

# EUROLIZARDS

## Algyroides nigropunctatus - Dalmatian Algyroides



Male: GR / Corfu, 02.06.2017 - The population on Corfu refers to the 'Northern Ionian Clade' which looks similar to the nominate subspecies but differs genetically.

The Dalmatian Algyroides is one of Europe's most colourful and variable lizard. In particular, males of the nominate subspecies with their blue heads and red undersides look fantastic; but several other colour varieties occur. Females are rather inconspicuous with brownish colouration.

The distribution area of this species ranges along the Adriatic Coast from north-eastern Italy to Western Greece. It prefers habitats with vertical structures (rocks or trees) with sufficient shade and humidity and frequently can be found near streams or lakes. It occurs from sea level up to 1600 m (Mount Enos / Kefalonia).

Besides of the nominate subspecies, *subspecies kephallithacius* has been described for the Ionian Islands of Lefkada, Kefalonia, Ithaka and also occurs on adjoining mainland (Etolokarnania).

Genetic analysis further indicates that there is a third lineage on Corfu and the adjoining mainland, the so called 'Northern Ionian Clade'. The taxonomic position of this lineage is unclear so far.

*Algyroides nigropunctatus* with its strongly keeled scales on the back is an unmistakable lizard. It may co-occur with the following other species:

- On Kefalonia and Ithaka, *Algyroides nigropunctatus* may be confused with *Algyroides moreoticus*. At *Algyroides nigropunctatus*, the scales on the backs are bigger than on the flanks whereas at *Algyroides moreoticus*, the scales on backs and flanks have the same size.
- *Algyroides nigropunctatus* differs from other small Lacertids within its distribution range (like *Dinarolacerta mosorensis*, *Dalmatolacerta oxycephala* or *Podarcis* species) by its strongly keeled scales on back. Furthermore, the combination of blue heads and reddish undersides of males is unique.



The distribution range of *Algyroides nigropunctatus*.



Pair: GR / Corfu, 04.06.2017 - Compared to males, females are rather inconspicuous.



Male: GR / Erikoussa (Corfu), 04.06.2017 - Sporadically on northern Corfu, but particularly on the islet of Erikoussa north of Corfu, males may show bright reddish colours.



Subsp. kephallithacius, male: GR / Ithaka, 30.05.2017 - Males of this subspecies show greenish to petrol-coloured throats. The undersides are yellowish or green.



Subsp. kephallithacius, male: GR / Lefkada, 25.05.2014 - Specimens from Lefkada frequently show green throats.



Subsp. kephallithacius, male: GR / Lefkada, 25.05.2014 - A male with bright yellow underside.



The peak area of Mount Enos (Kefalonia / GR) on 1600 m altitude: Terra typica of *Algyroides nigropunctatus kephallithacius*. The island in the background is Zakynthos.

\* PODNAR, M. & MAYER, W. (2006) - First insights into mitochondrial DNA diversity of Dalmatian Algyroides, *Algyroides nigropunctatus* (Lacertidae). - *Periodicum biologicum*, 18 (1): 85-87.

  
EUROLIZARDS