10th Symposium on the lacertid lizards of the Mediterranean Basin

2nd Symposium on the lizards of the Mediterranean Basin

Book of abstracts
Phenotypic differentiation of *Podarcis* lizards of western Pontine islands (Italy), inferred by geometric morphometrics

**Gabriele Senczuk**¹,², Paolo Colangelo¹,³, Vasco Avramo¹, Riccardo Castiglia¹, Wolfgang Böhme⁴, Claudia Corti²

¹ Dipartimento di Biologia e Biotecnologie "Charles Darwin", Università di Roma La Sapienza, sede di Anatomia comparata, Rome, Italy
² Natural History Museum of the University of Florence, section of Zoology “La Specola”, Via Romana 17, 50125 Firenze, Italy
³ Institute of Agro-Environment and forest Biology, CNR, Via Salaria km29.300, 00015, Monterotondo, Rome, Italy
⁴ Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig, Adenauerallee 160, D53113, Bonn, Germany

Islands are fascinating natural laboratory where to study speciation and evolution. Here, we investigated the variation of the head morphology of 374 individuals of *Podarcis siculus* from mainland Italy, Sicily and the Pontine Archipelago, using the geometric morphometric approach. We also included in the analysis samples of an extinct island population. Our results indicated a strong relation between the morphological differences and the phylogeographic structure basing on previously published genetic data, indicating that the western Pontine populations seem to be a case of incipient speciation and that additional information should be addressed to better define their taxonomic status. In addition, the extinct population of Santo Stefano Island clustered in all analyses with the western Pontine populations. This result not only involves the evolutionary history of *P. siculus*, but also entails broader taxonomic considerations and conservation aspects.