

FIRST RECORD OF THE *ERYTHRONOTUS* COLORATION MORPH IN *LACERTA AGILIS ARGUS LAURENTI*, 1768 FROM CROATIA

DUŠAN JELIĆ

State Institute for Nature Protection, Trg Mažuranića 5, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia (e-mail: jelic.dusan@gmail.com)

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The Sand Lizard, *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758, is a species very widely distributed in Croatia. *Erythronotus* coloration morphs are known to appear very often in different parts of Central and Eastern Europe, but were never recorded in Croatia. In this paper the author describes the first record of this color morph in a male individual collected in the vicinity of Donji Miholjac (Northeastern Croatia) during research in 2006.

Key words: Squamata, *Lacerta agilis argus*, Sand lizard, *erythronotus*, morph, Croatia

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Livadna gušterica, *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758 vrlo je široko rasprostranjena vrsta u Hrvatskoj. Jedinke s *erythronotus* tipom obojenosti poznate su iz raznih područja središnje i istočne Europe, no u Hrvatskoj nisu bile nikada zabilježene. Autor u radu donosi prvi nalaz tog tipa obojenosti kod jedinke muškog spola nađene u okolici Donjeg Miholjca (sjeveroistočna Hrvatska) tijekom istraživanja 2006. godine.

Ključne riječi: Squamata, *Lacerta agilis argus*, livadna gušterica, *erythronotus* tip obojenosti, Hrvatska

The Sand Lizard, *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758, is widely distributed in Croatia, with the exception of the Mediterranean part of the Adriatic coast and all of the Adriatic islands (WERNER, 1897; KARAMAN, 1921; PAVLETIĆ, 1964; BRELIH & DŽUKIĆ, 1974; BISCHOFF, 1984, 1988). It can be common in open grasslands in central and eastern parts of Croatia as well as in high mountains. At the southern border of the distribution area, outlined by the mountains Velika Kapela, Velebit, Promina (KARAMAN, 1921; PAVLETIĆ, 1964), Svilaja and Kamešnica (pers. obs.) the Sand Lizard is found only in areas above 800 m a. s. l.

In Croatia two subspecies of the Sand Lizard appear, *Lacerta agilis argus* Laurenti, 1768 in the north (Pannonian lowland) and *Lacerta agilis bosnica* Schreiber, 1912 in

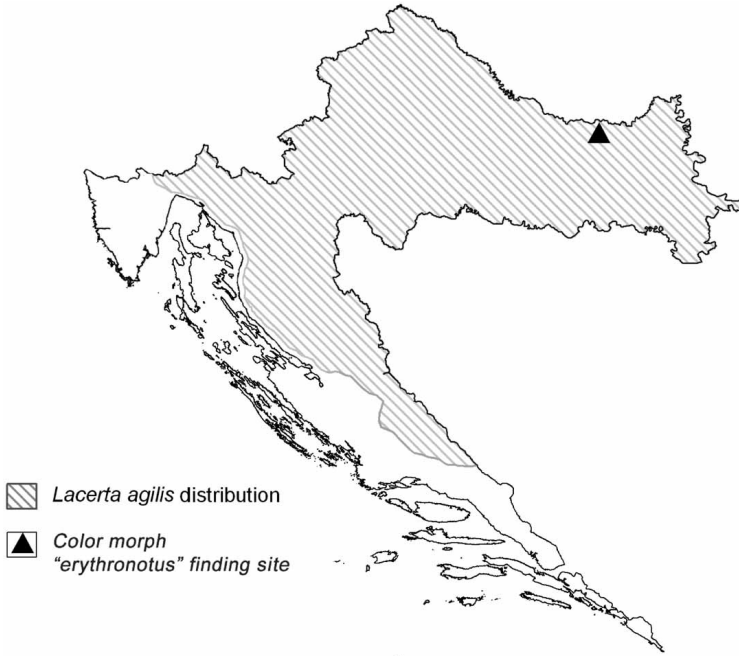


Fig. 1. *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758 distribution in Croatia (BRELIH & DŽUKIĆ, 1974; BISCHOFF, 1984, 1988), including the site (vicinity of Donji Miholjac) where a specimen of *L. agilis* color morph *erythronotus* was found.



Fig. 2. Male *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758 color morph *erythronotus* from the vicinity of Donji Miholjac (Northeastern Croatia).

the south (Dinaric part with the western borderline drawn between Karlovac and Rijeka) (KARAMAN, 1921; BISCHOFF, 1988; KALYABINA *et al.*, 2001). *Erythronotus* coloration morphs of *Lacerta agilis* have never been recorded in the literature for Croatia (PAVLETIĆ, 1964; BISCHOFF, 1984, 1988). Specimens originating from Croatia depos-

ited in collections of Natural History Museum Zagreb (Lončar Mila, pers. obs.), Natural History museum Vienna (Schweiger Silke, pers. obs.) and Hungarian Natural History Museum (Voros Judit, pers. obs.) were inspected, but only normally colored individuals were found.

During herpetological field research on September 4, 2006, in the vicinity of Donji Miholjac (Northeastern Croatia) (Fig. 1), one male *erythronotus* color morph of *Lacerta agilis* was caught (Fig. 2). This colour morph has been recorded in different rates within the populations of *Lacerta agilis argus* Laurenti, 1768 throughout eastern and central Europe, but is also known to appear in the subspecies *bosnica* Schreiber, 1912 and in some other taxa in other parts of its distribution (BISCHOFF, 1984; SCHWEIGER, 2008). This specimen was found in low grass on the river bank, about 100 m from the river Drava (X 5743511, Y 5075560; UTM 10x10 km is BR77; 98 m a.s.l.). At the same location another specimen, a female, was observed, but it showed normal dorsal coloration (*forma typica*) with a wide dark-brown dorsal stripe and a thin and broken middle stripe. Both individuals showed typical morphological characteristics (BISCHOFF, 1988) of the *Lacerta agilis argus* Laurenti, 1768 subspecies. Reports from Slovenia and Montenegro (VOGRIN, 1999; SCHWEIGER, 2008) show frequencies of about 30% and the same could be expected in the populations from Croatia too.

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S A Ž E T A K

**Prvi nalaz *erythronotus*-tipa obojenosti kod vrste
Lacerta agilis argus Laurenti, 1768 u Hrvatskoj**

D. Jelić

Livadna gušterica, *Lacerta agilis* Linnaeus, 1758 vrlo je široko rasprostranjena vrsta u Hrvatskoj, prisutna svugdje osim u Istri, južnim dijelovima Dalmacije i na otocima. Jedinke livadne gušterice s tipom obojenosti »*erythronotus*« poznate su iz raznih područja središnje i istočne Europe, no u Hrvatskoj nisu nikada zabilježene. Autor u radu donosi prvi nalaz tog tipa obojenosti kod jedinke muškog spola nađene u okolici Donjeg Miholjca (sjeveroistočna Hrvatska) tijekom istraživanja 2006. godine. Jedinka je pronađena u niskoj travi na nasipu za obranu od poplava rijeke Drave, tijekom toplog poslijepodneva. Tijekom istog istraživanja ulovljena je još samo jedna ženka normalne obojenosti te nije bilo moguće točno odrediti frekvenciju pojavljivanja mutacije iako se očekuje u oko 30% primjeraka, kao što je to slučaj u susjednoj Sloveniji i Crnoj Gori.