

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1
ANNOUNCEMENTS	1
ARTICLES	2
JACOBSEN, N.H.G. A contribution to the herpetofauna of the Passendro Area, Central African Republic	
LAMBIRIS, A.J.L. The Ninth Conference of the Herpetological Association Of Africa	22
CUNNINGHAM, M.J. Exceptional Contribution to Herpetology: Arne Schiøtz	26
Report on the General Meeting of the Herpetological Association of Africa, November 2008	27
OBITUARY: RICHARD NEWBERY	
JACOBSEN, N.H.G.	37
NATURAL HISTORY NOTES	
BARTS, M., & BALLANDAT, S. <i>Rhoptropus bradfieldi</i> Hewitt, 1935 Reproduction	39
BATES, M.F., ANDERSON, W.M., & BOURQUIN, S. <i>Amblyodipsas p. polylepis</i> (Bocage, 1873). Diet	41
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTIONS	
BATES, M.F., & MAGUIRE, D. <i>Zygaspis violacea arenicola</i> Broadley & Broadley, 1997	43
CHIRIO, L., & INEICH, I. <i>Afronatrix anscopus</i> (Cope, 1861)	44
INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS	46
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM	48

African Herp News

Newsletter of the Herpetological Association of Africa



Third HAA Symposium commemorating the 50th anniversary of the publication of FitzSimons' "Lizards of South Africa".

Although Richard did not publish much, he was on occasion co-author, and a list of publications is incorporated below. He was also Editor of Nyoka News, a publication of the Transvaal Herpetological Association during 1983 and 1984.

In 1991 he married Christia Rauch and in 1994, following on the fragmentation of the former Transvaal into four provinces, they elected to move to the newly established North West Conservation and Tourism Board where he was employed as a Field Ecologist in the Ecological Support Section of the Protected Areas Management Division. Much of the time he gathered baseline information on the poorly researched Molopo Nature Reserve including surveys of the vegetation, herpetofauna and small mammals, but was also involved in surveys on other reserves as well as contributing to the compilation of management plans for various parks. In 2003 he was appointed Regional Ecologist: Bophima District and was responsible for the compilation of management plans for Molopo, SA Lombard, Bloemhof Dam and Wolfespruit Nature reserves among others. During the last two years he also contributed towards the revision of vegetation maps of some reserves and played a substantial role in the surveys. This was ongoing until his untimely death on the 17th February 2009.

Richard was a kind, generous and outspoken man, a rare breed who was always dedicated to the task at hand. A sociable man and humanitarian, he was well liked and respected by all who knew him. Richard had a good rapport with, and was an inspiration to, many of his colleagues, especially the junior staff many of whom viewed him as their mentor. He was an ardent golfer but unfortunately his health deteriorated substantially during the past 14 years, affecting his active lifestyle.

In the words of a colleague, his death is a great loss to the North West Parks Board, especially at this time when a proper assessment of the sustainability of so many aspects which are permitted to take place in the parks is sorely needed. But it actually goes further than that. He was a man of great integrity, a true conservationist, a friend and colleague, and we are the poorer for his passing.

Publications

- NEWBERY, R., 1993. Power to *Cordylus giganteus*. Proceedings of the FitzSimons' Commemorative Symposium. South African Lizards: 50 years of Progress and Third H.A.A. Symposium on African Herpetology. Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.
- PETERSEN, W., NEWBERY, R.E. & N.H.G. JACOBSEN, N.H.G., 1985. *Cordylus giganteus* is Alive and Well and Living at Rietpoort. *Fauna & Flora* 42: 26-29.
- JACOBSEN, N.H.G., NEWBERY, R.E., & PETERSEN, W., 1986. *A Checklist of the Herpetofauna of the Transvaal Provincial Nature Reserves*. Transvaal Division of Nature Conservation, Pretoria.
- JACOBSEN, N.H.G., NEWBERY, R.E., & PETERSEN, W., 1990. On the ecology and conservation status of *Cordylus giganteus* A. Smith in the Transvaal. *S. Afr. J. Zool.* 1990. 25(1): 61-66.
- JACOBSEN, N.H.G., NEWBERY, R.E., DE WET, M.J., VILJOEN, P.C., & PIETERSEN, E., 1991. A contribution to the ecology of the Steppe pangolin *Manis temminckii* in the Transvaal. *Z. Säugetierkunde* 56: 94-100.

NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

REPTILIA: SAURIA; SQUAMATA

GEKKONIDAE

Rhoptropus bradfieldi Hewitt, 1935 Bradfield's Namib Day Gecko

REPRODUCTION

During October 2008 we visited the coast of Namibia. South of Wlotzkas Baken (22°25'46"S, 14°27'38"E, alt. 1m.) we encountered an isolated rocky site on hard sand. It is a 200m wide strip of grey-black dolerite boulders of varying sizes, extending inland from near the beach (See Google Earth). *Rhoptropus bradfieldi* occurs here in association with *R. afer* and *Agama anchietae*, as well as the nocturnal geckos *Pachydactylus bicolor* and *Chondrodactylus turneri* ssp. Bradfield's Namib Day Gecko matches the dark colour of the rocks, being black with lighter mottling. Adults of this species were only found on the larger boulders (< 1m) and in pairs. In suitable cracks, eggs were found glued to the rock, as well as shell remains from previous seasons.

On 22 October 2008, a fresh clutch of eggs was found lying on sand under a flat stone, measuring about 7 x 7 cm, and 3 cm thick. These eggs were stuck together longitudinally and measured 12.1 x 10.1 mm and 12.5 x 10.2 mm. Initially these eggs were pure white but two days later were pink, which indicated that they had been fertilized. They were placed in an incubator with a day temperature of 28°C, which was decreased to 24°C at night. On 19 January 2009, after 89 days, these eggs hatched. The first hatchling emerged at 10h00, shedding its skin within the following 30 minutes, while the second hatched an hour later, shedding its skin 20 minutes later. Their snout vent lengths were 22.1 mm and 22.9 mm and the tail lengths 23.2 mm and 21.8 mm. Their colouring was grey with black and lighter speckles.

Acknowledgment

We thank Mr. Wulf Haacke (Pretoria) for all the information he gave us and for reading this manuscript.

Submitted by

MIRKO BARTS, Hufeisen 20, 14532 Kleinmachnow, Germany, redaktion@sauria.de and STEFAN BALLANDAT, Querweg 13, 24632 Lentförden, Germany.

REPTILIA: SQUAMATA; SERPENTES

ATRACTASPIDIDAE

Amblyodipsas polylepis polylepis (Bocage, 1873)

Common Purple-glossed Snake

DIET

At 15h45 on 12 December 2007 an adult *Amblyodipsas p. polylepis* was captured by WMA in the grounds of the Sedia Riverside Hotel in Maun, Botswana (19°57'09.26"S, 23°28'40.26"E; 1923CD: 942 m). The collector (WMA) was informed that "two snakes were fighting" and upon arrival at the scene, one of these had been swallowed. Shortly after capture the snake regurgitated an adult Anchieta's Spade-snouted Worm Lizard, *Monopeltis anchietae*, which it had swallowed head-first (Fig. 1). This incident occurred on manicured grass beside a row of shrubs (<1 m in height) in an area where the soil was very sandy. The snake was measured (SVL 668 mm, tail length 42 mm), photographed and released the following day. The amphisbaenian was in near-perfect condition. It was preserved in vodka, later transferred to ethanol and eventually deposited at the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria (TM 85580) by SB.

The amphisbaenian had a SVL of about 307 mm (anterior part of body from snout to pectoral region could not be straightened) and tail length of 18 mm. Colour: Dark brown dorsal pigmentation uniformly from nuchal region to tail tip and extending to lateral sulci; belly for the most part immaculate cream; underside of tail cream with brown blotches. Lepidosis (according to Broadley, Gans & Visser, 1976, *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 157[5]: 313-485): Two zygous head shields; 3rd supralabial separates ocular from 2nd supralabial; one precloacal pore on either side of the vent; eight caudal annuli; four longitudinally parallel pectoral segments; 190 mid-dorsal body annuli; 173 mid-ventral body annuli (body annuli counted from 1st row posterior to enlarged 3rd supralabial to row anterior to enlarged precloacal plate; in pectoral region the ventral count was taken as four, corresponding to the number of dorsal annuli in this region).

Like many other atractaspidae snakes such as *Xenocalamus* and *Atractaspis*, snakes of the genus *Amblyodipsas* prey mainly on snakes and lizards, especially legless, burrowing and fossorial species (Broadley *et al.* op cit.; Shine, Branch, Harlow, Webb & Shine 2006, *Copeia* 2006[1]: 103-115). Amphisbaenians have been recorded in the diet of three species of *Amblyodipsas*: both *A. polylepis hildebrandtii* and *A. katangensis ionidesi* prey on *Loveridgei ionedesii*, while *A. ventrimaculata* includes *Zygaspis quadrifrons* in its diet (Broadley 1971, *Oec. Pap. Nat. Mus.*,

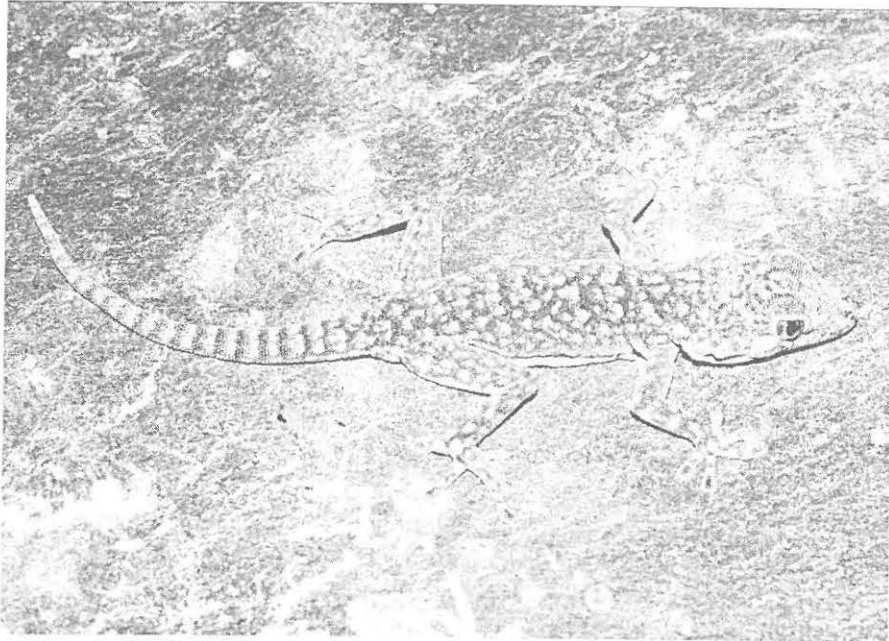
*Rhothropus bradfieldi*. Hatchling and juvenile.

Photo: Mirko Barts

Rhod. [B4] 33: 629-697) and Shine *et al.* (*op. cit.*) recorded *Zygaspis* (one of which was identifiable as *Z. violacea*) in the guts of three *A. polylepis* (subspecies not specified). However, this note provides the first record of *Monopeltis* in the diet of *A. polylepis*. The only other snakes known to prey on *Monopeltis anchietae* are *Xenocalamus bicolor* and *Atractaspis bibronii* (Shine *et al.*, *op cit*; Broadley *et al.*, *op cit.*).

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Lauretta Mahlangu (Transvaal Museum) for facilitating communication between the authors and for the loan of the amphisbaenian to MFB.

Submitted by

MICHAEL F. BATES (Department of Herpetology, National Museum, P.O. Box 266, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa), **WESLEY M. ANDERSON** (Department of Biology, Davidson College, North Carolina 28035-7118, USA) and **SVEN BOURQUIN** (Maun, Botswana).



Amblyodipsas p. polylepis from Maun, Botswana, regurgitating a *Monopeltis anchietae* (TM 85580).
Photo: Wesley Anderson

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTIONS

REPTILIA: SQUAMATA: SAURIA+

AMPHISBAENIDAE

Zygaspis vandami arenicola Broadley & Broadley 1997 Van Dam's Round-headed Worm Lizard

Mozambique, Porto Henrique (between Boane and Belevista, SSW of Maputo) (26°16'59.10"S, 32°20'42.84"E; 2632AD; 21 m); 25 November 2007; D. Maguire; National Museum, Bloemfontein, NMB R8703-4. Two specimens were collected in humic soil in the Lowveld Bioregion.

Size: NMB R8703 (Fig. 1) measured 155 mm SVL, 29 mm tail length; NMB R8704 was smaller but poorly fixed (could not be straightened out) and had a truncated tail. Colour: Both specimens were grey above, paler below, with the anterior part of the ventral plates darker grey; ventrally the tail was mostly dark grey. Lepidosis (according to Broadley & Broadley 1997, *Syntarsus* 4: 1-24): Body annuli 202 (NMB R8703), 198 (NMB R8704); caudal annuli 42 in NMB R8703. Both specimens had 28 dorsal and ventral segments in a midbody annulus, four precloacal pores; one postocular scale, one temporal shield, and no post-supralabials.

Broadley & Broadley (*op cit.*) recorded this subspecies from northern KwaZulu-Natal, southern Mozambique and south-eastern Zimbabwe, while Litschka, Koen & Monadjem (2008, *African Herp News* 46: 24-25) recently added north-eastern Swaziland to its range. The new record bridges the gap between localities in northern KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland and around Maputo in southern Mozambique.

Submitted by

MICHAEL F. BATES (Department of Herpetology, National Museum, P.O. Box 266, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa) and **DAVID MAGUIRE** (McGregor Museum, P.O. Box 316, Kimberley, 8300).

Fig. 1. (Overleaf)