

# Field Report, September 19th to October 19th 2011- Mallorca & Menorca, Spain

by Frank Deschandol



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*To continue the great herping in the spanish Mediterranean islands this year, I went to the Balearic for one month. About 15 days were spent on Menorca and then, 15 days on Mallorca. My main goal was to see the famous endemic species of both islands, of course, but including most subspecies of Podarcis lilfordi which lives on several small islets not so far from the coast. I didn't get enough time to visit Cabrera ; perhaps this will be done in a next trip.*

*To be completely self-sufficient on the place, I took my own car and a Mojito RTM, a small kayak which allowed me to reach each and every islet according to a suitable weather [= without too much wind = quite difficult]. In the end a fantastic experience, kayaking in the turquoise sea, snorkeling and finding some amazing isolated habitats for lizards. Probably my most exciting trip ever.*

*Nevertheless, it turned out to be very difficult to find all the snakes during a large part of this trip and I couldn't find any the first whole week. But stubborn, by lifting more than 1.200 stones (only for Menorca), I managed at last to find a few animals. The hot weather still suffered in September-October - about 25-30°C - shouldn't be a bad argument for this relative lack of snakes : the very last day, when back on Menorca, temperature became much colder, especially in the night - about 10°C - and I could find 2 Macropododon within 2 hours.*

*But moreover, I lost a lot of time in hospitals, exhausted all along the trip by a very strong dental infection. Then, pain and tiredness piling up, I was a little bit lazy on Mallorca, focusing almost exclusively on Alytes muletensis and the Podarcis lilfordi subspecies.*

*Even if some species were impossible to find on Mallorca nor Menorca, I managed to find all species from both islands, except one : Testudo graeca graeca. But I didn't spend much time to look for as it's easier to find on mainland Spain.*

*NOTA BENE : To illustrate the variety and/or the behavior of specimens from each population of P. lilfordi, a huge number of my best pictures are presented on purpose in this report.*

*Many thanks to Bobby Bok, Marten Van Den Berg, Jeroen Speybroeck, Mike Zawadzki, Matt Wilson, Jean-Marc Moingeon, Alex Sala Gorön, The Marineland Zoo of Palma : Gloria Fernandez and Miguel Cantallops and the naturalist Félix de Pablo, met on Illa de l'Aire, who saved me a lot of efforts by bringing me back with his zodiac during a stormy sea day :)*



The Balearic islands of Mallorca and Menorca

## **MENORCA**





*Podarcis lilfordi* : visited islands (not in chronological order)

*N.B : I specify the tendency of how shy are the Podarcis population on each island, please note it's only a personal feeling and at a given time/weather...*

**1 - Illa Del Rei, *Podarcis lilfordi balearicus***

Island very easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : shy.

























**2 - Illa de l'Aire, *Podarcis lilfordi lilfordi***

Island quite difficult to reach by kayak (1 km from the coast), often windy there. Lizards : very tame with patience, very high density.













































**3a - Escull de Binicodrell (Big), *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis***

Island very easy to reach, even without kayak. Lizards : shy.





Escull de Binicodrell

















**3b - Escull de Binicodrell (Small), *Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis***

Same, low density.















**4 - Illa Dels Porros (= De Sanitja), *Podarcis lilfordi fenni***

Island difficult to reach by kayak, far away, need a calm sea to come. Lizards : most are very shy, staying in bushes or under stones, difficult to make good pictures there. I've been 2 times on that island as it became rainy and windy on my first attempt. Also *Hemidactylus turcicus* and *Tarentola mauritanica* here.









































































































**5 - Illa De Ses Sargantanes, *Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : quite shy.

































Same







**6 - Illa d'Es Porros, *Podarcis lilfordi porrosicola***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : quite shy, hidden.











































**7a - Illetes Des Carbó (Big), *Podarcis lilfordi carbonerae***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : not very shy but always moving, not easy to photograph.





Middleground, right : Illetes Des Carbó. Illa Petita and Gran d'Addaia at background





























**7b - Illetes Des Carbó (Small), *Podarcis lilfordi carbonerae***

Same but very few specimens live there. A juvenile was spotted.











**Illot d'En Carbonet** : I took a quick look there but I was unable to find any lizard. They are probably missing.

**8 - Illa Gran d'Addaia, *Podarcis lilfordi addayae***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : not shy.









Arribo...



Lizard eating flowers and...





...lizard which ate flowers !



































*Hemidactylus turcicus* (ex. "spinalis") from Illa Gran d'Addaia



Same

**9 - Illa De Ses Mones, *Podarcis lilfordi* ssp. (undescribed subspecies)**

Island very easy to reach on foot, without kayak. Lizards : very shy, only 3 specimens seen by luck in 2h, always hidden and too much vegetation on this island. Low density (?).













**10 - Illa d'En Colom, *Podarcis lilfordi brauni***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : quite shy at a first look.





































































At Menorca, I also switched **Illot d'En Mel**, (*Podarcis lilfordi* of undescribed subspecies) this island being into a Natural Reserve, it's forbidden to go there without authorization.





Illot d'En Mel, Albufera de Grau (UNESCO World Heritage site)

**Other species found on Menorca :**





*Scelarcis perspicillata* from Cap d'Artrutx















*Podarcis siculus siculus* from Barranc de Binigaus, always very shy...



Other, young from Cala Tirant





*Tarentola mauritanica* from Cala Tirant, abundant everywhere



*Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus* young from Cap d'Artrutx





Other, baby from Lithica



Other, adult from Lithica





*Testudo hermanni hermanni*, baby from Turo Amagat



Others babies from Lithica





Other, adult from Cala Tirant



Same





Other, adult from Turo Amagat



Other, adult from Turo Amagat





The only turtle caught with my trap during the night, a very large and aggressive *Trachemys scripta elegans* from Vall d'Agaiarens... *Emys orbicularis* was also seen at this place.



*Natrix maura*, young from Torrent des Mercadel





*Rhinechis scalaris* from Pla de s'Alzinar



Other from Turo Amagat





Other weak and skinny adult from Pla de s'Alzinar, found under a big stone. Found once again under the same stone 15 days later, still alive...



*Macroprotodon cucullatus*, young from Pla de s'Alzinar





Other, adult from Torrent des Mercadel



Same





Other, adult from Cala Tirant



*Hyla meridionalis* from Cala Tirant





*Euscorpius balearicus*





*Hyles dahlia* larva L5





*Atelerix algirus* eating a dead *Bubulcus ibis*

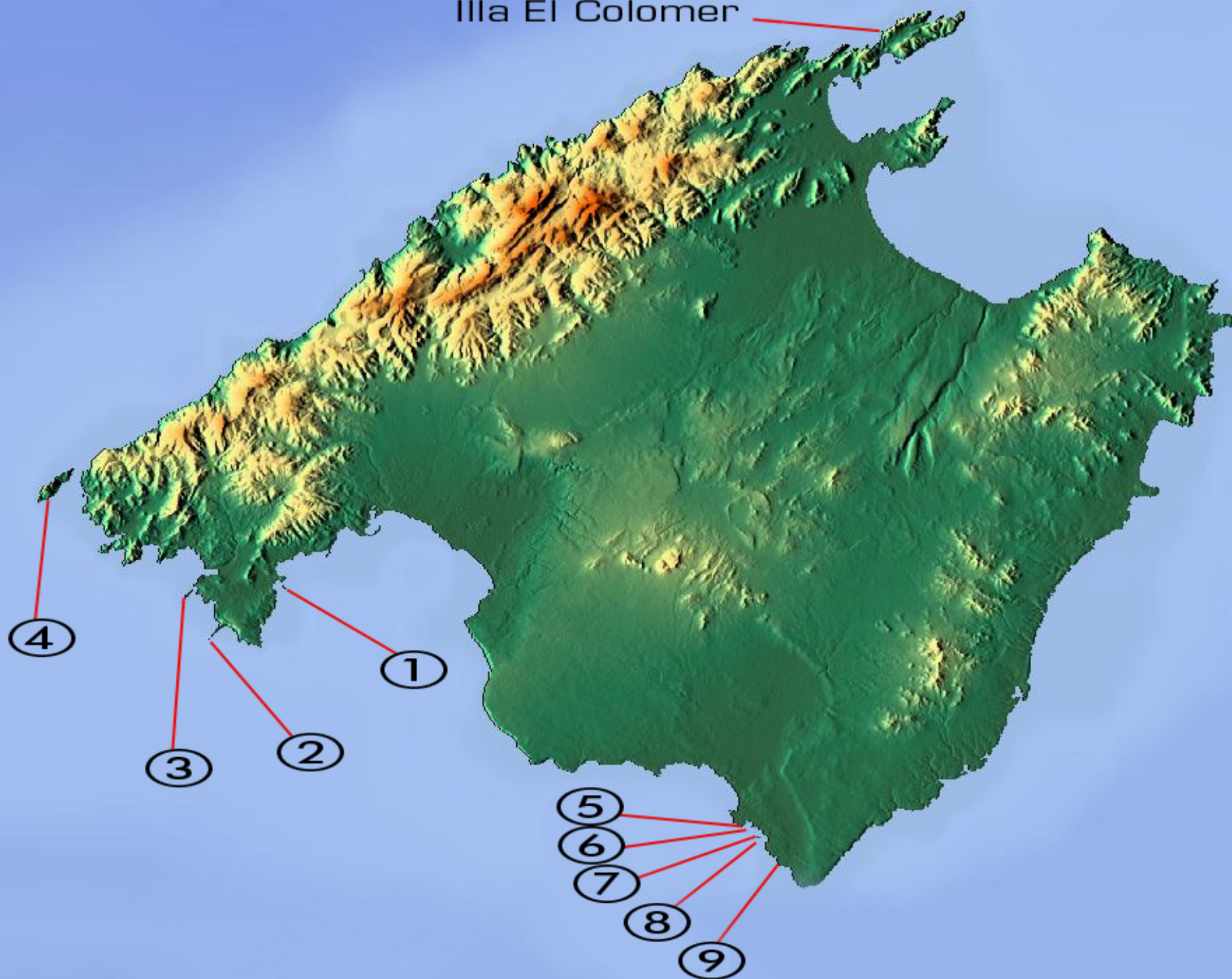


Same

**MALLORCA**



Illa El Colomer



*Podarcis lilfordi* : visited islands (not in chronological order)

**1 - Illa De Sa Porrassa**, *Podarcis lilfordi fahrae* (introd. population from Cabrera)

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : shy and always hidden under bushes, discreet. Very difficult to make pictures. Low density. Also *Tarentola mauritanica* here.



























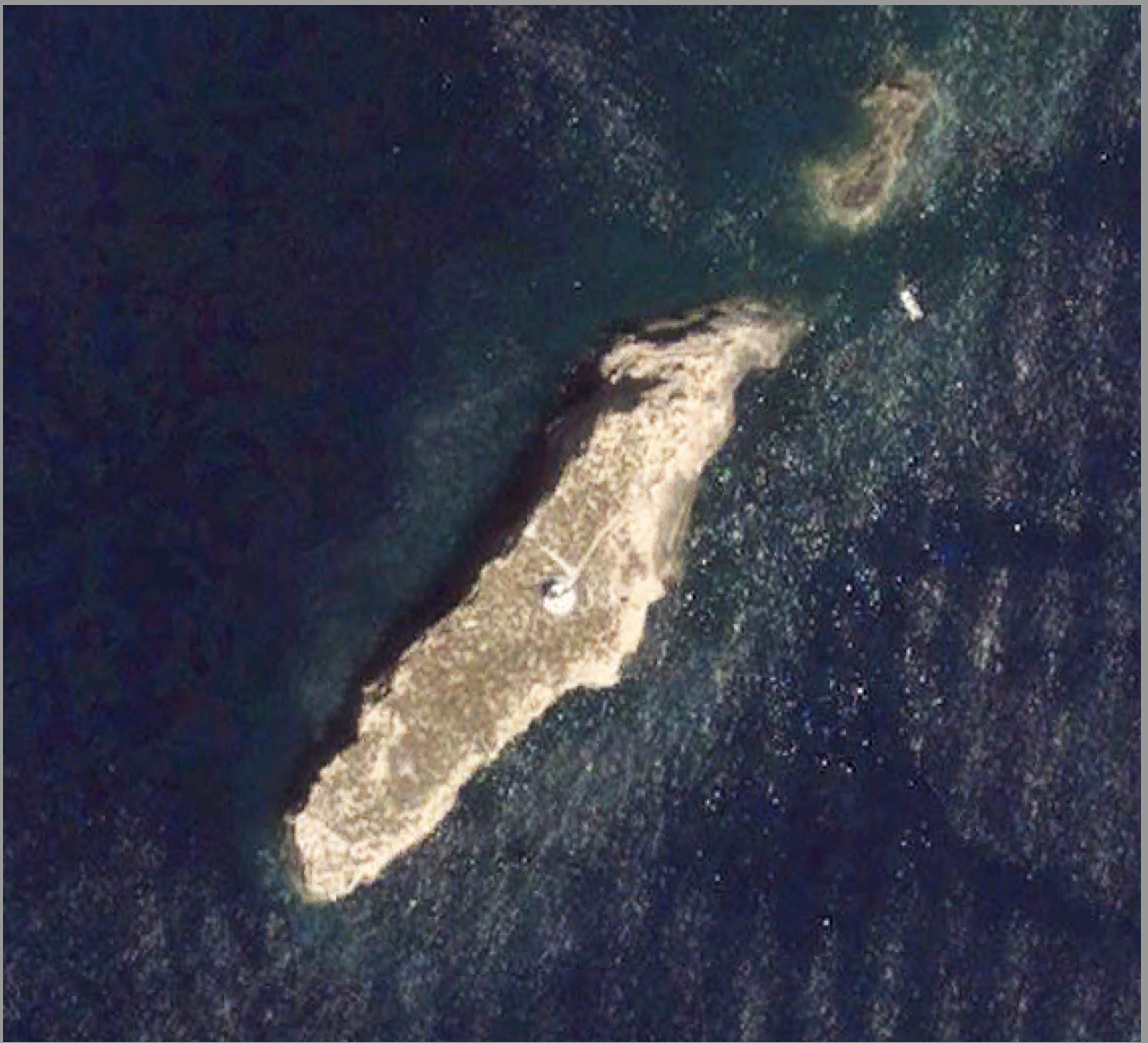


## 2 - Illa Del Toro, *Podarcis lilfordi toronis*

Probably the most difficult island to reach by kayak... and the most difficult *P. lilfordi* to photograph ever : lizards are extremely shy, all the time hidden under bushes, even for basking, low density. I spent 7 hours on this island to get only a few pictures.

But there, I spotted too briefly an awesome *Tarentola mauritanica* of fluo yellow-orange color. Surely an albino specimen but unfortunately the animal disappeared quickly into a hole and was impossible to see afterwards !









Steep island...





































**3a - Illa Des Conills, *Podarcis lilfordi hartmanni***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : not shy.









Illa Es Malgrat (left) and Illa Des Conills (right)



















**3b - Illa Es Malgrat, South-West part, *Podarcis lilfordi hartmanni***

Island easy to reach by kayak. Lizards : shy, staying hidden.





Another steep island



























**3c - Illa Es Malgrat, North-East part (population almost isolated from the main island), *Podarcis lilfordi hartmanni***

Same.









**4 - Illa Sa Dragonera, *Podarcis lilfordi giglioli***

The only island reached by boat. But it's possible to go there with a kayak on calm days without problem. Lizards : very tame, very high density but not everywhere.









































































**5 - Part of the harbour of Colònia Sant Jordi (not an island),** Could be a mixed population between *P. l. jordansi* and *P. l. kuligae* ( Zawadzki Mike, Die Eidechse, Jg. 21, H. 2, S. 43-52, Bonn, 20. August 2010)

Lizards : extremely shy.







Same





Same

























## 6 - Illa Na Guardis, *Podarcis lilfordi jordansi*

Island easy to reach by Kayak. Lizards : quite shy but tame with patience, often hidden under bushes. High density.

I met there some spanish biologists studying the population of *P. lilfordi*.





















Marked specimen



































Biologists about to go

**7 - Illa Na Moltona, *Podarcis lilfordi jordanii***

Island easy to reach by kayak on calm days. Lizards : not very shy, often basking in open areas. High density.

























**8 - Illa Na Pelada, *Podarcis lilfordi jordansi***

Island easy to reach by kayak on calm days. Lizards : very shy and hard to photograph, taking quickly refuge into crevices. Low density.





Illa Na Pelada (left) as seen from Illa Na Moltona ; note Cabrera's coast far away





Habitat















Love saliva...











**9 - Illot d'En Curt, *Podarcis lilfordi jordansi***

Island easy to reach by kayak on calm days, but long way, I've done > 10 km kayaking to go there. But probably a possibility to go on foot without kayak. Lizards : not shy, easy to photograph.

























**Illa El Colomer**, *Podarcis lilfordi colomi* : Not tried to reach this one, impossible by kayak and a very steep island...





Illa El Colomer...

## **Other species found on Mallorca :**



*Podarcis pityusensis pityusensis* from Ses Illetes beach, surprisingly enough : very shy !





Other



Other





Other



Other





Young





*Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus* from Santa Ponsa, species only common on the coast of Mallorca



*Macroprotodon cucullatus* baby from Cabo Blanco





*Pelophylax perezii* from Cuber lake



*Bufo viridis balearicus* from Mortitx





*Alytes muletensis*... Very difficult to find. Several known sites were visited, but all was dry everywhere after 3 months without any rain. The few downpours received during one night didn't help. I found only some tadpoles of that species in a water trough along with a single juvenile.







The beautiful Tramuntana mountains

Then I decided to make pictures of adults at the Marineland zoo of Palma, which breed that species for reintroduction. Unlike in the wild, the *Alytes* were calling (inside the cage) and a few males still carried some eggs.









*Alytes muletensis*







Same





Other



The last day at Port Adriano (Mallorca)





My mounting at Cap de Cavalleria (Menorca)

### **Reptiles (13) :**

*Testudo hermanni hermanni*  
*Trachemys scripta elegans*  
*Trachemys (scripta ssp. ?)*  
*Caretta caretta* (Marineland)  
*Emys orbicularis* (ssp. ?)  
*Tarentola mauritanica*  
*Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus*  
(incl. ex. spp. "spinalis")  
*Scelarcis perspicillata*  
*Podarcis pityusensis pityusensis*  
*Podarcis siculus siculus*  
*Podarcis lilfordi lilfordi*  
*Podarcis lilfordi addayae*  
*Podarcis lilfordi balearicus*  
*Podarcis lilfordi brauni*  
*Podarcis lilfordi carbonerae*  
*Podarcis lilfordi codrellensis*  
*Podarcis lilfordi fahrae*  
*Podarcis lilfordi fenni*  
*Podarcis lilfordi giglioli*  
*Podarcis lilfordi hartmanni*  
*Podarcis lilfordi jordansi*  
*Podarcis lilfordi kuligae*  
*Podarcis lilfordi porrosicola*  
*Podarcis lilfordi sargantanae*  
*Podarcis lilfordi toronis*



*Podarcis lilfordi* (undescribed ssp.)  
*Natrix maura*  
*Rhinechis scalaris*  
*Macroprotodon cucullatus*

**Amphibians (4) :**

*Pelophylax perezi*  
*Alytes muletensis*  
*Bufo viridis balearicus*  
*Hyla meridionalis*

**Total : 17 spp.**