

UPDATED LIST OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES IN IRAQ 2014

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ABSTRACT

The present work provides a list of all amphibians and reptiles recorded from Iraq up to 2014. It includes 115 species (105 species of reptiles and 10 species of amphibians) dating back to 25 families (20 families of reptiles and 5 families of amphibians). Conservation status of each species was mentioned.

Keywords: Amphibians, Reptiles, Iraq, Biodiversity, Herpetofauna

INTRODUCTION

Reptiles and amphibians are an important part of the biodiversity, which are spreading across the land of Iraq. Iraq Natural History Museum's publication No: 26 in 1969 is the list that included all vertebrate animals in Iraq in that time, including the Herpetofauna in Iraq which consisted of 91 species of reptiles and 6 species of amphibians Mahdi and Georg (1969), then Nature Iraq (non-governmental organization) issued a draft list of reptiles and amphibians of Iraq (Amr, 2009).

In this list of Herpetofauna species of Iraq consist of (115) species distributed to (105 species of reptiles and 10 species of amphibians) dating back to 25 families (20 families of reptiles and 5 families of amphibians). These families include many genera but the species in this list located under 69 genera (61 of them of reptiles and 8 genera of amphibians).

The studies of Herpetofauna in Iraq need more researches and explorations of species and subspecies located in it. Iraq is a rich and fertile area of biodiversity, In fact, there is hardly no place devoid of biodiversity in the different environments from the north to the far south, but although the Herpetology in Iraq did not have extensively of studied, In the middle of the last century, some Herpetologists have been published there note on Herpetology of Iraq like Hass (1957) and Khalaf (1959), but the big role and more importantly is to the Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum in record and add many species of reptiles and amphibians to the Herpetofauna List of Iraq, Afrasiab and Ali (1989) recorded their list for Romaila reptiles, South of Iraq also Nature Iraq (Non-governmental organizations interested in the environment of Iraq) issued a draft list of reptiles and amphibians in Iraq in 2009, followed by addition a number of species of snakes in Iraq and update the subspecies by the Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum, This list included all of these updates and recently additions species.

Updated list

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This checklist is the latest update on species of Herpetofauna of Iraq. It includes all available and reliable information published of Herpetofauna species, which has been confirmed its occurrence in Iraq. The information on the list of species collected by reviewing of previous the old and new studies, literatures and the lists Herpetofauna species of Iraq like Garstecki and Amr (2011) and some neighboring countries, which indicated species that spread in a common environment between them and Iraq like Arnold (1986) and the publication of Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum. In addition to the latest papers published of the species recorded for the first time in Iraq.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Updated list of amphibians and reptiles in Iraq 2014

Scientific name	English name	Conservation status
AMPHIBIA		
Family: Salamandridae		
<i>Neurergus crocatus</i> Cope, 1862	Mountain Newt, Azerbaijan Newt, Lake Urmia Newt	VU
<i>Neurergus microspilotus</i> (Nesterov, 1916)	Kurdistan Newt	CR
<i>Salamandra salamandra semenovi</i> Nesterov, 1916	Common Fire Salamander, Fire Salamander	LC
<i>Ommatotriton (Triturus) vittatus</i> (Gray, 1835)	Southern Banded Newt, Banded Newt, Striped Eft	LC
Family: Bufonidae		
<i>Pseudepidaea (Bufo) surdus</i> (Boulenger, 1891)* ¹	Iranian Earless Toad, Iranian Toad, Pakistan Toad	LC
<i>Pseudepidaea (bufo) viridis</i> (Laurenti, 1768)* ²	Green Toad	DD
Family: Hylidae		
<i>Hyla savignyi</i> (Audouin, 1829)	Middle East Tree Frog	LC
Family: Pelobatidae		
<i>Pelobates syriacus</i> Boettger, 1889	Eastern Spadefoot, Syrian Spadefoot	LC
Family: Ranidae		
<i>Rana camerani</i> Boulenger, 1886* ³		LC
<i>Pelophylax (Rana) ridibundus ridibundus</i> (Pallas, 1771)	Eurasian Marsh Frog	LC

*¹ Afrasiab and Ali (1988)

*² Leviton *et al.* (1992) reported occurrence of *Bufo viridis* in Iraq, it also reported by Mohammad *et al.* (2010) and Jasim (2008). Disi *et al.* (1999) noted its presence in Jordan, but according to IUCN (2014a) it did not mapped in the range of these countries instead of that *Pseudepidaea (Bufo) variabilis* (Pallas, 1769) mapped and referred to its presence in Iraq and Jordan

*³ Recorded by Kevork (1972) in Iraq and it considered a synonym to *Rana macrocnemis*, there is ongoing discussion regarding the taxonomic distinctiveness of *R. camerani* according to IUCN (2014b).

REPTILIA		
Family: Cheloniidae		
<i>Caretta caretta</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Loggerhead Sea Turtle	EN
<i>Chelonia mydas</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Green Turtle	EN
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata bissa</i> (Rüppell, 1835)	Hawksbill Turtle sub-species	CR
<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i> (Eschscholtz, 1829)	Olive Ridley	VU
Family: Dermochelyidae		
<i>Dermochelys coriacea schlegelii</i> (Garman, 1884)	Leather Back Sea Turtle sub-species	CR
Family: Emydidae		
<i>Mauremys caspica caspica</i> (Gmelin, 1774)* ¹	Caspian Pond Turtle, Strip-necked Terrapin	NE
<i>Mauremys caspica siebenrocki</i> Wischuf & Fritz, 1997* ²	Caspian Pond Turtle, Strip-necked Terrapin	NE
Family: Testudinidae		
<i>Testudo graeca ibera</i> Pallas, 1814	Spur-thighed Tortoise	VU
Family: Trionychidae		
<i>Rafetus euphraticus</i> (Daudin, 1801)	Euphrates Softshell Turtle	EN
Family: Amphisbaenidae		
<i>Blanus strauchi aporus</i> (Werner 1898)	Anatolian Worm Lizard	NE
Family: Trogonophidea		
<i>Diplometopon zarudnyi</i> Nikolsky, 1907* ³	Zarudnyi's Worm Lizard	LC
Family: Agamidae		
<i>Laudakia nupta nupta</i> (De Filippi, 1843)	Large Scaled-rock Agama	NE
<i>Stellagama (Laudakia) stellio</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Starred Agama, Roughtail Rock Agama	LC
<i>Phrynocephalus maculatus longicaudatus</i> Haas, 1957	Black Tailed Toed Agama, Spotted Toad-headed Agama	NE
<i>Trapelus agilis agilis</i> (Olivier, 1807)	Brilliant Agama, Steppe Agama	NE
<i>Trapelus pallidus haasi</i> (Y.werner, 1971)* ⁴	Pale Agama	NE
<i>Trapelus persicus fieldi</i> (Haas & Werner, 1969)* ⁵		LC
<i>Trapelus ruderatus</i> (Olivier, 1804)* ⁵	Horny-scaled Agama, Oliver's Agama, Anderson's Agama, Baluch Ground Agama, Persia Agama	LC

*1 Recorded by Leviton *et al.* (1992)

*2 Recorded by Amr (2009)

*3 *Diplometopon shueaibi* Niazi, 1979 was recorded a synonym to *Diplometopon zarudnyi* Nikolsky, 1907 by Leviton *et al.* (1992).*4 *Trapelus agnetae* was treated as a synonym of *T. pallidus* until Disi *et al.* (2001) found it to be identical to the subspecies *T. p. haasi*, and thus *T. p. haasi* should be considered a junior synonym of *T. p. agnetae*. Subsequent molecular research found *T. p. pallidus* to be synonymous with *T. mutabilis*, but that *T. p. agnetae* belonged to a separate clade (Wagner *et al.*, 2011). These authors therefore resurrected *T. agnetae* as a full species.*5 This account follows Anderson (1999) and Disi (2002) in including *Trapelus blandfordi* within *T. persicus*, itself now a junior synonym of *T. ruderatus* (Rastegar-Pouyani, 2000). *Trapelus ruderatus baluchianus* (Olivier, 1804) is now included within *Trapelus megalonyx* (Günther, 1864), following Rastegar-Pouyani (2000).

Updated list

Family: Gekkonidae		
<i>Asaccus elisae</i> (Werner, 1895)	Werner's Leaf-toed Gecko	LC
<i>Asaccus griseonotus</i> Dixon & Anderson, 1973	Grey Spotted Leaf-toed Gecko, Gray-marked Gecko	LC
<i>Asaccus saffinae</i> Afrasiab & Mohamed, 2009	Caves Gecko	NE
<i>Bunopus tuberculatus</i> Blanford, 1874	Baluch Rock Gecko, Arabian Desert Gecko, Southern Tuberculated Gecko	LC
<i>Cyrtopodion scabrum</i> (Heyden, 1827)	Keeled Rock Gecko, Rough-tailed Gecko, Rough Thin-toed Gecko, Rough Bent-toed Gecko	LC
<i>Eublepharis angramainyu</i> Anderson & Leviton, 1966	Iraqi Eyelid Gecko	DD
<i>Hemidactylus flaviviridis</i> Rüppell, 1835	Yellow-bellied House Gecko, Northern House Gecko	NE
<i>Hemidactylus persicus</i> Anderson, 1872	Persian Hecko, Persia Leaf-toed Gecko	NE
<i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Mediterranean Hecko, Turkish Hecko, Turkish Warty Hecko	LC
<i>Mediodactylus (Carinatogekko) heteropholis</i> (Minton, Anderson & Anderson, 1970)	Iraqi Keel-scaled Hecko, Iraqui Gecko	DD
<i>Mediodactylus (Cyrtopodion) heterocercum mardinensis</i> (Mertens 1924)	Blandford's Rough Scaled Gecko, Asia Minor Thin-toed Gecko	NE
<i>Mediodactylus (Cyrtopodion) kotschyi syriacus</i> (Stepanek 1937)	Kotschy's Gecko	LC
<i>Ptyodactylus hasselquistii</i> (Donndorff, 1798)	Common Fan-footed Gecko, Yellow Fan-fingered Gecko, Hasselquist's Fan-footed Gecko	NE
<i>Ptyodactylus puiseuxi</i> Boutan, 1893	Levante Fan-fingered Gecko	NE
<i>Stenodactylus affinis</i> (Murray, 1884)	Murray's Comb-fingered Gecko, Iranian Short-fingered Gecko	LC
<i>Stenodactylus doriae</i> (Blanford, 1874)	Doriae's Comb-fingered Gecko, Middle Eastern Short-fingered Gecko, Sand Gecko	LC
<i>Stenodactylus grandiceps</i> Haas, 1957	Stout Gecko, Jordan Short-fingered Gecko	LC
<i>Stenodactylus slevini</i> Haas, 1957	Slevin's Short-fingered Gecko	LC
Family: Lacertidae		
<i>Acanthodactylus boskianus</i> (Daudin, 1802)	Bosc's Fringe-toed Lizard, Bosk's Fringe-fingered Lizard	NE
<i>Acanthodactylus grandis</i> Boulenger, 1909	Giant Fringe-toed Lizard, Mesopotamian Fringe-toed Lizard	LC

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<i>Acanthodactylus ophiodurus</i> Arnold, 1980	Arnold's Fringe-fingered Lizard, Snake-tailed Fringe-toed Lizard	LC
<i>Acanthodactylus orientalis</i> Angel, 1936		LC
<i>Acanthodactylus robustus</i> Werner, 1929	Robust Fringe-fingered Lizard	LC
<i>Acanthodactylus schmidtii</i> Haas, 1957	Schmidt's Fringe-toed Lizard	LC
<i>Acanthodactylus scutellatus hardyi</i> Haas, 1957	Nidua Fringe-fingered Lizard, Hardy's Fringe-fingered Lizard	NE
<i>Apathya cappadocica muhtari</i> (Eiselt 1979)	Anatolian Rock Lizard	LC
<i>Apathya cappadocica urmiana</i> (Lantz & Suchow 1934)	Anatolian Rock Lizard	LC
<i>Eremias persica</i> Blanford, 1875	Aralo-Caspian Racerunner	NE
<i>Lacerta media media</i> Lantz & Cyrén, 1920	Three-line Lizard, Giant Green Lizard	LC
<i>Lacerta strigata</i> Eichwald, 1831	Caspian Green Lizard, Striated Lizard	LC
<i>Mesalina brevirostris</i> Blanford, 1874	Blandford's Short-nosed Desert Lizard	LC
<i>Mesalina guttulata</i> (Lichtenstein, 1823)	Small-spotted Lizard	NE
<i>Mesalina olivieri</i> (Audouin, 1829)	Olivier's Sand Lizard	NE
<i>Ophisops elegans</i> Ménétriés, 1832	Snake-eyed Lizard	NE
<i>Timon princeps kurdistanicus</i> Suchow, 1936	Siirt Lizard, Zagrosian Lizard	LC
Family: Scincidae		
<i>Ablepharus kitaibelii kitaibelii</i> (Bibron & Bory, 1833)	European Snake-eyed Skink	LC
<i>Ablepharus pannonicus</i> (Fitzinger, 1824)	Asian Snake-eyed Skink	NE
<i>Chalcides ocellatus</i> (Forsskål, 1775)	Ocellated Skink	NE
<i>Eumeces schneideri princeps</i> (Eichwld, 1839)	Schneider's Skink	NE
<i>Scincus scincus conirostris</i> Blanford, 1881	Common Sandfish	NE
<i>Scincus scincus meccensis</i> Wiegmann, 1837	Common Sandfish	NE
<i>Trachylepis (Mabuya) aurata aurata</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Levant Skink	LC
<i>Trachylepis (Mabuya) septemtaeniata</i> (Reuss, 1834)	Levant Skink	NE
<i>Trachylepis (Mabuya) vittata</i> (Olivier, 1804)	Bridled Mabuya, Bridled Skink	LC
Family: Uromastycidae		
<i>Uromastix aegyptia</i> (Forskål, 1775)	Egyptian Spiny Tailed Lizard	VU
<i>Saara (Uromastix) loricata</i> (Blanford, 1874)	Mesopotamian Spiny Tailed Lizard, Small Spiny Tailed Lizard, Iraqi Mastigure, Iraqi Spiny-tailed Lizard	LC

Updated list

Family: Varanida		
<i>Varanus griseus griseus</i> (Daudin, 1803)	Desert Monitor	NE
Family: Leptotyphlopidae		
<i>Myriopholis (Leptotyphlops) macrorhynchus</i> (Jan, 1860)	Long-nosed Worm Snake, Hooked Thread Snake	LC
Family: Typhlopidae		
<i>Ramphotyphlops braminus</i> (Daudin, 1803)	Brahminy Blind Snake, Flowerpot Snake	NE
<i>Typhlops vermicularis</i> (Merrem, 1820)	Blind Snake Species	NE
Family: Boidae		
<i>Eryx jaculus familiaris</i> Eichwald, 1831	Javelin Sand Boa	NE
<i>Eryx jaculus jaculus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Javelin Sand Boa	NE
<i>Eryx jayakari</i> Boulenger, 1888	Saudi Arabian Sand Boa, Arabian Sand Boa	LC
Family: Colubridae		
<i>Dolichophis (Coluber) jugularis</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)	Large Whip Snake	LC
<i>Eirenis collaris</i> (Ménétriés, 1832)	Collared Dwarf Snake	LC
<i>Eirenis coronella coronella</i> (Schlegel, 1837)	Crowned Dwarf Snake	LC
<i>Eirenis coronelloides</i> Sivan & Werner, 2003		LC
<i>Eirenis decemlineata</i> (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854)	Narrow-striped Dwarf Snake	LC
<i>Eirenis lineomaculata</i> Schmidt, 1939		NE
<i>Eirenis persicus</i> (Anderson, 1872)	Dark-headed Dwarf Racer	NE
<i>Hemorrhois (Coluber) nummifer</i> (Reuss, 1834)	Asian Racer, Coin-Marked Snake	NE
<i>Hemorrhois (Coluber) ravergieri</i> (Ménétriés, 1832)	Spotted Wipe Snake	NE
<i>Lytorhynchus diadema gaddi</i> Nikolsky, 1907	Common Leaf-nosed Snake	LC
<i>Lytorhynchus diadema kennedyi</i> K. Schmidt, 1939	Common Leaf-nosed Snake	LC
<i>Malpolon monspessulanus insignitus</i> (Geoffroy St-Hilaire, 1809)	Montpellier Snake	LC
<i>Natrix tessellata tessellata</i> (Laurenti, 1768)	Tessellated Water Snake,	LC
<i>Natrix natrix persa</i> (Pallas 1814)	Grass Snake	LC
<i>Platyiceps ladacensis</i> Perry, 2012	Raid Snake, Jan's Cliff Racer	NE
<i>Platyiceps (Coluber) najadum dahlii</i> (Fitzinger 1826)	Dahl's Whip Snake	LC
<i>Platyiceps (Coluber) rhodorhachis</i> (Jan, 1865)	Glossy-bellied Racer, Hardwicke's Rat Snake	NE
<i>Platyiceps (Coluber) rogersi</i> (Anderson, 1893)	Rogers' Racer	LC

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<i>Platyceps (Coluber) ventromaculatus</i> Gray, 1834	Gray's Desert Racer, Hardwicke's Rat Snake, Glossy- bellied Racer	NE
<i>Rhagerhis (Malpolon) moilensis</i> (Reuss, 1834)	Hooded Malpolon, Moila Snake	NE
<i>Psammophis schokari</i> (Forsskål, 1775)	Afro-Asian Sand Snake	NE
<i>Rhynchocalamus melanocephalus satuni</i> (Nikolsky, 1899)	Black-Headed Rhynchocalamus	LC
<i>Spalerosophis diadema cliffordii</i> (Schlegel, 1837)	Diadem Snake	NE
<i>Spalerosophis microlepis</i> Jan, 1865	Zebra Snake	EN
<i>Telescopus nigriceps</i> (Ahl, 1924)	Black Headed Snake	LC
<i>Telescopus tessellatus martini</i> (Schmidt, 1939)	Soosan Tiger Snake	LC
<i>Zamenis hohenackeri</i> (Strauch, 1873)	Caucasian Rat Snake, Transcaucasian Rat Snake	LC
Family: Elapidae		
<i>Walterinnesia aegyptia</i> Lataste, 1887	Desert Cobra, Desert Black Snake	LC
Family: Viperidae		
<i>Cerastes gasperettii</i> Leviton & Anderson, 1967	Arabian Horned Viper	LC
<i>Echis carinatus sochureki</i> Stemmler, 1969	Saw-scaled Viper	NE
<i>Montivipera (Vipera) raddei kurdistanica</i> (Nilson & Andren 1986)	Caucasus Viper	NT
<i>Macrovipera lebetina obtuse</i> (Dwigubsky, 1832)	Blunt-nosed Viper	NT
<i>Pseudocerastes fieldi</i> Schmidt, 1930	Field's horned Viper	LC
<i>Pseudocerastes persicus</i> (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854)	Persian Horned Viper	LC
Family: Hydrophiidae		
<i>Enhydrina schistosa</i> (Daudin, 1803)	Hook-nosed Sea Snake, Beaked Sea Snake	LC
<i>Hydrophis gracilis</i> (Shaw, 1802)	Slender Sea Snake, Graceful Small Headed Sea Snake	LC

CR= Critically Endangered

EN= Endangered

VU= Vulnerable

NT= Near Threatened

LC= Least Concern

DD= Data Deficient

NE= Not Evaluated

The information local conservation status of the Fauna in Iraq are very few so that of the Herpetofauna in Iraq, in this list we used the global conservation status for each species according to the IUCN (2014c) Red List, the conservation status consist of Critically Endangered (CR), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NE), Least Concern

Updated list

(LC), Data Deficient (DD) and Not Evaluated (NE) for the species that did not have a category in the IUCN (2014c) Red List yet.

This list includes the new records of reptiles in Iraq one of them is the Caves Gecko *Asaccus saffinae* which discovered for the first time in the world in Iraq by Afrasiab and Mohamad (2009) in one of the caves of Saffine mountain near Erbil province.

Another species recently recorded for the first time in Iraq and we add it to the list which consists of one species of lizards and four species of snakes, as are shown in below:

Striated Lizard *Lacerta strigata* recorded in Iraq according to three specimens collected from Gelki Islam near the Khapoor river and the road to Kanimase, Zakhaw district, western Kurdistan, in fact that records restricted to described areas so that this species of lizard may have been introduced from the mountains of eastern Turkey by flooding of the Khapoor river Afrasiab *et al.* (2013).

The Rat Snake *Zamenis hohenackeri* and snake *Platyceps ladacensis* recorded in northeast of Iraq by Afrasiab and Mohamad (2011), found at the foot of Hawraman mountain in Erbil province in Kurdistan Iraq, which represents the first record of Iraq, also the rare and endangered snake *Spalerosophis microlepis* record for the first time in Iraq in Serine mountain, northern of Erbil province by Afrasiab and Mohamad (2014).

The snake *Natrix natrix persa* was recorded for the first time in Iraq by Afrasiab *et al.* (2012) located near Dialah Bridge, 10 km east of Baghdad.

The occurrence of the Black Tailed Toed Agama *Phrynocephalus maculatus longicaudatus* have been confirmed and its presence observed in the south-west of Iraq in Muthanna province near of AL- Khuder city and in semi desert on the side of Sawa lake by Albarazengy (2015), there were neither specimens of *Phrynocephalus maculatus* in Iraq Natural History Research Center and Museum nor published searches of its distribution in Iraq Leviton *et al.* (1992), Anderson (1999), also there were no reliable local and realistic data about its distribution in Iraq Abu-Baker *et al.* (2005).

Many species in this list was updated which are placed under another genera. Also two subspecies placed to be a separated species according to Rastegar-Pouyani *et al.* (2008), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the official website The Reptile Database, as follows:

The updated genera of the Amphibians are:
Ommatotriton (Triturus) vittatus, *Pseudepidalea (Bufo) surda*, *Pseudepidalea (Bufo) viridis*,
Pelophylax (Rana) ridibundus ridibundus.

The updated genera of the Reptiles are:

Stellagama (Laudakia) stellio, *Mediodactylus (Carinatogecko) heteropholis*, *Mediodactylus (Cyrtopodion) heterocercum*, *Mediodactylus (Cyrtopodion) kotschyi syriacus*, *Trachylepis (Mabuya) aurata aurata*, *Trachylepis (Mabuya) septemtaeniata*, *Trachylepis (Mabuya) vittata*, *Saara (Uromastix)loricata*, *Myriopholis (Leptotyphlops) macrorhynchus*, *Dolichophis (Coluber) jugularis*, *Hemorrhoids (Coluber) nummifer*, *Hemorrhoids (Coluber) ravergieri*, *Platyceps (Coluber) najadum dahlia*, *Platyceps (Coluber) rhodorhachis*, *Platyceps (Coluber) rogersi*, *Platyceps (Coluber) ventromaculatus*, *Rhagerhis (Malpolon) moilensis*, *Montivipera (Vipera) raddei kurdistanica*.

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The placed subspecies to be separated species, *Pseudocerastes fieldi* and *Pseudocerastes persicus*.

Recently the species of the spiny tailed lizard *Uromastix egyptia* and *Saara (Uromastix) loricata* are separated and placed to be under an isolated family: Uromastycidae after it was under the family of Agamidae (Rastegar-Pouyani *et al.*, 2008; Gholamifard *et al.*, 2012).

The english names of Amphibians and Reptiles species in this list collected from many references and websites specializing in Herpetology.

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القائمة المحدثة للبرمائيات والزواحف في العراق لعام ٢٠١٤

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الخلاصة

يستعرض هذا البحث قائمة بجميع البرمائيات والزواحف المسجلة في العراق حتى عام ٢٠١٤، اذ تضم ١١٥ نوعا (١٠٥ نوعا من الزواحف و ١٠ انواع من البرمائيات) التي تعود إلى ٢٥ عائلة (٢٠ عائلة من الزواحف والبرمائيات ٥ عائلة). وذكر حالة حفظها.