



### A new record of *Pseudopus apodus* (Squamata: Anguillidae) from central mainland Greece

The range of the European glass lizard, *Pseudopus apodus* (Pallas, 1775), spreads from the Balkans in the Eastern Mediterranean through further eastern regions, such as the Middle East (e.g. coastal Turkey, Anatolia, Levant), Crimea, the Caucasus, northern Iran and Central Asia (Obst 1981, Sindaco & Jeremcenko 2008, Jandzik et al. 2017). The European range mostly covers the coastal parts of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece, including some islands of the Adriatic, Ionian and Aegean Seas and Northern Macedonia (Chondropoulos 1986, Valakos et al. 2008, Sillero et al. 2014, Stejirovski et al. 2014, Uhrin et al. 2016, Mizsei et al. 2017). The Greek range of the species is known to cover almost the entire country, with some gaps in the mountainous regions, such as in the Pindus range or in central Peloponnese (cf. Chondropoulos 1986, Gasc et al. 1997). However, we have to stress out that exact distributional data from the inner mainland are scarce as in the case of most species of the Greek herpetofauna (e.g., Pafilis & Maragou 2013, Christopoulos et al. 2019). Based on later available data, the Greek range of the species was indeed narrowed down to the coastal areas in the west (Epirus, western central Greece, Peloponnese) and east (Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace) parts of the country, with no occurrence data from the central parts of the mainland (Valakos et al.

Figure 1. Occurrence of *Pseudopus apodus* from the mainland of northern Greece: top – site of the record (blue circles corresponds to species range according Sillero et al., 2014 ([na2re.ismai.pt/atlas.php](http://na2re.ismai.pt/atlas.php), data kindly provided by Neftalí Sillero), the middle – shape of the individual, bottom – habitat features in the surroundings of the record. All photos by Marcel Uhrin.

2008, Sillero et al. 2014, Speybroeck et al. 2016).

During a two-week herpetological survey in north-eastern Greece conducted in June 2019, we recorded a European glass lizard in the central part of the mainland, clearly outside the previously known species range from Greece.

In June 10, 2019 we encountered a freshly killed individual of *P. apodus* (adult male, ca. 60 cm in length) found on a local road between the villages Agia Paraskevi and Sarakina, near a bridge over the Pinios River, in Thessaly (39.6624 N, 21.6286 E, 177 m a. s. l.; Fig. 1). The observation site is lo-

cated roughly halfway between the coastal species ranges delineated by Sillero et al. (2014), i.e. ca. 100 and 120 km from the seashore in the east (near Agiokampos) and in the west (near Sagiada) respectively, and around 50–70 km beyond the known species range. The site is on the eastern foot of the Pindus mountain range, which is considered the natural biogeographical barrier dividing the eastern and western parts of the species range here (cf. Chondropoulos 1986). To the best of our knowledge, only one published reference on the possible occurrence of the species in mainland Greece is available. Valakos et al. (2008) provided in their book a picture of *P. apodus* located near Meteora (which is 6 km north of our observation site), but without any further faunal data, and this record is not depicted on the species account map [Valakos et al. 2008: pp. 215 and 217]. Furthermore, no data on the species are reported from the region in some relevant publicly available faunistic datasets, e.g. 'Balkan Herps' [available at <https://openbiomaps.org/>] or 'Balcanica' [available at <http://en.balcanica.info/>] projects. Consequently, this record could be considered the first in detail documented observation of *P. apodus* from this part of mainland Greece and may indicate a wider and probably more continuous distribution of the species in Greece. The species is also part of the assemblages of small vertebrates that are vulnerable to road-caused mortality within their ranges (e.g., Tok et al., 2011), but despite this fact, our observation of a single killed animal could not be sufficient indicator of a viable population in the region. Nonetheless, the main habitat types of the species (Obst, 1981) are typically located in coastal and patchwork-like ecosystems that may be related to human agricultural activities. As such, continental and mountainous sites may be suboptimal for the species, as in the case of the neighbouring, currently well-mapped, Albania (Mizsei et al., 2017).

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