

## High altitude record of the Pyrenean lizard, *Lacerta bonnali*

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### Neuer Höhenrekord der Pyrenäeneidechse, *Lacerta bonnali*

Der höchste bislang bekanntgewordene Fund von *L. bonnali* bezieht sich auf eine Beobachtung auf 2 918 m üNN, wobei jedoch keine Belegexemplare gesammelt werden konnten. Uns gelang ein Fund der Art auf dem Gipfel der Grande Fache, auf einer Höhe von 3 000 m üNN. Das Exemplar belegt damit den bislang höchstgelegenen Fundort der Art.

*Lacerta bonnali* is a montane lizard endemic to the central western part of the Pyrenean mountain chain (ARRIBAS & MARTÍNEZ-RICA 1997). Eastwards in the Pyrenees, it is replaced by the allopatric taxa *L. aranica* and *L. aurelioi* (ARRIBAS 1997a, b) which were only recently described. All three taxa are closely related to each other and occur in rather small populations scattered within their distribution area, probably limited by climatic and other habitat restrictions (ARRIBAS & MARTINEZ RICA 1997, PALANCA et al. 1997).

The altitudinal range so far published is 1 940–2 500 m a.s.l. for *L. aranica* and 2 200–2 940 m a.s.l. for *L. aurelioi* (ARRIBAS 1997a, b). *L. bonnali* is known from 1 700 up to 2 900 m a.s.l. (ARRIBAS & MARTÍNEZ-RICA 1997). The highest published lizard observation within the distribution area of *L. bonnali* is 2 918 m at the Gran Alto de Pondiellos (MARTINEZ-RICA 1977), but the corresponding specimen was not captured and its identity thus not confirmed. MARTINEZ-RICA (1977) already speculated about the possibility that the species may also occur at still higher altitudes. We here report on the observation of specimens of *L. bonnali* at 3 000 m altitude, constituting the highest known altitude record for the species.

On 19.07.1998, M. D. observed one lizard specimen on the summit of the Grande Fache mountain (42°48'N/3°27'E), altitude 3 005 m; Aragón region, Spain, the summit constituting the very border with France). The specimen, however, could not be collected or determined. On 23.07.1998, M. V., J. R., C. M. and M. P. observed and collected one adult female specimen (ZFMK 68407; snout-vent length 53 mm; fig. 1) very near to the site of the first observation. The specimen was active at 13:00 h, basking on a small rock within a larger agglomeration of scree and loose rocks. The exact site was situated few meters below the highest point of the summit (3 005 m a.s.l.) and its altitude can be rather exactly estimated as 3 000 m.

The specimen was determined as *L. bonnali* (compared to *L. aranica* and *L. aurelioi*) by the following set of characters: no light dorsolateral lines; dorsal and lateral colouration uniform, without numerous dark spots typical for *L. aurelioi*; ventral side uni-