

Territoriality in lizards

Jan Chmelař

Abstract :

Territoriality is a widely discussed phenomenon occurring among all groups of vertebrates on intraspecific level. Nevertheless, lizards occupy a prominent position due to a nearly endless variability in forms of territorial behaviour on the levels of higher taxons, species, populations and individuals. Examples could be systems of social dominance hierarchy, female territoriality or interspecific territoriality. Importance of territoriality is obvious as a way of reproduction control and exclusive usage of space and resources and has a positive impact on individuals that are able to defend their territories. On the other hand, there is a higher exposure to predators and a cost in a form of depleted energy. One other thing is that it sometimes complicates efforts of conservational biologists by lowering genetic variability inside populations of endangered species.

Key words: territoriality, social dominance, lizards, home range