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REPTILIA: SAURIA

LACERTIDAE

Meroles reticulatus (Bocage, 1867)

Reticulate Sand Lizard

ENDOPARASITES

Meroles reticulatus is known from coastal areas of the northern Namib Desert from near Walvis Bay to southern Angola (Branch 1998). We know of no reports of helminths for this species. In this note we establish the initial helminth list for *M. reticulatus*.

Six *M. reticulatus* (mean SVL = 48.5 mm ± 3.7 mm, range: 43 - 52 mm) from the Erongo Region, Namibia collected in November 1972 and deposited in the herpetology collection of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, California, USA as LACM 77676, 77678, 77679, 77681, 77682, 77684 were examined for helminths.

The body cavity was opened by a longitudinal incision, and the digestive tract was removed, opened longitudinally, and examined under a dissecting microscope. Eight

cestode proglottids (as a segment) were found in the small intestine of LACM 77676. These were regressively stained in hematoxylin, mounted in balsam, studied under a compound microscope. Because mature non gravid proglottids were found, the cestode could be identified as *Oochoristica truncata*. Prevalence (number infected lizards/ number lizards examined X100) was 17%). The *Oochoristica truncata* specimen was deposited in the United States National Parasite Collection, Beltsville, Maryland, USA as USNPC (102696).

Oochoristica truncata is widely distributed in reptiles from southern Africa; hosts are summarized in Goldberg & Bursey (2004) and Bursey & Goldberg (2007). To those lists should be added the snake *Psammophis trinasalis* (Goldberg & Bursey 2007). The life cycle of *O. truncata* is unknown, however, the congener *O. anolis* utilizes beetles as intermediate hosts (Conn 1985). *Oochoristica truncata* in *M. reticulatus* is a new host record.

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