cilentoediano.it

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