



Fig. 206: *Acanthodactylus boskianus* male, Ad Dakhiliyah, Oman.

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Fig. 207: *Acanthodactylus boskianus* juvenile, southern Oman.

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Acanthodactylus boskianus (DAUDIN, 1802)
Bosc's Fringe-toed Lizard

Synonymy

Lacerta boskiana DAUDIN, 1802

Lacerta aspera AUDOUIN, 1829

Scapteira inaequalis GRAY, 1838

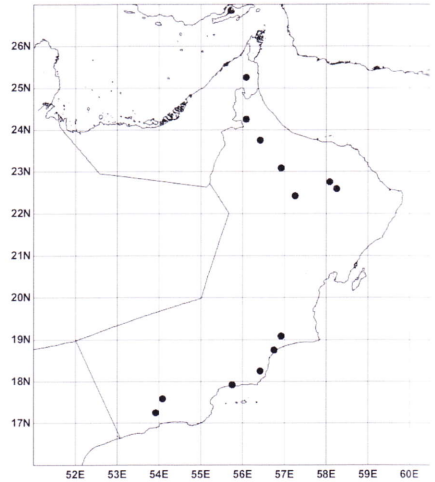
Acanthodactylus boskianus – DUMÉRIL & BIBRON, 1839

Range. A very widely distributed species. Saharan and Sahelo-Saharan Africa (including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Eritrea), Arabian Peninsula (including Yemen, Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait) and elsewhere in the Middle East as far north as southern Turkey, including Jordan, Israel, Syria, Iraq and southwestern Iran.

Size. Up to 95 mm SVL, though smaller in many populations.

Identification. A large fringe-toed lizard with a typically rough-scaled appearance due to strongly keeled, imbricate dorsal scalation. The general form, including the snout, is robust. There are three longitudinal rows of scales along the third and fourth fingers. Strong pectination on toes. Subocular nearly always separated from lip. Usually four, but occasionally five, upper labials anterior to subocular. Temporals keeled. Dorsal scales coarse, keeled and imbricate posteriorly, 18–30 at mid-body. Granular scalation on sides of body. Large, imbricate and sharply keeled scales on dorsal surface of the tail. 10 to 12 ventral scales in longest row. Pectinate anterior border of ear opening. Conspicuous gular fold.

Colour and pattern variable. Typically juveniles and sub-adults are more strongly striped with 7 broad dark longitudinal stripes separated by narrow paler ones. The mid-dorsal dark stripe divides anteriorly enclosing a lighter stripe. The more medial lateral stripes come together over the base of the tail. The back ground-colour is buff or off-white, and the stripes are blackish, grey or reddish brown. The dark and pale stripes between may become progressively more mottled or indistinct, and in some in-



dividuals (especially males) the pattern is almost lost. In juveniles and some adults the tail is blue, especially ventrally. Head and tail tend to be uniformly dark.

Biology. An active, diurnal ground-dwelling lacertid. The diet is broad including insects and other invertebrates, but they may also take small lizards. In winter it is active throughout the day, but in summer may have a bimodal activity pattern, or even be active in mornings only when particularly hot.

Clutch size reported as two to eight, and repeat clutches may be laid. Eggs are laid in a hole about 8 cm deep, which is then filled and tamped down. Hatchlings appear after two to three months of incubation.

Habitat. This species is usually found on relatively hard desert surfaces such as sandy-gravel plains, dry wadis, interdunal plains, and stony outwash plains. It avoids soft sand.

Distribution. In Oman this species is known from scattered localities from Dhofar to near the UAE border. It avoids sand seas and mountain areas, and is not recorded from the Batinah. In the UAE it has been reported on gravel plains abutting the Hajar Mountains.

Pertinent references. ARNOLD 1983, 1984, DISI *et al.* 2001, SCHLEICH *et al.* 1996, WILMS & HULBERT 2003.



Fig. 208: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, Yanqul, Ad Dhahirah, Oman.



Fig. 209: *Acanthodactylus felicis*, Dhofar, Oman.

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