

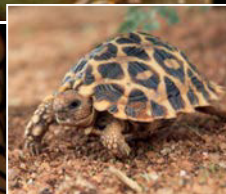
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AHN

AFRICAN HERP NEWS



Giant Legless Skinks
Agonistic Behaviour



Serrated Tent Tortoise
Winter Activity



Banded Caecilian
Behaviour



Eastern Shield Cobra
Distribution

HAA

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: *Dendroaspis jamesoni* from Soyo, Angola. Photograph by: Warren Klein.

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GEKKONIDAE

Pachydactylus barnardi FitzSimons, 1941 BARNARD'S ROUGH GECKO



The *Pachydactylus rugosus* group is a well-supported, relatively morphologically conservative group of geckos occupying the western portions of southern Africa. McLachlan (1979) considered the three constituent taxa as members of a polytypic *P. rugosus*, but Lamb and Bauer (2000) elevated *P. formosus* and *P. barnardi* to full specific status based on molecular and morphological data. Although its distribution is spotty throughout much of its range, and it may be encountered sporadically even at known localities, *P. rugosus* occupies a large area from the vicinity of Williston in the Northern Cape (3120BC) northward, through southwestern Botswana and southern and western Namibia, to southern Angola (Lamb and Bauer 2000; W.R. Branch, pers. comm.). Examination of specimens assigned to *P. rugosus* at the National Museum of Namibia, Windhoek (NMN, formerly SMWN) revealed three specimens from Farm Namuskluft in the Lüderitz District of the Karas Region (2716DD). Two of these (NMN 2683, NMN 2698) were typical in possessing the morphological features characteristic of *P. rugosus*. One individual, however, an adult female, 62.50 mm SVL (NMN 1546, Fig. 1A,

collected 12 October 1970 by H. Mittendorf), lacked the mucronate dorsal tubercles

(Fig. 1B–C) and spiny subcaudal scales of this species, but instead possessed the distinctive white head markings and narrower width dorsal markings, linked by a narrow vertebral stripe typical of *P. barnardi*. Although molecular data are unavailable to confirm the species assignment of NMN 1546, the scalation differences between this specimen and typical Namuskluft *P. rugosus* definitely exceed the degree of intraspecific variation observed in members of this species complex.

Pachydactylus barnardi has been regarded as a Little Namaqualand endemic, occurring terrestrially in rocky areas with succulent plant cover in areas from the Knersvlakte northward to the Orange River (Bauer 2014). Branch (1998) mapped its occurrence as ranging from approximately Groenriviermond north to the southern Richtersveld. The species has subsequently been found in the northern Richtersveld (Lamb and Bauer 2000; Bauer and Branch 2001[2003]), but has not been documented north of the Orange in Great Namaqualand. This new record extends the species range approximately 57 km to the north-northwest and constitutes the first

Namibian record for *P. barnardi*. *Pachydactylus barnardi* and *P. rugosus* have not previously been found in sympatry, although they have been found within 25 km of one another in the Richtersveld. The precise localities of the Namuskluft specimens are unknown, but the occurrence of both species on a single farm suggests that they occur in sympatry or near-

sympatry. Namuskluft is also at or near the northern limit of distribution of several other geckos, including *Goggia gemmula* (Bauer *et al.* 1996) and *Pachydactylus carinatus* (Bauer *et al.* 2006). Additional records of southern taxa may be expected to occur in the region, which constitutes the northernmost extension of the Succulent Karoo.

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Figure 1. A. Specimens of *Pachyactylus rugosus* group geckos from Farm Namuskluft, Karas Region, southern Namibia (2716DD): left and center, *P. rugosus*; right, *P. barnardi*. Scale bar in mm. Magnification of dorsal scalation pattern of (B) *P. barnardi* (NMN 1546) and (C) *P. rugosus* (NMN 2683) showing the difference between the flattened scales of the former and the enlarged, highly mucronate scales of the latter.