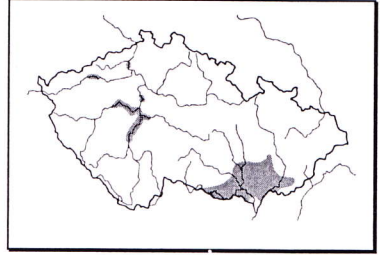




a) The head of a male *Lacerta viridis* from Pálava Hills. (D. MODRÝ); **b)** A female of *L.v.* from Dyje River National Park. (P. NEČAS); **c)** A male of *L.v.* from Pálava Hills. (D. MODRÝ); **d)** Habitat of *L.v.* - Svatý Kopeček, Mikulov. (D. MODRÝ).

Lacerta viridis
(LAURENTI, 1768)



COMMON NAMES: ještěrka zelená (c), Green Lizard (e), Smaragdeidechse (g), lézard vert (f), элёная ящерица (r)

SYSTEMATICS: A polytypic species with 2 subspecies: the nominotypic and *L.v. meridionalis* from the Black Sea coast. Populations from CZ belong to the nominotypic subspecies. Recently, the W- and SW-European populations traditionally referred to *L. viridis*, have been recognised as a distinct species - *L. bilineata*.

DESCRIPTION: A large lacertid reaching max. L over 40 cm. Head long, robust, usually 2 PN and 1 LR behind nostrils, 4–6 SL between rostral and subocular, 8–11 chin shields. Supraciliary granules mostly present (1–14). Body robust, scales mostly smooth, oval. Back with 0–2 longitudinal rows of scales smaller than on flanks, 42–61 MSR, 8–11 collar scales. Extremities long, robust. Tail relatively long (TL 60–66% of the L), thin, fragile, covered by keeled scales, autotomy developed. Femoral pores 11–21. Coloration relatively stable: back usually green with yellow and black points in MM, brown to greenish with darker spots along two dorsolateral yellowish stripes in FF. Belly whitish (FF) or yellowish (MM). Temporal region in MM brownish to olive with yellow spots. JUVs with similar pattern as FF. Besides the sexual dichromatism, MM have a thickened tail base, larger head, more prominent femoral pores and blue throats within the mating season.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION: A widespread species distributed from C- and SE-Europe to NE and to Dnieper river (S-RUS) in the east and to D and PL in the north.

Europe: A, AL, BG, CZ, D, GR, H, HR, MAC, MO, PL, RO, RUS, SK, SLO, TY, U, YU.

HABITAT: *L. viridis* occurs in warm, sun-exposed habitats of (forest-) steppe character: rocky and bushy hillsides, river valleys, railway terraces, vineyards etc. In CZ, it lives in lowlands, exceptionally up to 550 m a.s.l. It prefers variable landscape with suitable hiding places and moisture.

NOTES ON BIOLOGY: *L. viridis* is a diurnal, heliophilous lizard. Though mostly ground dwelling, it climbs well. It hibernates in burrows, rocky crevices, rarely in tree cavities. An aggressive, territorial species with a wide home range. Beginning of seasonal activity: e.III–V. Mating season: e.IV–V. FF lay 5–21 eggs in VI–VII. Incubation period 63–105 days, hatchlings appear in VII–e.IX measuring 80–100 mm. End of annual activity: e.IX–X - ADs earlier than JUVs. Maturity reached in 3rd year, life span: 10–12 years. The diet consists predominantly of invertebrates (esp. insects: Coleoptera, Orthoptera), ADs occasionally feed also on small lizards, birds and rodents. A common host of the tick *Ixodes ricinus*.

CONSERVATION STATUS: The occurrence in the CZ is relict and endangered, due to the loss of suitable habitats, as well as climatic factors. Protected by law and classified as a critically endangered species. In the RDB, it is listed as endangered.