

ABSTRACT

If there is an innate, specific idea of the natural animal predator, antipredatory reactions should occur even the subjects are kept in captivity for several generations. An ideal subject for this type of research is the leopard gecko (*Eublepharis macularius*), an animal which is kept in captivity for several generations (there are also several wild subjects in our laboratory). Its primary enemy in rural Pakistan is the snake.

The goal of this thesis was to explore the leopard gecko's antipredatory behaviour, to the snake predators combining sympatric and alopatric behaviour, to other ecological factors. The predators are: *Spalerosophis diadema* (sympatric, reptile-vorous), *Elaphe q. quatuorlineata* (allopatric, prefers warm-blooded chordates, but also reptile-vorous), *Hemorrhois hippocrepis* (allopatric, lizards are its main prey), *Lampropeltis getula californiae* (alopatric, reptile-vorous), *Eryx johnii* (sympatric, eats young rodents and reptile), *Gongylophis colubrinus* (allopatric, eats young rodents and reptile) and *Malpolon monspessulanus* (allopatric, is moderately dangerous for leopard geckos). As an control was chosen *Pseudopus apodus* (native to Iran, eats invertebrates, small rodents and reptile).

Sampling tests were performed with these leopard geckos. It was observed if the subject prefers the cage with a predator inside, or without. Young animals were tested as well as adults. It seems that idea of a snake predator is rather innate and supported by wariness increased at young age. The intensity of antipredatory response, is related to combination of predator's various qualities e.g. sympatry and predator ecology.

This thesis will be financed by GAAV č. IAA 601 410 803 grant Research plan MŠMT č. 0021620828.