Differences in Features of External Morphology Traits of Young and Adult Snakes of the Family Colubridae (Reptilia)

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Abstract. Characteristics of the meristic features of the external morphology of young and adult snakes (the Colubridae family) of three species, namely, the grass snake *Natrix natrix*, the dice snake *N. tessellata* and the Pallas' coluber *Elaphe dione*, living in the Samara region, are described. For the first time, a comparative analysis was carried out of a number of morphological characters of uneven-aged snakes, namely: newborns obtained in laboratory conditions, juvenile specimens, and adult snakes captured in nature. It was revealed that those morphological features which remained unchanged during the snake's life (the number of *Ventr*., *Scd*., *Lab.* and *Temp.* scales) significantly differred in specimens of laboratory and natural origin. Statistically significant differences were also found between young and adult specimens of the dice snake from nature.
Keywords: Colubridae, *Natrix natrix*, *Natrix tessellata*, *Elaphe dione*, meristic features.

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