

A serological comparison of the populations of the *Lacerta laevis* complex in northern Cyprus and southern Turkey

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Abstract: The present study compares the blood serum proteins of populations of the *Lacerta laevis* complex from northern Cyprus and southern Turkey (Adana) by polyacrylamide-disc electrophoresis. There are discernible differences between the electropherograms of blood serum proteins of the two populations. In the light of these differences, it would be appropriate to accept the northern Cyprus population as a distinct species, *Lacerta troodica*, as suggested previously by BUDAK & GÖÇMEN (1995).

Kurzfassung: In dieser Untersuchung werden mit Hilfe der Polyacrylamid-Elektrophorese die Blutserumproteine der Populationen des *Lacerta laevis*-Komplexes im nördlichen Zypern mit denen aus der Süd-Türkei (Adana) verglichen. Zwischen beiden Populationen gibt es im Bandenmuster der Serumproteine klar erkennbare Unterschiede. In Anbetracht dieser Unterschiede erscheint es angemessen, die zypriotische Population als separate Art, nämlich *Lacerta troodica*, zu akzeptieren, wie es bereits vorher schon von BUDAK & GÖÇMEN (1995) vorgeschlagen worden war.

Key words: Lacertidae, *Lacerta laevis*, *Lacerta laevis troodica*, taxonomy, serology.

Introduction

The morphology of the populations of *Lacerta laevis* Gray, 1838 (GRAY 1838) in northern Cyprus and Turkey was examined in detail by BUDAK (1976), BUDAK & GÖÇMEN (1995) and OSENEGG (1989). BUDAK & GÖÇMEN (1995) suggested that, according to some morphological characters, the *L. laevis* population of northern Cyprus is significantly different from the nominate race, *L. laevis laevis*, in the vicinities of Adana and Mersin. They also proved that it is not possible to distinguish the two populations with the diagnostic characters given by WERNER (1936) for the Cyprus population, which he described as *L. laevis troodica*. OSENEGG (1989) failed to find significant morphological differences, but she claimed that the colour pattern would be more suitable for separating the Cypriot population from that of the opposite mainland. On the other hand, SCHÄTTI & SIGG (1989) and BÖHME & WIEDL (1994) claimed that there was more variation in the colour pattern of the Cyprus population than was previously thought, but GÖÇMEN et al. (1996) did not find any significant variation in the pattern of 103 specimens examined, except for the vertebral bands.