

# *African Herp News*

**Newsletter of the  
Herpetological Association of Africa**



**Number 53**

**APRIL 2011**

## SCINCIDAE

### *Trachylepis acutilabris* (Peters, 1862)

#### Wedge-snouted Skink

## DIET

The diet of the Wedge-snouted Skink (*Trachylepis acutilabris*) is described by Branch (1998) and Alexander & Marais (2008) as including beetles, ant-lions, wasps, flies and grasshoppers caught in sandy habitats. The wedge-snout probably facilitates foraging in loose substrate (Alexander & Marais 2008).

On 26 January 2011, at 10h45 an adult *T. acutilabris* (approximately 60 mm SVL) was observed in the process of consuming a 10 to 20 mm solifuge (Order: Solifugae) on sandy substrate covered with leaf litter under *Acacia reficiens* shrubs, west of Karibib (21°59'14.4" S & 15°43'04.4"E) in western central Namibia. The skink grappled with the solifuge for at least 3 minutes, repeatedly dropping its prey, resuming the attack from another angle, whilst vigorously shaking and bashing the solifuge against the ground in an attempt to immobilize it. By the time I encountered this scenario the solifuge was not showing much resistance anymore and eventually succumbed to the attack, being consumed head first.

Although skinks are known to be generalist feeders, this sighting confirms solifuge as forming part of the diet of *T. acutilabris* in Namibia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Johan Marais is thanked for confirming the identification of the skink based on the photograph provided.

## REFERENCES

- ALEXANDER, G.J. & MARAIS, J. 2007. A Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers, Cape Town. Pp. 408.
- BRANCH, W.R. 1998. Field Guide to Snakes and Other Reptiles of Southern Africa. Struik Publishers, Cape Town. Pp. 399.

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