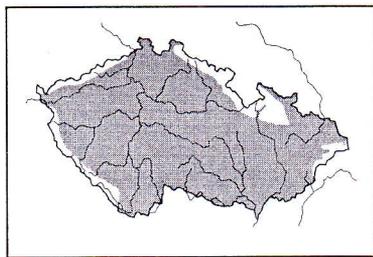


Lacerta agilis

LINNAEUS, 1758



COMMON NAMES: ještěrka obecná (c), Sand Lizard (e), Zauneidechse (g), lézard agile (f), прыткая ящерица (r)

SYSTEMATICS: A polytypic species with 8 subspecies. In CZ, only the nominotypic subspecies occurs.

DESCRIPTION: A medium-sized lizard reaching max. L of 24 cm. Head short, robust, conical, usually 1 PN and 2 LR arranged in a triangle behind nostrils, 4 (3–5) SL between rostral and subocular, 6 (4–7) chin shields. Supraciliary granules mostly absent (rarely 1–5). Collar serrated. Body robust, scales mostly smooth, oval. Back with 8–16 longitudinal rows of scales smaller than those on the body sides, 33–49 MSR, ventrals in 6 rows. Extremities and tail relatively short (TL 56–64% of L). Tail fragile, dorsally covered by keeled scales, autotomy developed. Femoral pores 10–15. Coloration very variable: back usually with a dark brown dorsal band with a light vertebral streak and very dark blotches between two light dorsolateral stripes. Flanks with large ocelli and dark spots on a grey, brown (FF) or green (MM) underground. Belly whitish, yellow (FF) or green with many black spots (MM). Some specimens with a wide brown or reddish band on the back (var. *erythronota*). JUVs with the same pattern as adults, green is lacking. Besides the sexual dichromatism, MM have a thickened tail base, larger head and more prominent femoral pores.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION: A widespread species ranging from Pyrenees and S-GB to Lake Baikal and from S and Siberia (max. 62°N) to I, GR, Caucasian Mts., and NW-CHI.

Europe: A, B, BE, BG, CH, CZ, D, DK, E, EST, F, GB, GR, H, HR, I, LA, LI, LU, MAC, MO, NL, PL, RO, RUS, S, SK, SLO, TY, YU, U.

HABITAT: *L. agilis* is an ecologically adaptive species. It inhabits various dry and warm habitats: forest and field edges, meadows, river banks, gardens etc., up to 750 m a.s.l., including in the immediate vicinity of humans. It prefers slopes with S- and SW- exposition.

NOTES ON BIOLOGY: A diurnal, heliophilous, ground dwelling lizard, often living in dense populations. Adults dig own holes (several dm long) used for sleeping and hibernation. A territorial animal. Beginning of seasonal activity: III–IV, MM appear 2 weeks earlier than FF. Mating season: V–VI, MM grasp FF by jaws in the sacral region during copulation. FF lay about 10 (1–21) eggs in VI–VII. Incubation period: 43–60 days, hatchlings appear in VIII–IX, measuring 59–78 mm (L). End of annual activity: IX–X. Maturity reached in 2nd–3rd year, longevity: 13 years. The diet consists of various invertebrates, especially insects (Coleoptera, Orthoptera, Hymenoptera). A common host of the tick *Ixodes ricinus*.

CONSERVATION STATUS: The most common lacertid in CZ. Protected by law and classified as a markedly endangered species. Not listed in the RDB.



a) A male of *Lacerta agilis* from Bedřichovice. (D. MODRÝ); b) A female of *L.a.* from the vicinity of Praha (J.R. ŠLAPETA); c) The head of a male *L.a.* from Bedřichovice. (P. NEČAS); d) Juvenile *L.a.* from Hradec Králové. (R. ROZÍNEK).