

Animal Biodiversity Final Report

Prepared by
Zuhair Amr Ph. D.

Project coordinator:	Zuhair S. Amr	Jordan University of Science & Technology
Participants	Ahmad Disi	Jordan University
	Ahamd Bader	Jordan University
	Ratib Al-Oran	Mutah University
	David Modry	University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Brno, Czech Republic

Abstract: The animal biodiversity team conducted field research covering various aspects of animal diversity in Jordan during 1996-2001. Ecological systems representing major ecosystems were studied extensively. With collaboration with the Badia Research and Development Programme, a number of studies were accomplished that enriched our understanding of biodiversity in Jordan and provided a great deal of information on the various components of animal diversity. These efforts were culminated in publishing over 30 scientific papers in highly reputed journals and one reference book on the herpetology of Jordan. In addition, several new taxa (Parasites, insects and reptiles) were described for the first time. Also, additional new records for various taxa were reported to the fauna of Jordan.

Introduction:

In 1995, the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST) generously supported this project by a total of 34,000 JD. A steering committee was assembled to include main investigators for other biodiversity projects (Microbiology, botany and zoology) under the auspices of the Badia Research and Development Programme (BRDP). Countrywide field surveys were conducted in cooperation with BRDP throughout the entire period of the project. A one-year (2001) extension was granted to finalize some on going field research and to conclude the final stages in the proposed studies.

Objectives:

Since the early nineties, biodiversity issues received much attention worldwide as a result of the Earth Conference that was held in Brazil. Efforts were directed towards providing funds to support research projects dealing with biodiversity issues, especially in Third World Countries. Thus, providing base-line data on the biodiversity resources and its use at the present.

The diversity of animals in Jordan is rather interesting, owing to the country's location where four different faunal areas meet, namely: Afrotropical, Oriental, Saharo-Arabian-Sindian and Palaeartic. Hence, the fauna of Jordan is a mixture of several assemblages in addition to the occurrence of some endemic forms. By far, animal diversity in Jordan remains poorly known, and yet mostly unexplored.

The present study is the first attempt to compile efforts of various Jordanian zoologists to reveal the animal biodiversity elements in the Hashmite Kingdom of Jordan. These objectives are as follows:

1. Identify the animal diversity for some groups of the Jordanian fauna (reptiles and amphibians, mammals, birds, some groups of insects).