

EUROLIZARDS

Podarcis levendis - Pori Wall Lizard



Male: GR / Pori, 29.05.2011 - Note the blue spots on shoulder and the whitish throat.

The discovery of a new vertebrate species in our thoroughly explored European area may seem impossible - but it still can happen in the 21st century: The Greek island of Pori is so remote that the existence of lizards on this uninhabited rock was first noticed in 1994. Subsequently, it turned out that they were different from all other known lizards. In 2008, they were described as a separate species: *Podarcis levendis*, which occurs on the barren Pori island and close-by Lagouvardos (Poretí) rock.

It appears noteworthy that the scientific name "levendis" means "brave" which is explained by the authors of the species' description as follows: *We consider that this relict species, which survived for at least 5 My on two small islets isolated from any similar taxon, qualifies as brave.* - We definitely agree!

As *Podarcis levendis* is the only Lacertid lizard on Pori and Lagouvardos, it cannot be mistaken with other species. Its closest relatives are [Podarcis peloponnesiacus](#) and [Podarcis cretensis](#).

Podarcis levendis is a rather big Wall Lizard. The males resemble to pale coloured *Podarcis peloponnesiacus*: back greenish to brown, white throat, underside white to orange, blue outer ventral scales and blue spots on shoulders. They show some dark dorsal pattern but no dark reticulation on flanks.



The distribution area of *Podarcis levendis* is limited to the uninhabited islets of Pori and Lagouvardos.



Pair: GR / Pori, 29.05.2011 - An archaic love scene.



Male: GR / Pori, 29.05.2011 - These lizards show some dark blotches on the back but not on the flanks.



Male: GR / Pori, 29.05.2011 - The backs may be greenish in some specimen.



Female: GR / Pori, 29.05.2011 - This species resemble to a 'pale' *Podarcis peloponnesiacus*.



The rocky and barren Pori island as seen from a boat.

* LYMBERAKIS, P. & POULAKAKIS, N. & KALIONTZOPOULOU, A. & VALAKOS, E. & MYLONAS, M. (2008) - Two new species of Podarcis (Squamata: Lacertidae) from Greece - *Systematics and Biodiversity*, 6 (3): 307-318.



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