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## On a New Variety of the Wall Lizard

(*Lacerta muralis* var. *breviceps*)

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Hearing that I was engaged in a revision of the varieties of *Lacerta muralis*, Professor MONTICELLI, has been so kind as to send me for examination all the specimens preserved in the zoological Museum of the Naples University, and among them I was much surprised to find six examples, in one bottle labelled *Podarcis muralis* var. *lineata*, DE BETTA, "Napolitano, dono del Direttore A. COSTA, 1889", which belong to an undescribed variety (1), just distinguishable from the typical form and in many respects approaching *L. vivipara*. Had there been but one specimen, and had it come from a district where *L. muralis* and *L. vivipara* co-exist, I should have regarded this form as probably a hybrid between the two species. But there are six specimens, and it is not known where they come from, for I can hardly believe the indication "Napolitano" to be correct, and Prof. MONTICELLI, who has searched the registers of his museum, informs me the locality whence they were procured has not been noted, and he cannot answer for the correctness of the *habitat*. I am therefore inclined to think they come from some part of Northern Italy, as they show a great general resemblance to the typical form, and I consider it necessary to establish for them a distinct variety, under the suggestive name of *breviceps*.

In shape, the head resembles that of *L. vivipara*, it is small and convex, once and one third to once and two fifths as long as broad, and its depth equals the distance between the anterior border of the eye and the anterior border of the tympanum; the snout is obtusely pointed. The neck is as broad as the head, or a little narrower. Body rather strongly depressed. Hind limb, in the males, reaching the axil or the shoulder, in the females, the elbow of the adpressed fore limb; foot a little longer than the head.

(1) DE BETTA's variety *lineata* (*quadrilineata* GRAY, *geni* CARA) is a different form, inhabiting Sardinia and Corsica.

Head-Shields as in the typical form of *L. muralis*, but frontal rather broader than usual; nasal forming a short suture with its fellow, and, in two specimens, in contact on one side with the anterior loreal; granules between the supraciliaries and the supraoculars reduced to 3 to 10; parietals as long as broad or but slightly longer; occipital smaller than the interparietal, entirely absent in one specimen; temporal scales usually larger than in the typical form, the masseteric plate distinct and in contact with the upper temporal or separated from it by one series of scales; four upper labials anterior to the subocular. Gular scales rather large (20 to 25 in a longitudinal series); gular fold rather feebly marked. Collar very feebly denticulate, with 8 to 10 plates.

Scales on body rhomboidal or distinctly hexagonal, and more strongly keeled than usual in the typical form, 46 to 55 across the middle of the body, 3, or 2 and 3 transverse series correspond to one ventral plate, 24 to 36 to the length of the head. Ventral plates in 6 longitudinal and 23 to 28 transverse series.

Preanal plate large, bordered by one semicircle of small plates.

Scales on the upper surface of the tibia keeled and much smaller than the dorsals 22 to 24 lamellar scales under the fourth toe. 14 to 16 femoral pores on each side.

Upper caudal scales strongly keeled and more or less distinctly pointed behind, sometimes marly as much as in *L. vivipara*.

The coloration is the same as in most examples of the typical form of *L. muralis*, with a dark lateral band, light-edged above and beneath, and a dark vertebral streak or series of spots; these markings are strongly defined in the very young; the belly of the males is marked with thick black dots, and the throat and breast are spotted with black in both sexes. This type of markings, which is frequent in the typical form of *L. muralis*, is also that which most nearly approaches the pattern of *L. vivipara*.

Measurements, in millimetres	♂	♀
From end of snout to vent	51	56
From end of snout to fore limb	22	22
Length of head	13	12
Width of head	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	9
Depth of head	7	7
Fore limb	18	18
Foot	15	14
Tail	97	104

Prof. v. MÉHELY has recently (1) expressed the opinion that the Caucasian form *L. saxicola* is to be regarded as representing the ancestral stock out of which *L. vivipara* has been evolved. In my opinion, the variety here described establishes an even closer connection between the typical *L. muralis* and *L. vivipara* than is to be found in any of the Eastern forms yet described, including NIKOLSKI'S *L. Derjugini* (2), which is also intermediate between the two species. A much closer knowledge of the variations of these lizards than we now possess is required before we can profitably speculate on this question.

(1) MÉHELY, L. — Eine neue Lacerta aus Ungarn. *Ann. Mus. Hung.* Vol. 2, 1904, pag. 377.

(2) NIKOLSKI, A. M. On two new Lizards from Russia [Russian text]. *Ann. Mus. St. Petersburg*, 1898, pag. 284.