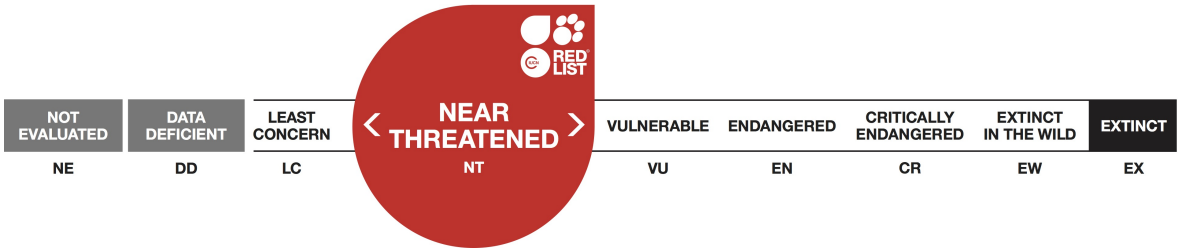
The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™
ISSN 2307-8235 (online)
IUCN 2008: T60755628A45791802

Adolfus alleni, Alpine Meadow Lizard

Assessment by: Spawls, S., Malonza, P., Wagner, P. & Branch, W.R.



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Citation: Spawls, S., Malonza, P., Wagner, P. & Branch, W.R. 2014. *Adolfus alleni. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2014*: e.T60755628A45791802. http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2014-3.RLTS.T60755628A45791802.en

Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Reptilia	Squamata	Lacertidae

Taxon Name: *Adolfus alleni* (Barbour, 1914)

Synonym(s):

- *Algiroides alleni* Barbour, 1914

Common Name(s):

- English: Alpine Meadow Lizard

Taxonomic Source(s):

Wagner, P., Greenbaum, E., Malonza, P. and Branch, B. 2014. Resolving sky island speciation in populations of East African *Adolfus alleni* (Sauria, Lacertidae). *Salamandra* 50(1): 1-17.

Taxonomic Notes:

Wagner *et al*. (2014) investigated the taxonomy of *Adolfus alleni*, then understood to consist of four isolated, high montane subpopulations in western Kenya. Using a combination of morphological, genetic and meristic data, these authors found support for the presence of two species within *A. alleni*. Wagner *et al.* (2014) described the more widespread taxon as *A. masavaensis,* confining *A. alleni* to Mt. Kenya.

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Near Threatened ver 3.1

Year Published: 2014

Date Assessed: January 28, 2014

Justification:

Listed as Near Threatened on the basis that this species is confined to a small area of Mt. Kenya, and the surrounding landscape is subject to ongoing pressures from farming and burning of moorland. As such it is close to qualifying for listing as Vulnerable under criterion D2. The species is nevertheless still common and threats currently appear to be limited within the national park where it occurs, and due to the management of the Mt. Kenya protected area, more extensive encroachment into the species' moorland habitat from agricultural activity is considered unlikely at present.

Geographic Range

Range Description:

This species is endemic to Mt. Kenya, where it is found between 2,700 and 4,500 m asl (Wagner *et al*. 2014); P.K. Malonza (pers. comm. 2014) indicates that it may occur as low as 2,400 m asl., as moorland extends this far down the mountain.

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Country Occurrence:

Native: Kenya

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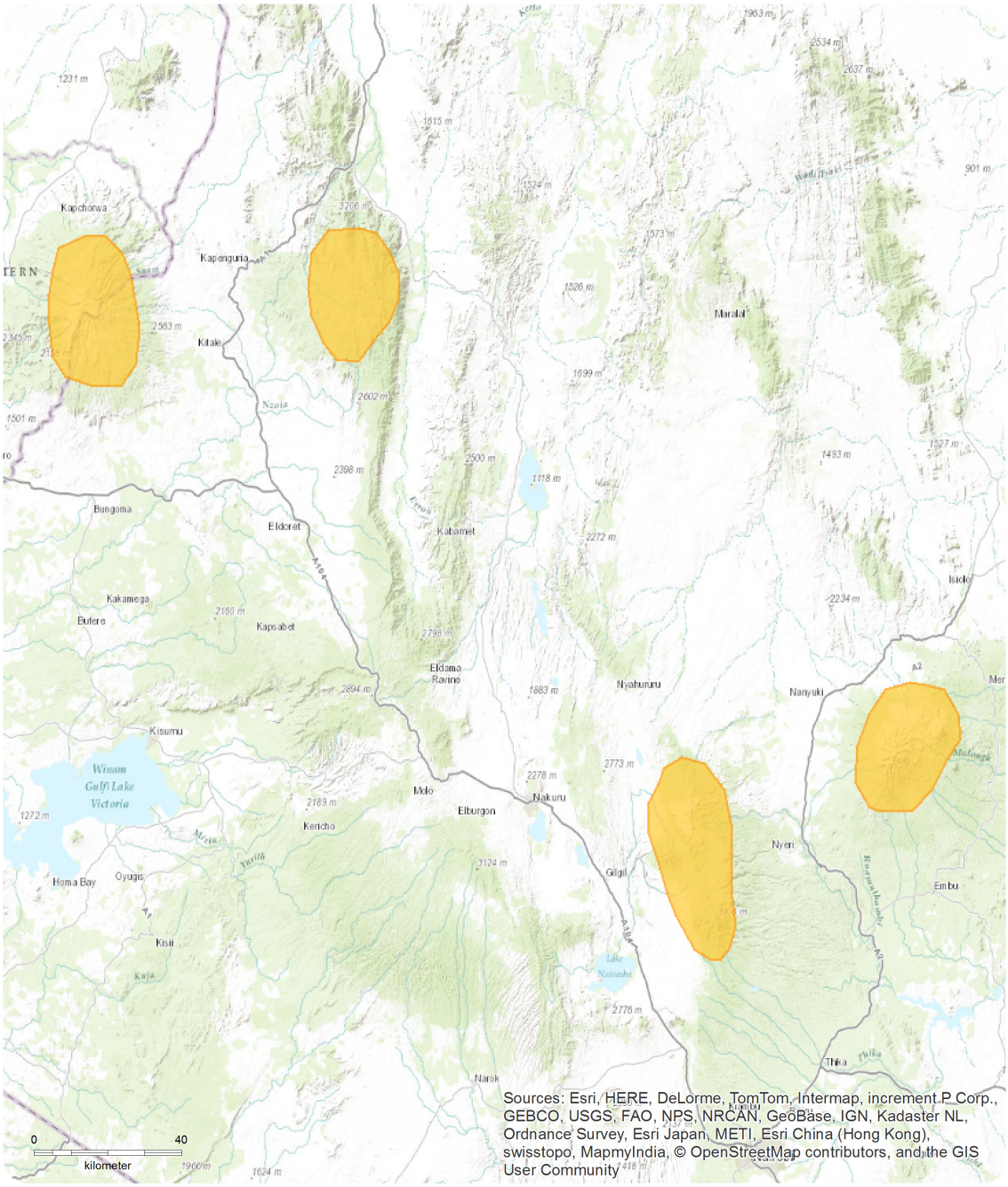
Distribution Map



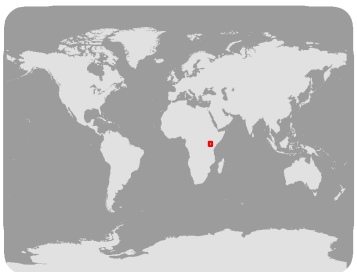
Adolfus alleni

Range

Extant (resident)

Compiled by:
Red List Index (Sampled Approach), Zoological Society London

NE | DD | LC | **NT** NEAR THREATENED | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply any official endorsement, acceptance or opinion by IUCN.

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Population

This lizard appears to be common on Mt. Kenya (S. Spawls and P.K. Malonza pers. comm. 2014), however, two recent one-week surveys at higher elevations on the mountain recorded a total of two specimens (P.K. Wagner, unpubl. data).

Current Population Trend: Stable

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

This high montane species inhabits moorland above the tree line, however, *A. alleni* is also found in clearings in bamboo forest on Mt. Kenya (P.K. Malonza, pers. obs.). The diurnal lizard is more terrestrial than other *Adolfus* species, and is found in tussocks of coarse or spiny heath vegetation (Arnold 1989).

Systems: Terrestrial

Use and Trade

There is no known use or trade in this species.

Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

This species is confined to small patches of habitat at high elevations on Mt. Kenya. This area is within Mt. Kenya National Park (Spawls *et al*. 2002), but despite its protected status, moorlands are still being burnt and the high local human population means that these habitats are vulnerable to habitat disturbance and change. The lizard is, however, common well into burned areas, and the species is thought likely to be adaptable to fire at its current frequency and intensity (S. Spawls and P.K. Malonza pers. comm. 2014). There is a high human population density in the surrounding area (Wagner *et al.* 2014), and people are encroaching into this species' moorland habitat as they farm potatoes and destroy the grass tussocks on which they rely (P.K. Malonza pers. comm. 2014), and as such threats are likely to intensify in the immediate future. Climate change is a plausible future threat, as these lizards live at the top of mountains and desiccation of their open, moorland habitat may increase the intensity and destructiveness of fires, with the resulting destruction of the grass tussock habitat (S. Spawls pers. comm. 2014).

Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

There are no known species-specific conservation measures in place for this species, however, all known sites lie within the best-managed protected areas in Kenya, and large-scale encroachment by human activities is unlikely (S. Spawls pers. comm. 2014). Systematic monitoring of subpopulations is required to ensure that any evidence of decline or further human encroachment is detected and remedial measures instituted.

Credits

Assessor(s): Spawls, S., Malonza, P., Wagner, P. & Branch, W.R.

Reviewer(s): Bowles, P.

http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2014-3.RLTS.T60755628A45791802.en

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http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2014-3.RLTS.T60755628A45791802.en

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Spawls, S., Howell, K.M., Drewes, R.C. and Ashe, J. 2002. *A Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa*. Academic Press, Elsevier Science, San Diego, San Francisco, New York, Boston, London.

Wagner, P., Greenbaum, E., Malonza, P. and Branch, B. 2014. Resolving sky island speciation in populations of East African *Adolfus alleni* (Sauria, Lacertidae). *Salamandra* 50(1): 1-17.

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Disclaimer

External Resources

For Images and External Links to Additional Information, please see the Red List website.

Appendix

Habitats
(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
1. Forest -> 1.9. Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Moist Montane	-	Suitable	No
3. Shrubland -> 3.7. Shrubland - Subtropical/Tropical High Altitude	Resident	Suitable	Yes

Threats
(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.1. Annual & perennial non-timber crops -> 2.1.4. Scale Unknown/Unrecorded	Ongoing	Minority (50%)	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		
7. Natural system modifications -> 7.1. Fire & fire suppression -> 7.1.1. Increase in fire frequency/intensity	Future	Whole (>90%)	Unknown	Unknown
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		

Conservation Actions in Place
(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Occur in at least one PA: Yes
Percentage of population protected by PAs (0-100): 100

Conservation Actions Needed
(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Conservation Actions Needed
2. Land/water management -> 2.1. Site/area management

Research Needed
(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

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Research Needed
3. Monitoring -> 3.1. Population trends
3. Monitoring -> 3.4. Habitat trends

Additional Data Fields

Distribution
Number of Locations: 1
Lower elevation limit (m): 2400
Upper elevation limit (m): 4500
Population
Population severely fragmented: No

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The IUCN Red List Partnership

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