

and the Italian Aesculapian Snake *Z. lineatus* (CAMERANO, 1891), which is endemic to the central-southern Italian Peninsula and Sicily; its occurrence in Sardinia needs to be confirmed (see RAZZETTI & ZANGHELLINI 2006).

LENK & WÜSTER (1999) indicated the northern limit of *Z. lineatus* near Pannarano (province of Benevento, Campania region, southern Italy) and established the southern limit of *Z. longissimus* near Rosello (province of Chieti, Abruzzi, Central Italy; see also RAZZETTI & ZANGHELLINI 2006). However, recently, CAPULA et al. (2006) revised the distribution of both species in Italy considering the Campania region (Southern Italy) as a parapatric contact area and suggested an analogous pattern for the Apulian region where they recorded *Z. longissimus* for the first time. Finally, CORSETTI & ROMANO (2008) provided records of the presence of both species in a mountainous chain of the Pre-Apennine, the Volsci Chain (Latium, Central Italy), establishing the northern limit of the range of *Z. lineatus* in the province of Frosinone and the western limit in the province of Latina which constitutes a considerable northward extension of the previously known boundaries.

Here we provide a new record from the Lepini Mountains, a northern subgroup of the Volsci Chain, which further extends the range limit of the species. In May 2010 we found a road-killed *Z. lineatus*. The site is called "Piano della Civita", in the town of Artena, province of Rome (WGS84; UTM coordinates: X = 0326303, Y = 4621384; altitude: 900 m a.s.l.; Fig. 1). The record here reported is the first one for the province of Rome (cf. BOLOGNA et al. 2007; CORSETTI & ROMANO 2008) and represents both the northernmost and westernmost known place where *Z. lineatus* occurs. The observation extends the known territory roughly 10 km to the north and one km to the west (the previous border of the range area fell in the Frosinone and Latina provinces respectively, Fig. 1). Although the Lepini Mountains are partially isolated (to the north and north-west they are separated from the volcanic complex of the Colli Albani by some small valleys while in north-eastern direction they are separated from the inner Apennine by the Sacco Valley), the Italian Aesculapian

### Extension of known range area of *Zamenis lineatus* (CAMERANO, 1891). New northern and western limits

Three colubrid snake species of the genus *Zamenis* occur in Italy: *Zamenis situla* (LINNAEUS, 1758), a Balkano-Apulian element (Italian range area: Apulia, easternmost portion of Basilicata and Sicily), *Z. longissimus* (LAURENTI, 1768), a southern European snake (Italian range area: north, center and part of the south of the country),

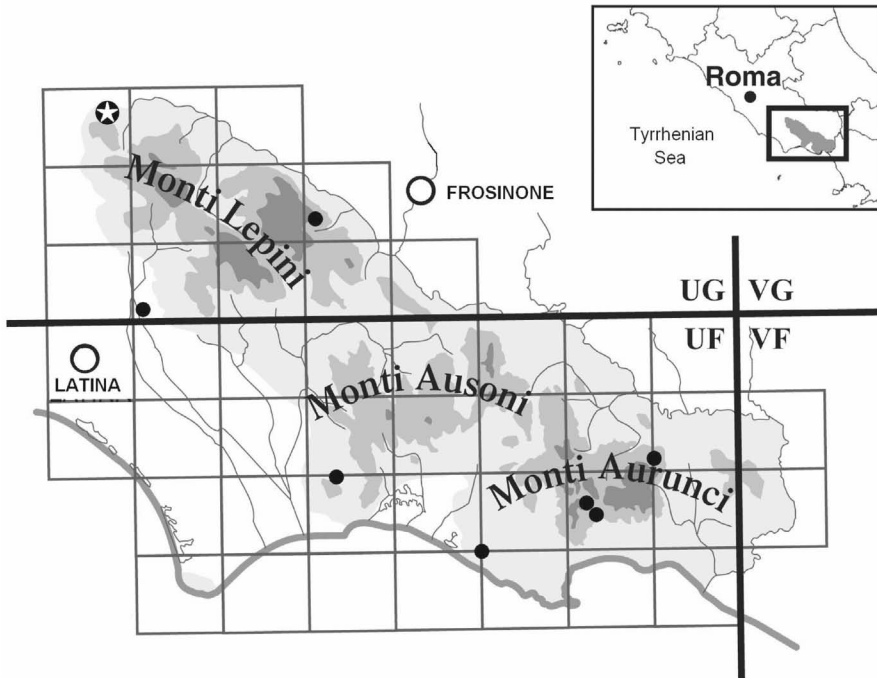


Fig. 1: The new northernmost and westernmost record of the Italian Aesculapian Snake *Zamenis lineatus* (CAMERANO, 1891) (star - top left) in the Volsci Mountains (Latium, Central Italy). Black dots represent the records by CORSETTI & ROMANO (2008). 10 km x 10 km UTM grid is shown.

Snake is a vagile species and its occurrence in nearby territories seems likely.

The various contributions that extended the known range of *Z. lineatus* and *Z. longissimus* (CAPULA et al. 2006; CORSETTI & ROMANO 2008; this note) highlight that the distribution range of *Z. lineatus* is remarkably wider than previously supposed and that, as a consequence, the ranges of these two closely related species are considerably more overlapping than originally reported by LENK & WÜSTER (1999).

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