

Book Reviews

Jehle, R., Thiesmeier, B., Foster, J. (2011): *The Crested Newt. A Dwilling Pond-Dweller*. Laurenti Verlag (www.laurenti.de), Bielefeld, Germany. 152 pages. ISBN 978-3-933-06644-2 (softcover).

This book is an updated revision of the German edition published in 2009 “Der Kammolch – ein Wasserdrache in Gefahr” (Thiesmeier, B., Kupfer, A., Jehle, R.). It reflects the long-standing experience of the authors and provides the most recent in-depth review of the crested newt, a flagship species in Europe listed in Annex II of the European Habitat Directive. It is also well illustrated with 59 colour and 62 black and white figures.

After a brief introduction, the second chapter presents the description, distribution and habitats of the six species now included in the *Triturus cristatus* superspecies, thus accounting for the recent distinction (2007 and 2009 respectively) of *T. macedonicus* and *T. arntzeni*. A specific account is provided for each species and for each country. The third chapter documents the complex life cycle, including migration patterns, site fidelity, sensory perception, aquatic and terrestrial micro-habitat use, feeding habits, fertility, oviposition behaviour, embryonic development, larval biology, survival rates, overwintering, predators and antipredator behaviours. The fourth chapter is devoted to the fabulous mating tactics with a detailed account of the varied courtship displays, but also sexual interference, female choice and reproductive success. The fifth chapter is into population dynamics. It provides syntheses on demography, annual fluctuations, effective size,

metapopulations, and age structure. The sixth chapter presents field methods, from detection and capture to identification, genetic markers and the habitat suitability index. The seventh chapter, specific to this English edition, is focused on the conservation and management of *T. cristatus* in the United Kingdom, a country in which this species receives a particularly large amount of protection. It includes discussions on the trends in conservation status, historical and present threats, conservation measures (habitat creation and restoration, species management, control of invasive species, site protection, surveillance), and legislation. The book ends with a long list of bibliographic references.

In conclusion, this book presents not only a synthesis of the current published knowledge on the crested newts, but also numerous original data, discussions and illustrations. It will be of primary interest for anyone who wants to know more about the wonderful and complex biology of amphibians and also for those involved in newt conservation.

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