



Fig. 1: Adult Dione Ratsnake *Elaphe dione* (PALLAS, 1773) from 2-3 km south-west of Yacı (=Yaycı) [39,930° N / 43,957° E, province of Iğdır, east Anatolia, Turkey]. Photograph by J. GARZONI.



Fig. 2: Western distribution of *Elaphe dione* (PALLAS, 1773), according to SCHULZ (1996), DAREVSKY (1997), pers. obs. The asterisk indicates the new Turkish record locality.

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Lacerta horvathi (MÉHELY, 1904) in the Tyrol south of the Central Alps

In August 5, 2003 *Lacerta (Iberolacerta) horvathi* (MÉHELY, 1904) was observed by one of the authors (F.T.) in a small tributary valley (Frauenbachtal, 900 m a.s.l.) of the Drau river between Lienz and Oberdrauburg in the Tyrolian portion of the Lienzer Dolomiten massif. This is the first record of *L. horvathi* in the Tyrol apart from one out of a handful of repeatedly discussed findings from north of the Central Alps in the borderland area of Germany and Austria (CAPULA & LUISELLI 1990; FRANZEN et al. 1993; SCHMIDTLER & SCHMIDTLER 1996). During an excursion by FRANZEN, GRUBER, HECKES and LUISELLI, some Bavarian record localities of *L. horvathi* incorrectly allocated by CAPULA & LUISELLI (1990) were rectified. The subsequent German study reported five locations in the vicinity of the Achenpaß region where *L. horvathi* was observed (one turned out to be within the territory of Austria, some 20 m from the borderline; four were clearly located in Germany) (FRANZEN et al. 1993). However, doubts have been uttered concerning



Fig. 1: Pittenbachtal valley, near the Achenpaß.
View in northern direction (to Bavaria)
as seen from the territory of Austria.

the autochthony of *L. horvathi* in this northern exclave. They are fed by the suboptimal habitat situation, and the fact that the region is herpetologically well studied. Moreover, the authors would have had the rare opportunity to discover tiny populations at the brink of extinction, as *L. horvathi* never has been found again in this region since.

In 2003, a survey (F.T., 8 person-days) of more or less promising spots on the Austrian side of the Achenpaß (Pittenbachtal, fig. 1; Hühnersbachtal) resulted in records of Common Lizards (*Zootoca vivipara* JACQUIN, 1787), but not *L. horvathi*. Based on all our knowledge on the habitat requirements of *L. horvathi* in Carinthia (see GRILLITSCH & TIEDEMANN 1986; TIEDEMANN 1992; CABELA et al. 1992; GRILLITSCH & CABELA 2001), the Pittenbachtal habitats appear unsuited for the lizard (too cold and shady, insufficient crevices), however, those in Hühnersbachtal look much more appropriate. In its structural equipment (cleft, schistous limestone formations, rich in crevices, close rock portions overflowed by a little stream), the new record locality of *L. horvathi* in the Frauenbachtal valley (fig. 2) agrees well with the known Carinthian habitats in the mountain ranges of the Lienzer Dolomiten and eastern Gailtaler Alpen (GRILLITSCH & CABELA 2001; CABELA et al. 2002). The concomitant herpetofauna was represented by *Salamandra salamandra* LINNAEUS, 1758 (a larva in a little nearby pool) and *Podarcis muralis* LAURENTI, 1768 about 100 meters of altitude below the site.



Fig. 2: New record locality (Frauenbachtal, 900 m a.s.l.) of *Lacerta horvathi* in the Tyrol (Austria).

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