

Second record of *Walterinnesia aegyptia* LATASTE, 1887 from southeastern Anatolia

The Desert Black Snake *Walterinnesia aegyptia* LATASTE, 1887, is known from the northern part of Egypt (east of the river Nile, southern Sinai included), southern Israel, western Jordan, Saudi Arabia (east of the hill and mountain chains, north of the ar-Rub 'al-Hālī desert), Kuwait, northern Iraq (region of Al-Mōsul in the Tigris river valley), western and southwestern Iran (Zagros Mountains in the Provinces of Khuzistan and Fars) (CORKILL 1932; MARX 1953; REED & MARX 1959; ANDERSON 1963; HARDING & WELCH 1980; WELCH 1983; JOGER 1984; GASPETETTI 1988; WERNER 1988; LATIFI 1991; LEVITON et al. 1992; GOLAY et al. 1993; DISI & BÖHME 1996; DAVID & INEICH 1999). MINTON et al. (1970) mentioned *W. aegyptia* from Syria without indicating any precise locality. DISI & BÖHME (1996) added *W. aegyptia* to the list of reptiles of Syria, but the record was found to be doubtful by MARTENS (1997). However, a Syrian specimen has been reported by SERRA (2005) on a web page about the fauna of Syria in which the snake is shown and a paper (SINDACO et al. in prep.) on its presence in Syria is announced. The record of *W. aegyptia* from Lebanon reported by HARDING & WELCH (1980), WELCH (1983) and GOLAY et al. (1993) is erroneous (JOGER 1984; GASPETETTI 1988; LEVITON et al. 1992; DAVID & INEICH 1999).

Recently, UĞURTAŞ et al. (2001) found *W. aegyptia*, four km from the town of Şanlıurfa (37°85'89"N, 38°45'145"E), in southern Anatolia, Turkey. The authors provided a detailed description of the female specimen (California Academy of Sciences, Department of Herpetology, San Francisco CAS N220647) and discussed the distribution and taxonomic status of the species. In the following account the second Desert Black Snake found in Turkey is presented and compared with the individual reported by UĞURTAŞ et al. (2001).

The new specimen of *W. aegyptia* is a male which was collected near Viranşehir, vilayet of Şanlıurfa (36°57'306"N, 39°20'769"E) at 568 m a.s.l. on April 28, 2005 by

İ. BARAN, Y. KUMLUTAŞ, Ç. ILGAZ and A. AVCI. The site is approximately 64 km east of the first Turkish record. The snake was kept alive in a terrarium in the biology laboratories of the Faculty of Education, Dokuz Eylül University. A mouse (*Mus musculus*) was offered upon arrival on 1 May but was not eaten by the snake. After two weeks during which food uptake was refused, the *Walterinnesia* specimen was fixed in 5% formaldehyde, preserved in 70% ethanol according to BAŞOĞLU & BARAN (1980) and registered in the Zoology Department of the Ege University collection (ZDEU 108/2005). Color slides were taken from the live specimen.

For general aspect, color and pattern see figures 1 and 2. Observe the relatively short tail and its tip ending with a sharp thorn. The pholidosis characters are summarized and compared with those of the Şanlıurfa specimen (UĞURTAŞ et al. 2001) in table 1. Head pholidosis is shown in figures 3-5. Further details of head pholidosis: Nostril surrounded by three nasals and one internasal; prefrontal as long as wide; length of frontal 1.4 times its width; parietal 1.8 times as long as frontal.

Dorsal scales smooth in the anterior two thirds of the body, strongly keeled in the posterior third and on the tail. Number of ventrals 182 (counted according to DOWLING 1951). Anal plate divided (fig. 6). Subcaudals 43, the first divided in three parts, 2-5 entire, 6-28 divided, 29 entire, 30-43 divided. Regarding pholidosis characters, morphometric measurements and color-pattern features, the specimen collected from Viranşehir, vilayet of Şanlıurfa is within the variation reported in the literature (GASPETETTI 1988; JOGER 1984; DMI'EL et al. (1990), LEVITON et al. 1992; UĞURTAŞ et al. 2001).

Although *W. aegyptia* is characterized by its nocturnal and fossorial mode of life (GASPETETTI 1988; UĞURTAŞ et al. 2001) our specimen was captured in the early afternoon (14:00) at a temperature of 26°C. The sympatric reptile fauna comprised *Ophisops elegans* MÉNÉTRIES, 1832, *Eumeces schneideri* (DAUDIN, 1802), *Leptotyphlops macrohynchus* (JAN, 1862), *Lacerta cappadocica* F. WERNER, 1902, *Eirenis coronella* (SCHLEGEL, 1837), *Platyceps ventromaculatus* (GRAY,



Table 1: Pholidosis characters of the two specimens of *Walterinnesia aegyptia* LATASTE, 1887 known from Turkey. CAS - California Academy of Sciences, Department of Herpetology, San Francisco, ZDEU - Zoology Department of the Ege University collection. PO+PN - Preocular in contact with posterior nasal; POC - Postoculars; SO - Subocular; RW/RL - Rostral width / Rostral length; FL/RL - Frontal length / Rostral length; FL/IL - Frontal length / Internasal length; FL/PFL - Frontal length / Prefrontal length; SPOL/SPOW - Supraocular length / Supraocular width; PL/ PW - Parietal length / Parietal width; UAT+POC - Upper Anterior Temporal in contact with Postocular; UAT+SO - Upper Anterior Temporal in contact with Subocular; LAT+SO - Lower Anterior Temporal in contact with Subocular; LAT+SRL₅₊₆ - Lower Anterior Temporal in contact with 5th and 6th Supralabials; LPT+SRL₆₊₇ - Lower Posterior Temporal in contact with 6th and 7th Supralabials; E+SRL₃₊₄ - Eye in contact with 3rd and 4th Supralabials; POC+SRL₅ - Lower Postocular in contact with 5th Supralabial; SO+SRL₅ - Subocular in contact with 5th Supralabial; SRL - Supralabials, SL - Sublabials, AIM/PIM - Anterior Inframaxillar length / Posterior Inframaxillar length, DS₈₀₋₁₀₀ - Longitudinal Dorsal Scale rows at mid-trunk (between ventrals no. 80-100), V - Ventrals, SC - Subcaudals.

Character	ZDEU 108/2005	CASN220647
Gender	male	female
Loreal	absent	absent
PO+PN	Yes	Yes
Total Length [mm]	1090	880
(Snout-vent+Tail)	(945+145)	(767+113)
POC (left/right)	2/3	2/2
SO	1	1
RW/RL	1.6	1.4
FL/RL	1.5	1.3
FL/IL	1.5	1.9
FL/PFL	1.5	1.7
SPOL/SPOW	2.1	1.8
PL/PW	1.7	2.2
Temporals	2+3	2+3
UAT+POC	Yes	Yes
UAT+SO	No	Yes
LAT+SO	No	Yes
LAT+SRL ₅₊₆	Yes	Yes
LPT+SRL ₆₊₇	Yes	Yes
E+SRL ₃₊₄	Yes	Yes
POC+SRL ₅	Yes	Yes
SO+SRL ₅	Yes	Yes
SRL (left/right)	7/7	7/7
SL (left/right)	9/9	9/10
AIM/PIM	1.2	1.3
DS ₈₀₋₁₀₀	21	21
V	182	186
SC	43	43

1834), and *Malpolon monspessulanus* (HERMANN, 1804).

The present *Walterinnesia* specimen was found among big calcareous rocks at the edge of a cultivated area (fig. 7). The first Turkish specimen was caught on a semi-desert plateau at 713 m a.s.l. in a drainage tube near the highway during night excursion; the ambient karst massif was covered with sparse xerophytic vegetation and hawthorn (*Crataegus*) grew along the edge of the canyons (UĞURTAŞ et al. 2001). CORKILL (1932) noted that *Walterinnesia* occurs in a variety of habitats, buildings, play grounds, cultivated fields and open desert included. LEVITON et al. (1992) mentioned that it avoids sandy desert and mountains and is highly secretive, spending most of the time in burrows of mammals or the large spiny-tail lizard, *Uromastix*. In some contrast to the above and MENDELSSOHN's (1963) observations, ZINNER (1971) reported *Walterinnesia* to spend almost all of its active time foraging on the surface (which is, however, from about 21:00 to 03:00, at optimal temperatures between 16-22 °C). In captivity the snake was observed to drink large amounts of water (MENDELSSOHN 1963) and to feed on reptiles of suitable size, frogs and toads (ZINNER 1971). According to the latter author the Green Toad (*Bufo viridis* LAURENTI, 1768) is the natural staple food for *Walterinnesia* in Israel.

When disturbed, our specimen hissed and stroke towards the aggressor, in general with its mouth closed as stated in LEVITON et al. (1992). When handling the live snake, UĞURTAŞ et al. (2001) observed defensive tail stabbing which was displayed by our specimen as well.

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Figs. 1 - 6 (opposite page): *Walterinnesia aegyptia* LATASTE, 1887 from Viranşehir, vilayet of Şanlıurfa, southeastern Anatolia, Turkey (ZDEU 108/2005).

- 1 - Dorsal view; 2 - Ventral view.; 3 - Head from dorsal; 4 - Head from ventral; 5 - Head from lateral; 6 - Anal region.

Fig. 7 (opposite page): Habitat of *Walterinnesia aegyptia* LATASTE, 1887 (ZDEU 108/2005) at Viranşehir, vilayet of Şanlıurfa, southeastern Anatolia, Turkey.

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New records of *Liolaemus inacayali* ABDALA, 2003 in western Río Negro province, Patagonia, Argentina

Liolaemus inacayali ABDALA (2003) was described from a few localities around the town of Ingeniero Jacobacci and alongside the National Road Ruta Nacional 23, in southwestern Río Negro province, Patagonia, Argentina. Several field trips carried out during the summers of 1999, 2000, 2003, and 2005 to west Río Negro province resulted in the collection of a number of samples of *L. inacayali* that represent significant new geographic records for this species. All lizards were collected by hand, euthanased with pericardic injection of Tiopental Sódico (Abbot®), fixed with formalin 20% and later transferred to 70% ethanol. Latitude, longitude, and elevation were determined with a Garmin™ GPS12 Global Position Device. All specimens are deposited in the authors' private field collection (LJAMM), Centro Nacional Patagónico-CONICET, Puerto Madryn (Chubut), Argentina. The general habitat where *L. inacayali* is found, is restricted to the ecological region known as Central Plateau, characterized by an extreme aridity (less than 200 mm of average annual precipitation) and one of the coldest area in Argentina (with average annual temperatures of 10-12°C) (BRAND et al. 1989). Following BRAND et al. (1989), the Central Plateau vegetation is characterized by areas of sandy soils known as 'low shrubs steppes' (mainly with *Nassauvia glomerulosa*, N.

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