

for overwintering in the second half of November. On the coast of the Sea of Japan, they appear earlier than in the mountains. The first clutches are laid at the end of May. In the northern part of the range, females produce 1–2 clutches per season, while in the south, three clutches of 2–8 eggs each, measuring 6.7–9.5 × 10.5–12.5 mm, are the norm. Each female lays on average 11–12 (up to 23) eggs per season. The young with body lengths of 2.6–2.9 cm hatch in late August or early September. Amur Grass Lizards reach sexual maturity, apparently, after their second winter. They feed on insects and their larvae, and other small invertebrates, mainly spiders.

Conservation status: Population numbers are stable within the species' range, and in no need of any conservation measures.

Mountain Grass Lizard

Takydromus wolteri FISCHER, 1885

Figs. 360–364, Map 74

The Mountain Grass Lizard was originally described from North Korea, hence the Russian common name (Корейская долгохвостка = Korean Longtail) of the species.

External appearance: The Mountain Grass Lizard is a small and slender lacertid reaching a body length of 58 mm, with a tail of approximately twice this size. The rostral scale does not touch the frontonasal scale; it is separated from it by the nasal scale. Prefrontal scales contact each other or are separated by a small scale. The subocular scale widely touches the edge of the lip; the tympanic is well defined. There are four pairs of infralabial scales; the line of the posterior edge of the third pair of these scales is straight. The collar is poorly developed.

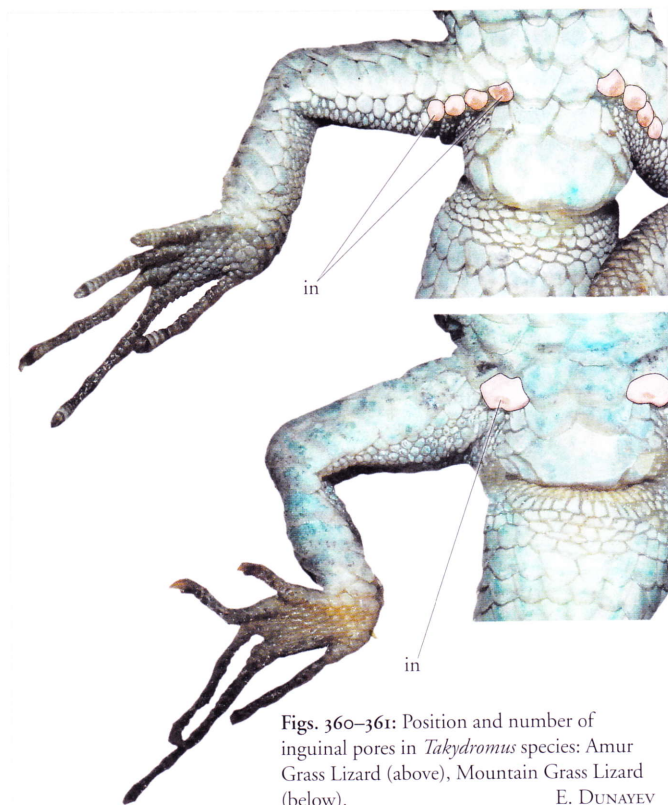


Fig. 362: Young Mountain Grass Lizards, *Takydromus wolteri*, are expert climbers.
I. MASLOVA

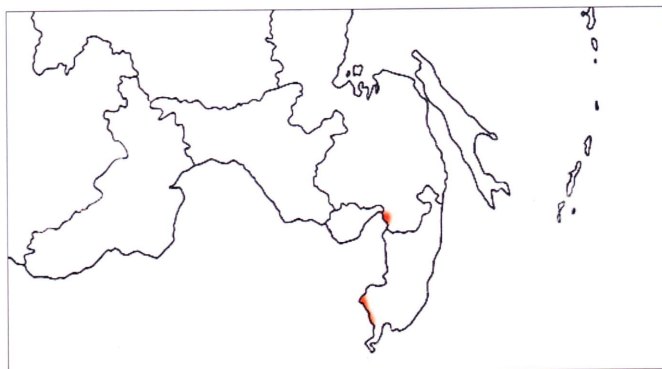
The large dorsal scales, with low longitudinal keels, are arranged in 7–8 longitudinal rows. Vertebral and dorsolateral scales are keeled and several times smaller than the dorsal scales. The lateral scales are keeled and arranged in 2–3 longitudinal rows.

Mountain Grass Lizards are brown or olive-grey above, with a fulvous or black-brown stripe along the vertebral line that passes onto the tail. The wide, dark lateral stripes on the bottom are edged with a narrow, white or bluish line. The venter is yellowish-white, and the throat and chest are greenish-blue. Juveniles are dark, almost black.

Distinguishing features: The Mountain Grass Lizard is very similar to the Amur Grass Lizard, from which it differs by its smaller size, by having only one inguinal pore on each side, and by some other characters.



Figs. 360–361: Position and number of inguinal pores in *Takydromus* species: Amur Grass Lizard (above), Mountain Grass Lizard (below).
E. DUNAYEV



Map 74: *Takydromus wolteri*.

Distribution and subspecies: The Mountain Grass Lizard is common in Korea, on Sosu Island, in south-eastern Manchuria and in eastern China. In Russia, it is found in the extreme south of the Primorsky Region, nearly up to the Iman River valley.

No subspecies have been described.

Natural history: This lizard inhabits only open areas such as steppe areas with grass and shrub vegetation, the outskirts of forests, meadows and marshes. In case of danger, it willingly goes into the water and it swims well. The Mountain Grass Lizard moves swiftly in grass and can climb shrubs. Its activity is diurnal. This species comes out from overwintering in the first half of May. Clutches consist of up to nine eggs and deposited in early June. At least two clutches are produced per season. Hatchlings are 3.2–4.2 cm long and leave the nest in August–September. The diet of the Mountain Grass Lizard consists of insects (orthopterans and beetles) and arachnids. The ecology of this rare species has not been studied well. Due to the reclamation of meadows by man, the populations of this species are in decline.

Conservation status: The conservation status of the species has not been assessed.

Genus *Zootoca* WAGLER, 1830

Forest lizards

Until quite recently, this monotypic genus was considered a subgenus of the genus *Lacerta*.



Fig. 363: Dorsal colour pattern of the Mountain Grass Lizard.

I. MASLOVA

Members of the genus *Zootoca* differ from members of other lacertid lizard genera by a combination of features. These differences bear on the morphology of the skull (the postorbital and postfrontal bones of newborns are merged), the lack of microchromosomes in the karyotype, the existence of several chromosome races, and two modes of reproduction (ovoviviparity in the majority of the species range, and oviparity in central and southern Europe), as well as a number of other characteristics.

The teeth on the pterygoid bones are absent. Body length does not exceed 76 mm. The head is thick, small in size; the limbs and tail are relatively short. The tail is cylindrical in cross-section. The collar is well defined and scalloped.



Fig. 364: Typical habitat of the Mountain Grass Lizard in the Primorsky Krai.

I. MASLOVA