

## Morphological variability of *Podarcis muralis* (Sauria: Lacertidae) in Bulgaria

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The common wall lizard *Podarcis muralis* is a small-sized lacertid largely distributed throughout middle and southern Europe including nearly almost all the territory of Bulgaria. In despite of here wide distribution in this country there is no information about the intraspecific morphological variation of this species. Former recognised subspecies from this region do not give an explanation of the observed morphological polymorphism. In order to draw a preliminary picture of the morphological variability, 27 morphological characters (13 meristic and 14 morphometric, later transformed into 13 indices) were analysed in 416 preserved specimens. Univariate (ANOVA) and multivariate (PCA and DFA) analyses were used to describe the geographic variability. Specimens were grouped according to their geographical locations, later reduced to 4 main groups. Results from both uni- and multivariate statistics suggest strong morphological differentiation among them, well expressed in males. Only specimens from group 1 are attributed to the nominal subspecies. They are distributed in central, northern and north-western Bulgaria. Those from group 2 inhabit southern Bulgaria. Group 3 inhabit north-eastern and group 4 south-eastern part of the country. Morphotype 1 meets in a contact zone with morphotypes 2 in south-western and south-central and with morphotype 3 in north-eastern Bulgaria. After the present results we may conclude that four morphotypes occur in the country. To clarify the relationships among them future genetic analysis should be carried out.

