

and game birds (MARAIS 1992; BRANCH 1998; CLAUSS & CLAUSS 2002). Bigger prey is also consumed and records include sitatunga, reedbuck, young waterbuck, occasionally humans and even difficult prey such as porcupine (BROADLEY 1990).

According to WALKER (1984) the principal predators of *H. africae australis* are lion and leopard. SKINNER & SMITHERS (1990) note that *H. africae australis* quills have been known to damage predators such as lion and leopard and can cause fatal wounds. KENMUIR & WILLIAMS (1992) state that although larger predators may kill porcupines they seldom emerge unscathed from the attack. This observation indicates that although *P. natalensis* may prey on *H. africae australis* they also succumb to the defense mechanism of the latter species.

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KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Boidae; *Python natalensis*, prey, Namibia

SUBMITTED: February 24, 2004

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Nomenclatural validity of the name *Testudo weissingeri* BOUR, 1995

The testudinid taxon *Testudo weissingeri* BOUR, 1995 was described ten years ago from south-western Peloponnese in Greece. The type locality is Kardamili, Messenia, Greece, by original designation. The species was named in honour of the late HEINZ WEISSINGER who had previously worked with this population.

BRINGSØE et al. (2001) claimed later that the name *Testudo marginata weissingeri* TRUTNAU, 1994 - which appeared unintentionally before BOUR's (1995) description in a terrarium book - would be available because of inclusion of a minimal characterisation ("a diagnosis"). Additionally, the name *Testudo weissingeri* BOUR, 1995 [where the date of authority was erroneously and consistently quoted as 1996] was said to be a primary older homonym and thus not available in any case (BRINGSØE et al. 2001). These interpretations are erroneous, however. TRUTNAU's (1994) "description" goes as follows: "Auf dem Peloponnes [sic!] wurden vor kurzer Zeit kleiner bleibende *Testudo marginata* entdeckt, die sich außer in der Größe auch in anderen Merkmalen unterscheiden und die wohl in Zukunft als *Testudo marginata weissingeri* in die Systematik eingehen werden." ICZN (1999) Article 15.1 rules however that, "A new name or nomenclatural act proposed conditionally and published after 1960 is not thereby made available." If one checks in the Code's glossary (ICZN 1999), it says under the term "conditional": "Of the proposal of a name or a type fixation: one made with stated reservations [Art. 15.1]." TRUTNAU's (1994) expression "...wohl in Zukunft" means "possibly/likely in the future", therefore the paragraph is conditional and the author has reservations. In conclusion, *T. marginata weissingeri* TRUTNAU is not an available name according to the present Code (ICZN 1999), and thereby the name *Testudo weissingeri* BOUR, 1995 is available and valid. A piquant aside is that the collection of the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna has several *T. weissingeri* specimens collected by the late H. WEISSINGER and his friend P. KEYMAR labeled with the working title "*Testudo marginata modesta*" by the collectors themselves [the citation of this name appears here for curiosity reasons only and is not a nomenclatural act].

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KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Testudines: Testudinidae: *Testudo weissingeri* BOUR, 1995: taxonomy, valid name

SUBMITTED: February 9, 2004

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New data on fringe-toed lizards of the *Acanthodactylus scutellatus* group in Mauritania

According to CROCHET et al. (2003), five species of the *Acanthodactylus scutellatus* group occur in Mauritania: *Acanthodactylus senegalensis* CHABANAUD, 1918, *A. dumerili* (MILNE EDWARDS, 1829), *A. longipes* BOULENGER, 1918, *A. aureus* GÜNTHER, 1903 and *A. taghitensis* GENIEZ & FOUCART, 1995.

In November 1995 one of the authors (PL) found and photographed a large male of *Acanthodactylus scutellatus audouini* BOULENGER, 1918 (fig. 1), east of Ouadane (ca. 20°59'N / 11°26'W), in the north-eastern Adrar area of Mauritania (fig. 2). This specimen can be identified undoubtedly as *A. s. audouini* by its large size, the strongly



Fig. 1: Male *Acanthodactylus scutellatus audouini* BOULENGER, 1918 from west of Ouadane (Mauritania) (Photo: P. LLUCH).

swollen base of its tail, the large dark spots on its pileus, the strongly contrasted black and disjointed reticulation on its dorsum and its relatively large and carinate dorsal scales. *Acanthodactylus s. audouini* was previously known only from the eastern and central Sahara, (north-eastern Sudan and Egypt in the east to south-eastern Tunisia in the north and eastern Mali in the south-west (CROCHET et al. 2003). The present observation adds a new country (Mauritania) to the range of *A. scutellatus* and extends its distribution 1,000 km towards the West. The only species of the

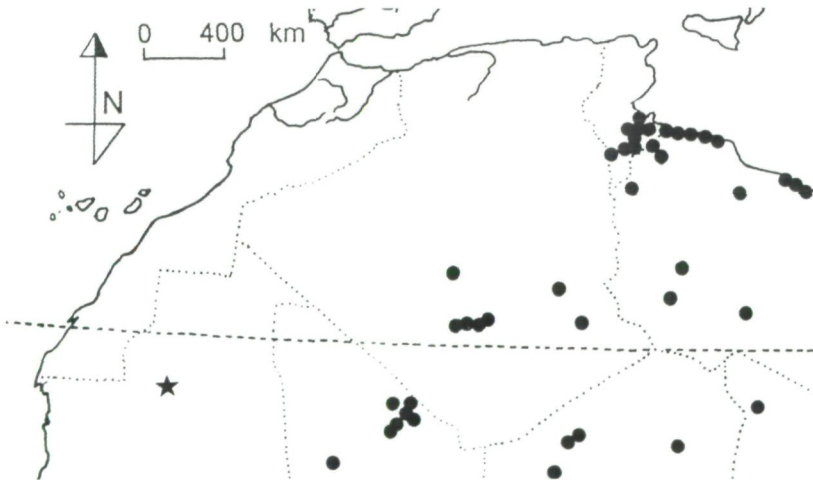


Fig. 2: Western part of the distribution of *Acanthodactylus scutellatus audouini* BOULENGER, 1918 based on CROCHET et al. 2003. The asterisk represents the new Mauritanian locality.

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Jahr/Year: 2004

Band/Volume: [17_1_2](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Perälä Jarmo

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