

First record of *Algyroides nigropunctatus* (DUMÉRIL & BIBRON, 1839), east of the Pindos mountain chain, Greece

The exclusively European lacertid genus *Algyroides* BIBRON & BORY, 1833, comprises four species: *Algyroides marchi* VALVERDE, 1858, in mountainous regions of southeast Spain (RUBIO 2002), *A. fitzingeri* (WIEGMANN, 1834) in Corsica and Sardinia (CORTI & LO CASCIO 2002), *A. moreoticus* BIBRON & BORY, 1833, in the Peloponnese and the Ionian Islands of Cephalonia, Ithaca, Zakynthos and the Strophades Island of Stamfani (CHONDROPOULOS 1986; VALAKOS & MYLONAS 1992; BÖHME & LYMBERAKIS 2009) and *A. nigropunctatus* (DUMÉRIL & BIBRON, 1839) occurring throughout the east Adriatic and Ionian coastal region, from continental Greece in the south to the area of Trieste, Italy, in the north (BÖHME et al. 2009; TÓTH et al. 2006). Greece is the only country supporting two species, *A. moreoticus* and *A. nigropunctatus*, living in sympatry in at least three of the aforementioned Ionian islands (VALAKOS et al. 2008).

The Greek distribution of *A. nigropunctatus* is restricted to the west side of the country, extending from the Albanian border in the north (prefectures of Kastoria and Florina in the region Macedonia, and prefectures of Ioannina and Thesprotia in the region Epirus) to the prefecture of Aetoloacarnania (region of Western Greece) in the south (ONDRIAS 1968; VALAKOS et al. 2008). Besides the above three major Ionian islands, its insular range includes Corfu, Paxoi and Lefkada (TÓTH et al. 2002; PEEK & VAN SOEST 2013) and adjacent Diapontia Islets (STILLE & STILLE 2016). The vast majority of the Greek populations is found west of the Pindos Cordillera. Pindos, the north-south-directed “mountainous spine” of Greece, represents a physical obstacle to the cloud accumulations approaching from the Adriatic and Ionian Seas and, thus, separates the country into two distinct climatic regions with western Greece being much more humid compared to the eastern part (KOTINI-ZABAKA 1983). The clear preference of *A. nigropunctatus* for humid habi-

tats (BISCHOFF 1981) conforms to this geographical pattern and, thus, almost all its populations are located either west of or on mountains of the Pindos chain (VALAKOS et al. 2008). To the best of the authors' knowledge there is only a single and unprecise report of *A. nigropunctatus* from south of the Pindos (prefecture of Fokida; CHONDROPOULOS 1986).

During a field trip on October 13, 2015, the authors recorded four adults and several juveniles of *A. nigropunctatus* in a small ravine close to the village Fteri (38°52' 54.98" N, 22°02'54.53" E, 800 m a.s.l.). Pubescent oaks (*Quercus pubescens*) and sweet chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*) were the most common trees and their fallen leaves covered the banks of the stream. Climatic conditions (clear sky, air temperature at noon around 22 °C) enabled *A. nigropunctatus* to be active, either preying on terrestrial arthropods or basking within the leaf litter. One of the numerous juveniles was captured by hand. The individual (snout-vent length: 28 mm, body mass: 2.5 g, intact tail 51 mm) was preserved in alcohol and added to the Herpetological Collection of the Museum of Natural History of Crete (accession number MNHC 80.3.71.2343).

This record expands the known eastern limits of the species' global distribution by about 30 km, as it is the first record of *A. nigropunctatus* on the east side of the Pindos mountain chain. The closest report comes from the neighboring prefecture of Evrytania (BRINGSØE 1995) that is located on the southern extremities of the Pindos. The present finding suggests that the species may occur in suitable habitats also at other places east of its typical range. Wallacean shortfalls (i. e., poor knowledge of the geographic distribution) are a well-known phenomenon in the study of the Greek herpetofauna (PAFILIS & MARAGOY 2013).

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