

EUROLIZARDS

Anatololacerta budaki - Budak's Rock Lizard



Adult: GR / Psomi Islet 14.05.2018 - Note the brownish basic colouration.

Budak's Rock Lizard is basically a Turkish species. However, on the small Greek islet of Psomi in the Kastellorizo Archipelago, a population of *Anatololacerta* was discovered by Greek scientists. First, it wasn't sure to which species those lizards refer. But in 2018, genetic analysis revealed that they are conspecific with their cousins on the Turkish mainland: *Anatololacerta budaki* - the first and so far only record of this species in Greece'.

As the population on Psomi is the only one known in our area, this species could actually be regarded as Europe's rarest Lacertid. (We will not discuss here whether the Kastellorizo Archipelago belongs to Europe - Just ask any local Greek, if you want to know...)

Lizards of this population show a darker basic colouration as the closely related *Anatololacerta pelasgiana*. They are rather uniform brownish.

Their habitat is a karstified limestone islet with some sparse shrubs on top.

As it is the only Lacertid on this islet, it cannot be confused with other species.



In our area, *Anatololacerta budaki* only occurs on a small islet of the Kastellorizo Archipelago.



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Adult: GR / Psomi Islet, 14.05.2018 - Compared to *Anatololacerta pelasgiana*, these lizards show a rather uniform pattern.



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Psomi Islet off Kastellorizo: The only known habitat of *Anatololacerta budaki* in our area.

* KALAENTZIS, K. & STRACHINIS, I. & KATSIYIANNIS, P. & OEFINGER, P. & KAZILAS, C. (2018) - New records and an updated list of the herpetofauna of Kastellorizo and the adjacent islet Psomi (Dodecanese, SE Greece). - Herpetology Notes, 11: 1009-1019.

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