

slight knocks on her head at high speed, while clawing on the head with his foreclaws. At that point we observed the introduction of the penis into the female's cloaca, while the biting and clawing continued. The whole process lasts from 5–8 min, and may be repeated a few times during the day, always in the late afternoon and early evening. We observed copulation in aquatic and terrestrial environments.

One of the females for which we had observed copulation was found dead (157 mm CL); after dissection we noted three enlarged ovarian follicles, two in one ovary and one in the other. The different diameters of the follicles suggest that this turtle would have laid three clutches of one egg each during this reproductive season. We also noted corpora lutea of 3 different diameters, demonstrating that she had already laid three clutches in this reproductive period. This is the first evidence of multiple nesting in this species (Fig. 1B). We induced the release of eggs in one gravid female by oxytocin injection (Ewert and Legler 1978. *Herpetologica* 34:314–318) on 27 September 2018, and another nested naturally on 3 October 2019; each clutch had only one large egg, about one third the CL of the female. The elliptical eggs have a rigid hard shell, with one end more rounded than the other end.

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SQUAMATA — LIZARDS

OPHISOPS ELEGANS (Elegant Snake-eyed Lizard). LONGEVITY. *Ophisops elegans* is a small (mean: 40–55 mm SVL, 2–3.5 g), terrestrial and insectivorous lacertid lizard (Bar and Haimovitch 2012. *A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Israel*. Pazbar, Herzlyia. 246 pp.; Meiri 2018. *Glob. Ecol. Biogeog.* 27:1168–1172). It ranges widely from eastern Iran to northeastern Greece and south via Turkey to the Levant and North Africa (Kyriazi et al. 2008. *Mol. Phylogen. Evol.* 49:795–805; Roll et al. 2017. *Nature Ecol. Evol.* 1:1677–1682.). In Israel, this diurnal species is found throughout the Mediterranean region and into the Negev Mountains (Bar and Haimovitch, *op. cit.*) at altitudes of 350–1150 m (E. Maza and S. Meiri, pers. obs.), with 100–2000 m altitudinal range in the Golan Heights and Mt. Hermon (Simon Jamison, pers. comm., and the collections of the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History; SMNH).

Several authors gave estimates of longevity in *O. elegans*. Foufopoulos and Ives (1999. *Am. Nat.* 153:1–25) gave a maximum of 4 yrs, while Arakelyan et al. (2011. *Herpetofauna of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh*. Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. SSAR Publications. 149 pp.) and Gharzi and Yari (2013. *Zool. Mid. East.* 59: 10–15) listed 5 years. The longest-lived individuals were found by Tok et al. (2013. *Ecol. Balk.* 5:23–30), who reported males reaching 6 years of age in two Turkish populations using skeletochronology.

At 0905 h on 4 June 2012 we surveyed reptiles at a site in Mt. Meron, the highest of the Galilee Mountains, close to the Lebanese border in northern Israel. In a site near the Mt. Meron Field School, 33.011°N, 35.394°E, 720 m elev., we collected (under permit #2012/38489 from the Israel Nature and Parks Authority) an active, adult male *O. elegans*. It had a bifurcated tail (Tamar et al. 2013. *Herpetol. Rev.* 44:146), that was lost during capture (Fig. 1). We measured and weighed the lizard upon capture (SVL



FIG. 1. A photo of the male *Ophisops elegans*, and its autotomized bifurcated regenerated tail, upon capture, June 6th, 2012, six years and three months before it died.

= 50.3 mm, 3.3 g, including the autotomized tail).

The animal was then transferred to the Garden for Zoological Research, School of Zoology, Tel Aviv University, where it was kept alone in a large outdoor terrarium and provided with crickets and water ad-lib. It died on 13 September 2018, 6 years and 3 months after capture. We measured it again and found it had an SVL of 56.0 mm, and a (regenerated, but not bifurcated) tail 67 mm long. It weighed 3.9 g.

Wild *Ophisops elegans* are known to begin hatching in June, and to reach sexual maturity at lengths of about 40–45 mm SVL in Israel (Bar and Haimovitch, *op. cit.*, Werner 2016. *Reptile Life in the Land of Israel*. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt Am Main. 494 pp). In Lebanon, males were found to reach sexual maturity at a minimum length of 43 mm SVL (Nassar et al. 2017 *Zool. Mid. East* 63:17–23). Elsewhere in its range it is reported to reach sexual maturity at ages of one to two years (Perez-Mellado et al., 1993 *In* Valakos et al. [eds.], *Lacertids of the Mediterranean Basin: A Biological Approach*, pp. 231–242. Hellenic Zoological Society, Atenas; Szczerbak 2003. *Guide to the Reptiles of the Eastern Palearctic*. Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, Florida. 350 pp.). Therefore, we think this 50 mm SVL male was likely to be at the very least 1 yr old upon capture. Thus, at the time of death this male (now SMNH 16297) was thought to be at minimum seven years and 3 months old.

The difference between the age of this specimen and the previous maximum age reported for *O. elegans* (6 yr, Tok et al., *op. cit.*) may reflect the generally longer lives led by captive reptiles compared with their free kin (Scharf et al., *op. cit.*; Stark et al., *op. cit.*). This new record shows that even small lacertids can achieve relatively long lives.

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