

**CLIMATIC PREFERENCES OF A SAND LIZARD POPULATION (*Lacerta agilis*  
LINNAEUS 1758) IN WESTERN GERMANY**

VIC CLEMENT

Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany

RIEKE SCHLUCKEBIER

Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany

JULIA PLATZEN

Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany

DENNIS RÖDDER

Zoological Research Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany

Understanding the climatic factors influencing a species behavior is important for a multitude of reasons including conservation planning. Climate ecology of *Lacerta agilis* has been studied thoroughly at the edges of its distribution range and at high elevations but hardly in the central parts. As preferences between populations living in extreme conditions can vary considerably from those of populations in more moderate conditions, in order to properly conserve central populations of *Lacerta agilis*, we cannot rely on studies conducted in extreme conditions. We therefore use a visual encounter study on a sand lizard population in a heathland near Cologne over two years and combine it with the corresponding data of a nearby weather station. Our aim is to determine climatic preferences within the population and identify which factors influence activity in sand lizards using among other methods CART models and analysis of variance. Furthermore, we aim to deliver a method which can easily be included in any visual encounter based fieldwork.