

*Book Review*

**Petar Beron, 2015**  
**Cave Fauna of Bulgaria**  
 Sofia, East-West Publishing, 434 p.

Bulgaria is rich in exceptionally diverse karst formations and caves. Currently, the number of caves registered on the territory of the country is greater than 6000. In terms of biospeleology, the most popular and studied caves are c. 830; they have been already discussed in detail in the recently published large monograph *Caves and Spelaeology in Bulgaria* (2006, Sofia, Pensoft Publishers). This monograph presents also a short account on their troglobiotic fauna. However, numerous troglophile and troglone species of animals inhabit Bulgarian caves, and a significant portion of them has not been included in the above-mentioned monograph.

The newly published book by the outstanding Bulgarian zoologist and speleologist Dr. Petar Beron collates all the current knowledge from the Bulgarian and foreign literature about the fauna of the caves in this country. The brief introduction of the book reviews the history of studies on karst and caves in Bulgaria. The caves are classified in four geographically distinct karst regions: Danube Plain, Karstic Region of Stara Planina Mountains, Rhodopean Region and Caves in Non-carbonic Rocks. The main chapter of the book is entitled *Animal Species Found in Bulgarian Caves* (pp. 21-143). It contains a list presenting systematic data for all animals currently known from Bulgaria, the caves where they have been recorded and the names of the authors that have published these data. The list of the identified species and subspecies contains 886 taxa, from unicellular organisms to insects. It also includes unidentified animals (c. 200); very likely, there would be taxa new for science among them. An original contribution of the author is the inclusion in the list of 153 new species and subspecies of Bulgarian cave animals, which were not previously reported. A significant contribution is the inclusion of 189 new caves (where troglobiotic animals are recorded) in the list of biospeleological studies. The new data for the presence of 202 species of aquatic and terrestrial troglonants from Bulgarian caves demonstrate strongly why Bulgaria, regarding biospeleology, is among the most fully studied Balkan and European countries. The book includes 21 informative maps, demonstrating the geographic distribution of the better studied troglonants and stygobionts in the country, as well as interesting graphical and photographic illustrations of the studied caves and their inhabitants.

A separate chapter is devoted to the origin of Bulgarian cave fauna. It includes a detailed zoogeographical analysis and comparisons with the neighbouring countries. The chapter *The Caves and their Fauna* presents short characteristics of the studied Bulgarian caves and their fauna. Another valuable contribution of the book is the comprehensive list of scientific works and publications by Bulgarian and foreign authors on Bulgarian caves and their fauna. It consists of 584 titles, some of them being bibliographic rarities.

The new book by Dr. P. Beron is not only a valuable summary of studies on the unique and rich cave fauna of Bulgaria. It is a solid basis for future studies on life in our caves. Additionally, it may serve as a basis for more efficient future conservation of these habitats and their unique biodiversity.