

An addition to the herpetofauna of Eritrea: *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942

During the study of herpetological collections of the Genoa (MSNG) and Florence (MZUF) museums, three Eritrean specimens of the poorly known gecko *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942 were identified.

Two specimens, an adult female (MSNG 52419; snout-vent length = SVL = 26 mm, Fig. 1) and an immature specimen (MSNG 52420; SVL = 18 mm) were found among undetermined geckos in the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale "G. DORIA" of Genoa, labelled as follows: "Mar Rosso, Is. Dissei, Genn.-Marzo 1892, R.N.I. "Scilla", Com. Cassanello" [= Red Sea, Dissei Island, January-March 1892, vessel "Scilla", commander CASSANELLO].

An adult male (MZUF 29052; SVL = 23 mm, Fig. 2), labelled "Is. Daalac Chebir, Mar Rosso, (...) 19.1.35" [= Dahlak Kebir Island, Red Sea, (...), January 19th, 1935; the points in brackets indicate an illegible word], was found in the Zoological Museum "La Specola" of Florence.

The specimens agree with the original description of *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942, in having the anterior postmental scale not reaching the second lower labial, the second postmentals evident and in contact with both the first and the second lower labial, and supraorbital scales smaller than the interorbital ones.

The specimens also agree with the characters listed by BAHÁ EL DIN (2001) for this species, in having about 36-39 keeled and imbricate scales around midbody (the count is not precise because the specimens are slightly damaged), scales on top of the

head and behind the eye keeled and more or less imbricate (12-15 interorbitals counted between the eyes, Fig. 2); 22-27 gulars between postmentals and a line joining the ear openings (Fig. 2), 9/9 enlarged supralabials (in the adult MSNG specimen 9/10), 6/6 enlarged infralabials; 12-14 lamellae under the fourth toe; preanal pores absent.

In contrast to what is indicated in the determination key of BAHÁ EL DIN (2001) the dorsals of the three Eritrean specimens are distinctly larger than the ventrals, and not subequal in size.

The color of the preserved MSNG specimens is reddish-brown dorsally, whitish ventrally; on the sides of the head and neck, from the tip of the snout, across the eye, backwards to the forelimbs, there is a darker brown-reddish stripe, a little bit narrower than the eye diameter. The pattern of MZUF 29052 is apparently absent, however the color of the specimen has faded strongly.

So far *T. somalicus* is known from a very limited number of specimens collected in the following localities (Fig. 3):

1 - Somalia/Ethiopia border, 42°50'E/10°20'N, 3000 ft., holotype, Capt. R.H.R. TAYLOR leg., 27.VII.1933 (PARKER 1942; LANZA 1990; ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *Tropicolotes tripolitanus*).

2 - Somalia, 43°15'E/11°25'N, 150 ft., 3 paratypes (PARKER 1942; LANZA 1990; ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *T. tripolitanus*).

3 - Somalia, 43°E/10°45'N, 3000 ft., 3 paratypes (PARKER 1942; LANZA 1990; ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *T. tripolitanus*).

4 - Somalia, Biji [about 10°12'N/ 44°01'E], 1 paratype (PARKER 1942; LOVERIDGE 1947: as *T. tripolitanus somalicus*; LANZA 1990; ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *T. tripolitanus*).



Fig. 1: *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942 from Dissei Island, Eritrea (MSNG 52419).

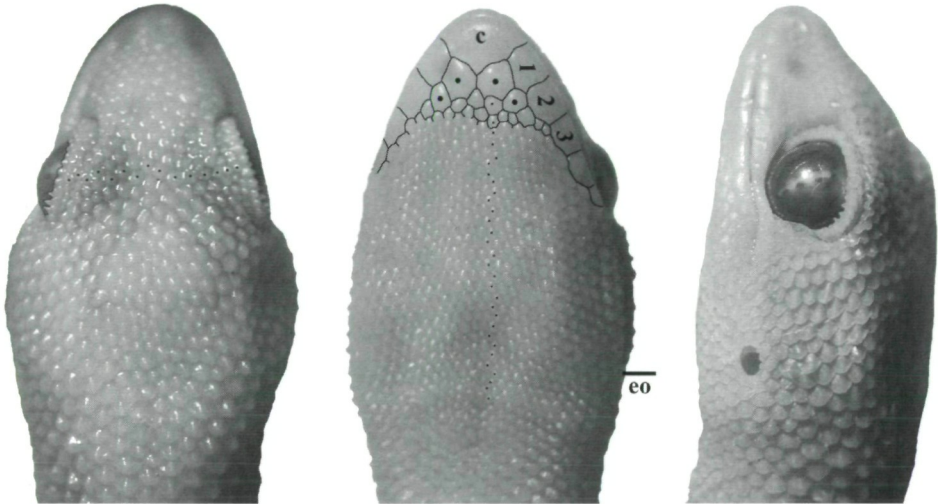


Fig. 2: Dorsal (left), ventral (middle) and lateral (right) views of the head of *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942 (MZUF 29052). c - mental shield, eo - position of the ear opening; numbers indicate the infralabials 1 2 3. In the dorsal aspect small dots indicate the interorbitals; in the ventral aspect large dots indicate the enlarged post-mental shields; small dots the gular count.

5 - Djibouti, Obock [about 11°59'N/43°20'E] (ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *T. tripolitanus*).

6 - Djibouti, 2 km W (by road) Tadjoura; elevation 5 m [11°72'N/42°86'E], MVZ 236570, T. J. PAPENFUSS leg., 4.III.

2002 (Museum of Vertebrate Zoology Data Access, University of California, Berkeley).

• - "Djibuti", (ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV 1996: as *T. tripolitanus*). Not mapped in Fig. 3 because there are doubts if the locality must

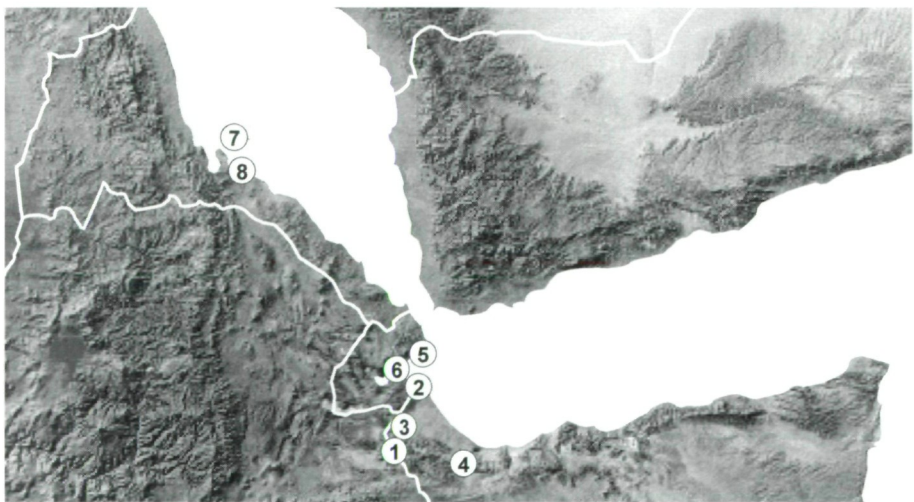


Fig. 3: Known distribution of *Tropicolotes somalicus* PARKER, 1942. Numbers 1-6 indicate the localities from the literature quoted in the text; numbers 7 (Dahlak Kebir Island) and 8 (Dissei Island) represent the new Eritrean localities.

be identified as "Djibouti City" or more generalized as "State of Djibouti".

The records number 5 and "Djibuti" were referred to *T. somalicus* because ŠČERBAK & GOLUBEV (1996) considered *T. somalicus* a synonym of *T. tripolitanus* PETERS, 1880, a species never found in NE Afro-tropical countries (nearest localities are N Egypt, SE Libya and Niger).

A record for Egypt (BAHA EL DIN 1998) is based on a specimen now referred to another species, *Tropiocolotes bisharicus* (BAHA EL DIN, 2001).

Up to now *T. somalicus* was considered endemic of Somalia, Djibouti and adjoining Ethiopia. The species is neither listed by LARGEN (1997) in his checklist of the Eritrean herpetofauna, nor by SCHÄTTI (2001) in his review of the herpetofauna of the Dahlak archipelago.

The Eritrean records from the Dahalak Kebir [approximately 15°39'N/40° 07'E] and Dissei Islands [approximately 15°05'N/39°75'E] represent the first evidence of the species in Eritrea and the northernmost localities of the species.

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KEY WORDS: *Tropiocolotes somalicus*, Reptilia, Squamata: Sauria: Gekkonidae, Eritrea, new country record

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Herpetofauna in the area of the lakes Yliki and Paralimni and the Kifissos river in Boeotia, Greece

The area of the lakes Yliki and Paralimni including the Kifissos river system in Boeotia, Central Greece (22°03'33" – 23°24'00" E and 38°23'00" – 38°29'00") some 40 km NW of Athens, was selected to become one of 236 Greek Natura 2000 sites (Fig. 1). Fragmentary knowledge on the reptile and amphibian fauna called for a herpetofaunal study of this area.

The lakes are situated near the town of Theva (Thebes), north-northwest of Athens, and are guarded by the Athens Water Supply and Sewerage Company since they are part of the drinking water supply system of the city of Athens. Today, the two lakes are interconnected by a canal. The Boeotian Kifissos river system includes numerous artificial canals which are draining the Kopais basin.

Lake Yliki has an average surface of 12 km², while the area of Lake Paralimni usually does not exceed 4 km². The mountains around the lakes are basically bare. A considerable portion of the Natura 2000 site is part of the plain of the now drained lake Kopais and is cultivated land. Around Lake Paralimni there are some small vineyards. The elevation of the study area ranges from 31 m (Lake Paralimni) to 781 m a.s.l. (Ptoon Mountain) (NCMR 2001; DAFIS et al. 1996).

In order to study the herpetofauna, the area was visited repeatedly in May, June, July, November 2003 and February and April 2004 (30 person-days). During the first visit, in May 2003, we selected four places to focus in fieldwork (Fig. 1): (A) the estuary of the Boeotian Kifissos river, (B) the north-eastern shore of Lake Yliki, (C) the area near the pump station of Lake Yliki, (D) the eastern shore of Lake Paralimni.

This is the first time that the area was covered by a herpetological field survey. Thus, only a moderate number of literature data refers to observations made in the study area proper. Selected specimens were deposited at the Goulandris Natural History Museum, Kifissia (GNHM).

Salamandra salamandra salamandra (LINNAEUS, 1758) – reported by DAFIS et al. (1996) without detailed locality data, not ob-

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