

A Record of *Eryx jaculus* Linnaeus, 1758 (Squamata: Boidae) at Mount Ismaros, Northern Greece

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Abstract. A new locality for the Sand Boa (*Eryx jaculus*) is reported from Mount Ismaros in Northern Greece, based on a juvenile road-killed specimen. The site represents the southernmost published record for the species in the Rhodope Mountains, although the location of the observation falls within the already known range of the species. Habitat description and coordinates are provided.

Key words: Sand Boa, herpetofauna, new record.

Introduction

The Sand Boa (*Eryx jaculus*) is a secretive fossorial species with a patchy distribution in southeastern Europe, including Greece. Although its presence in the country has been confirmed for decades, detailed distributional data remain scarce due to the species' cryptic behavior and low detection probability.

Recent field efforts have helped expand the known range of *E. jaculus* in Greece. Christopoulos & Kotselis (2021) reported a new northernmost record from the Evros Prefecture in Thrace, highlighting the species' presence close to the border with Bulgaria. Later, Christopoulos *et al.* (2022) documented several new occurrences from central Greece, particularly in regions characterized by dry, sandy soils and open shrubland vegetation, which appear to be preferred habitat types for the species.

The herpetofauna of Mount Ismaros - the southernmost extension of the Rhodope Mountains - has been previously surveyed by the author (Georgiev & Mollov 2016, Georgiev 2023), yet *Eryx jaculus* has not been recorded there until now, although the location of the observation falls within the already known range of the species. This short note presents the first documented locality of the Sand Boa from Mount Ismaros, further contributing to the understanding of its distribution in Northern Greece.

Materials and Methods

Field studies on Mount Ismaros have been conducted periodically during spring and early summer. Observations were recorded with GPS, and habitat notes were taken in situ.

Results

A single juvenile specimen of *Eryx jaculus* was found dead on a paved road on 27 May 2024 at 07:03 h, at the following coordinates: 40.89071°N, 25.51215°E, elevation 90 m a.s.l. The surrounding habitat was dense, xerophilous macchia (maquis), growing on reddish, sandy-clayey soils (Fig. 1, 2).



Fig. 1. Location map of the new *Eryx jaculus* record from Mount Ismaros. Image from Google Earth (accessed on 8 June 2025). © Google, CNES / Airbus, Maxar Technologies.



Fig. 2. Juvenile specimen of *Eryx jaculus* found dead on a road at Mount Ismaros, Northern Greece.

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