

ABSTRACT

Several parthenogenetic lineages occur within the lizards of the genus *Darevskia* (Sauria: Lacertidae) which are endemic to southern Transcaucasus. High level of heterozygosity, caused by their hybrid origin, is one of the crucial aspects of their evolutionary potential, as well as the asexual reproduction. Heterosis on one side is in the opposition to the outbreeding depression and genetic uniformity of the clones on the other side. Aim of this work is to evaluate if these aspects influence viability of parthenogenetic species and differ them from the sexual ones. We chose the amount of asymmetries as a measure of developmental instability, which we studied on three meristic characters. We also evaluated the pattern of asymmetries in lateral blue spots, which are of signaling importance in lacertid lizards. Our results suggest that there isn't significant difference between parthenogenetic and sexual species in developmental stability, but the sexual ones are more sensitive to population changes. Absence of males may have perhaps the greatest influence on coloration, resulting in loss of symmetry in the blue spots.