

## Family Lacertidae

*Meroles suborbitalis* (Peters, 1869)

Spotted Desert Lizard

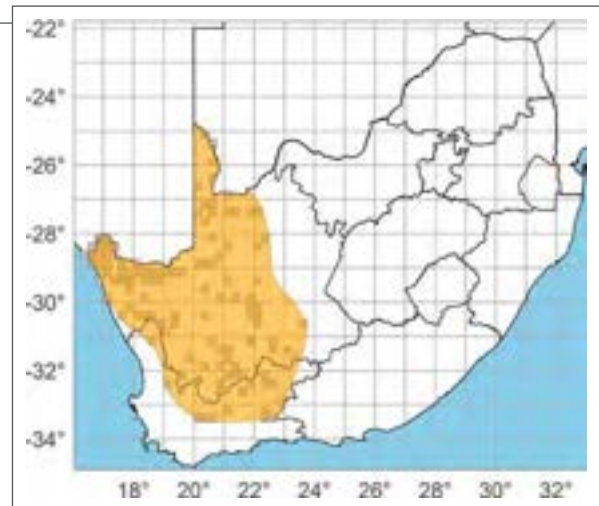
■ LC – Least Concern (Regional)

Assessors: Tolley, K.A., Turner, A.A.

**Previous Red List categories:**

2020: Least Concern (Global IUCN assessment).

2014: Least Concern (SARCA).

**Assessment rationale:** Widely distributed, locally abundant, and not under any significant threats.**Taxonomic notes:** There is some morphological variability across its range, possibly relating to cryptic taxa (Bauer & Branch 2003 [2001]). *Other important names:* none.**Distribution:** Widely distributed from north-central Namibia southwards into the arid west of South Africa, including the western Great Karoo and Tankwa Karoo (Branch 1998). *EOO:* 420 000 km<sup>2</sup>; *Distribution:* 318 000 km<sup>2</sup>.**Countries of occurrence:** Namibia, South Africa.**Habitat and ecology:** This species occupies sparsely vegetated areas in desert and arid regions (Branch 1998), most often occurring on gravel or coarse sands. *Habitat:* Savanna, Shrubland, Desert.**Threats:** There are no substantial threats to this species.**Population trend:** Occurs in arid regions that have not been significantly impacted by habitat transformation, thus the population size is not thought to have declined.**Conservation and research recommendations:** The hypothesis that this taxon may be a species complex should be evaluated in a phylogenetic framework.

*Meroles suborbitalis*, Aggeneys, Northern Cape province (© C. & S. Dorse).



*Meroles suborbitalis*, Steinkopf, Northern Cape province (© L. Kemp).