nymphs. Thus, reptile hosts may be inexpedient for this tick species. Most probably the availability of the common host, sheep at Krk, may have decreased dramatically in the year of investigation. For its development, this tick species needs one blood donation per year and stage (HOOGSTRAAL et al. 1981), so the ticks may have tried to escape starvation by a 'panic behaviour'. (ii) If this is true, the *Hepatozoon* species found is either not a true reptilian parasite, because this parasite may be passed transstadially by these ticks, but not vertically between different host individuals within one year, or this *Hepatozoon* species is a true reptilian parasite but uses another mite or tick as a vector.

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KEYWORDS: Arachnida: Acari: Ixodidae: *Haemaphysalis concinna*, nymph, vector, reptilian hosts (*Algyroides nigropunctatus*, *Podarcis melisellensis*, *P. muralis*, *Lacerta bilineata*, *Elaphe longissima*), island of Krk, Croatia

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Status and new records of *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758), in Morocco

Dasypeltis scabra (LINNAEUS, 1758) is a colubrid which inhabits subsaharan Africa as far as to the Cape in the South. The populations of the snake in south-western Morocco (BONS & GENIEZ 1996), Egypt (ANDERSON 1898), and south-western Arabia (GASPERETTI 1988) are considered Afrotropical relicts. The species is extremely rare in Morocco (BONS & GENIEZ 1996; SCHLEICH et al. 1996). While the Egyptian Nile valley is a northward corridor of the Ethiopian region for some subsaharan reptile and amphibian species, e.g., for *D. scabra*, the Moroccan population is isolated from the subsaharan ones. In Morocco, the Common Egg-eating Snake was previously known from six records only located along an axis Agdz-Agadir-Tantan-Bou Kraa. Details were published for all these records (listed in BONS & GENIEZ 1996) except for the most recent one made by Gilles TROCHARD who found a dead juvenile specimen eaten by a scorpion under a stone on April 14, 1993 at the village of Dar Lahoussine (fig. 1). In addition, SCHLEICH et al. (1996) present a picture of a captive Common Egg-eating Snake from Morocco without precise geographical origin.

One of us (MG), together with Karim AMRI, found two more specimens of *D. scabra* in Morocco on March 25, 2002. The first specimen was found dead on the road, 29 km from Sidi Ifni towards Goulimine (= Guelmim) [29°12'49"N / 10°4'0"W], in a quite arid shrubby hilly environment. It is an adult female deposited in the collection of the Laboratoire de Biogéographie et Ecologie des Vertébrés de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études (E.P.H.E.) in Montpellier [BEV.7254] (fig. 2). Its principal measurements and counts are as follows: snout-vent length: 53.5 cm; tail length: 7.3 cm; 25 rows of dorsal scales at midbody; 225 ventral plates (anal excluded); 50 pairs of subcaudal plates. The second specimen, also an adult female, was found alive under a stone 16.5 km from Sidi Ifni towards Tiznit near the coastal road [29°29'30"N /10°4'30"W] (figs. 3, 4), in quite the same environment as the previous one. Its principal measurements and

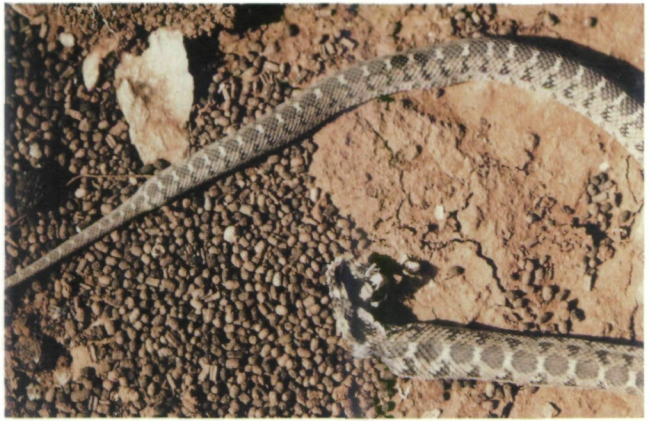

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Fig. 1: *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758), juvenile, partially eaten by a scorpion. Dar Lahoussine (Morocco) (photo G. TROCHARD).
Fig. 2: *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758), adult female, roadkilled. 29 km from Sidi Ifni towards Goulimine (Morocco) (photo PH. GENIEZ).
Fig. 3: *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758), adult female. 16.5 km from Sidi Ifni towards Tiznit near the coastal road (Morocco) (photo PH. GENIEZ).
Fig. 4: Portrait of *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758), adult female. 16.5 km from Sidi Ifni towards Tiznit near the coastal road (Morocco) (photo PH. GENIEZ).

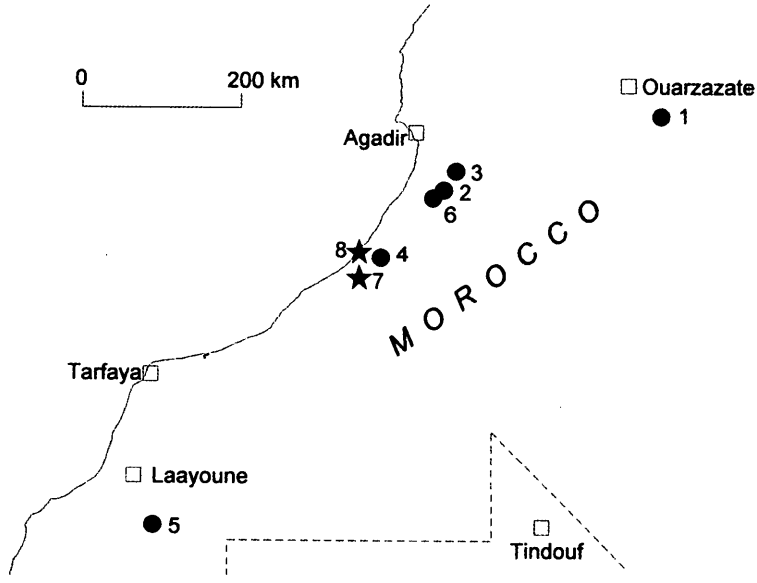

Fig. 5: Distribution of *Dasypeltis scabra* (LINNAEUS, 1758) in Morocco. The numbering of the localities refers to the 'list of records'in the text.

counts are: snout-vent length: 42.5 cm; tail length: 6.0 cm; 24 rows of dorsal scales at midbody; 219 ventral plates (anal excluded), 49 pairs of subcaudal plates. For comparison, the two Moroccan Egg-eating Snakes (a female and a male) found by GRUBER & HELLMANN (1984) show slightly different pholidosis counts (22 and 21 rows of dorsal scales at midbody and for the female 229 ventral plates and 52 pairs of subcaudal plates). These two new records fall within the previously known Moroccan distribution area of *D. scabra*. They constitute the 9th and 10th specimens of this species known from Morocco, including the specimen illustrated in SCHLEICH et al. (1996).

At present, the exhaustive list of the known records of *D. scabra* from Morocco is as follows (fig. 5):

- May 1969. South-west of Aït-Semgane-n-el Grara, 5-6 km north-west from Agdz (Anti-Atlas mountains). One adult previously determined as "*Echis carinatus*". E. SOCHUREK in STEMMLER (1971). [locality 1 in fig. 5]

- January 26, 1970. West of Tankist between Dorf and the road 7060 (surroundings of the Youssef ben Tachfine dam). One specimen in nocturnal activity. J. GARZONI pers. comm. and in STEMMLER (1971). [locality 2 in fig. 5]

- March 18, 1979. 50 km south-east of Agadir, 1 km west of the road S.509, 5 km from Aït-Baha. One male. GRUBER & HELLMANN (1984). [locality 3 in fig. 5]

- March 21, 1980. 50 km south-east of Agadir, 1 km west of the road S.509, 5 km from Aït-Baha. One female. GRUBER & HELLMANN (1984). [locality 3 in fig. 5]

- 1980. Between Goulimine and Sidi Ifni. One specimen. D. HEUCLIN pers. comm., and in BONS & GENIEZ (1996). [locality 4 in fig. 5]

- Without date. Camping of Ahel Brahimat (former Spanish Sahara). One specimen in the collection of the Estación Biológica de Doñana in Sevilla (Spain). BONS & GENIEZ (1996); GENIEZ et al. (2000) (this last record is the southernmost of the Moroccan *Dasypeltis* distribution). [locality 5 in fig. 5]

- April 14, 1993. Village of Dar Lahoussine (south-south-west of Aït-Baha). A juvenile specimen partially eaten by a

large scorpion. G. TROCHARD pers. comm., and in BONS & GENIEZ (1996). [locality 6 in fig. 5]

- Without date. Morocco (without precise locality). A captive adult specimen photographed. SCHLEICH et al. (1996).

- March 25, 2002. 29 km from Sidi Ifni towards Goulimine. An adult female roadkilled. This paper. [locality 7 in fig. 5].

- March 25, 2002. 16.5 km from Sidi Ifni towards Tiznit near the coastal road. An adult female under a stone. This paper. [locality 8 in fig. 5]

The snake species *Dasypeltis scabra*, *Lamprophis fuliginosus* (BOIE, 1827), *Bitis arietans* (MERREM, 1820), and *Echis leucogaster* ROMAN, 1972 are representative of a relictual Subsaharan herpetofauna isolated in southern Morocco. *Telescopus tripolitanus* (WERNER, 1909; sensu CHIPPAUX 1999), *Naja haje* (LINNAEUS, 1758) and *Crocodylus niloticus* LAURENTI, 1768 (now extinct from Morocco) are also Sahelian or Ethiopian reptile species which survived in relictual populations north of the Sahara including Morocco. All these species are very rare north of the Sahel, locally seriously threatened and need effective conservation actions to be taken imposing a high responsibility on the Moroccan government.

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KEY WORDS: Reptilia, Squamata, Serpentes, Colubridae, *Dasypeltis scabra*, Morocco, distribution, new records.

RÉSUMÉ: Les auteurs relatent la découverte de deux *Dasypeltis scabra* dans le sud-ouest du Maroc (région de Sidi Ifni) et donnent la liste des mentions de ce serpent pour le Maroc. Ils attirent l'attention sur la grande responsabilité du gouvernement marocain pour la conservation des reptiles d'origine éthiopienne présents au Maroc et gravement menacés de disparition.

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Bufo viridis LAURENTI, 1768 in Monti Simbruini Regional Park: altitude record for Peninsular Italy

The generally accepted maximum altitude record of *Bufo viridis* LAURENTI, 1768 in Peninsular Italy refers to few toads recorded in Calabria at 1180 m. a.s.l. (TRIPEPI et al. 1992, 1999). An earlier statement (2000 m a.s.l. in the Abruzzi) by BRUNO (1973) was never confirmed and the "Atlas of the amphibians and reptiles of the Abruzzi" specifies the maximum altitude to be 800 m in the Majella National Park (FERRI et al. 2000; L. DI TIZIO and M. PELLEGRINI pers. comm.).

We report on a population of *B. viridis* in the Monti Simbruini Regional Park (MSRP) (Latium, central Italy, fig. 1), breeding at an altitude of 1310-1330 m a.s.l.. This breeding site is the highest one known from the Abruzzi Mountains and Peninsular Italy (i.e. South of the Po River). It is part of the Fioio Creek that flows along the north-western border of the park and dries up in summer (BIGI et al. 1999; BONO P., pers. comm.). This reach crosses a wide karstic highland that is used as grazing land.

We discovered the breeding site on 13 May, 2002 and visited it once a week until 14 July, 2002. The width of the creek varied from 0.2 to 2 m and during the observation period the depth of the water was 10 - 30