

Introduction

DILIAN GEORGIEV, Editor in Chief

The initiative for the faunal investigations of Sarnena Gora Mts. was provoked because of two reasons – the first one is a scientific one (there are very few studies of this area), and the second one is a personal one (I was born in Stara Zagora city and I currently live in the mountains in Hrishteni village). At the hills of Sarnena Gora (especially along the Bedechka River) my friend, Ivailo Klisurov (NGO “Green Balkans”) and I grew up as naturalists and conservationists. Our “expeditions,” inspired by the books of Gerald Durrel and Petar Beron were full of interesting adventures, which are still remembered with a smile.

Here I use also the opportunity to express my gratitude to all colleagues and friends who were involved in this project. It is a project without any finances and all work was paid by our enthusiasm of naturalists. Some of the team members had started later their own projects with financial supports to explore the target area. The idea grew up and many new relationships between colleagues were established.

I wish to send many thanks to the ZooNotes team: Dimitar Bechev (founder of the journal), Vesela Yancheva and Anelia Pavlova, for their constant support (again, without any payment), vital for the journal survival.

Here as a support to the faunal studies we tried to include and some data on the geology, soils, and habitats of the region.

From January 2020 ZooNotes was opened for papers about the faunistic diversity of Sarnena Gora Mts. There was no limit of 4 pages per article as it is for the regular issues. The authors were strongly advised to include also photo/s of the most fascinating or rare species in their papers.

All accepted papers are going to be published one after another, and will not be arranged in a systematic order according to the various taxonomic groups. This was done in favor of the authors in terms of fast manuscript publishing and according to technical reasons. Because of time needed for some more terrain and/or laboratory work of some of the teams we decided to publish the “Fauna of Sarnena Gora” in two parts, one in 2020 and a second at the end of 2021.



Dilian Georgiev (left) and Ivaylo Klisurov (right) in 1994 at fifteen and sixteen years of age, respectively, observing birds (photo: Simeon Marin, “Green Balkans”).