
***Ophisops elegans* MENETRIES, 1832**
Snake-eyed Lizard

Identification: A small lizard with a total length up to 15-16 cm. A distinct depression is present at the anterior dorsal side of head. The two eyelids are fused, forming a transparent capsule over the eye, similar to that of a snake. Rostral does not contact external nares; 2 postnasals; 28-43 rows of keeled dorsal scales at mid-trunk; ventrals in 6 longitudinal rows; femoral pores between 8-12. The dorsum is usually gray or brown with a few or more abundant and variously sized black markings, rarely no markings on dorsum; usually two dorsolateral light lines present. The forms from the middle and the eastern Anatolian regions, especially the males, exhibit two brick red stripes which extend from back of the eyes to the tail base. The venter is yellow or greenish yellow from chin to the mid-trunk, sometimes completely yellow, and in some forms dirty white.

Habitat & Biology: A ground-dwelling species usually inhabiting open arid plains with sparse vegetation and rocky, soily substrates; prefers steppes. Diurnally feeds on insects. A female lays 2-6 eggs.

Distribution: Its range extends from southern Balkan countries, Aegean and Mediterranean islands to SW Asia and Punjab in N India;

with a vertical distribution to 2000 m. In Turkey, it is represented with four subspecies:

1. *O. e. elegans*: In E and SE Anatolia, including Hatay.
2. *O. e. basoglui* BARAN-BUDAK, 1978: In the Mediterranean coasts from Manavgat to İskenderun.
3. *O. e. centralanatoliae* BODENHEIMER, 1944: In Middle Anatolia.
4. *O. e. macrodactylus* BERTHOLD, 1842: In W Anatolia and Turkish Thrace.



71A. *Ophisops elegans ehrenbergi*



71B. *Ophisops elegans centralanatoliae*