

Distribution of the Yellow-Headed Agama, *Laudakia nupta fusca* (Blanford 1872), in Iran (Squamata: Agamidae)

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Abstract. The present study describes the distribution of the Yellow-Headed Agama, *Laudakia nupta fusca* Blanford, 1872, based on new records in the south-east, south and south-west of Iran. Specimens were captured in Baloutchistan, Hormozgan and Bushehr provinces at altitudes of 30–1950m above sea level. The subspecies seems to be restricted to outlying hilly country off the Iranian plateau, where the nominate subspecies does not occur.

Kurzfassung. In der vorliegenden Untersuchung wird das Vorkommen der Gelbkopfagame, *Laudakia nupta fusca* Blanford, 1872, im Iran dargestellt, basierend auf neuen Feststellungen im Südosten, Süden und Südwesten des Landes. Belegexemplare wurden in den Provinzen Belutschistan, Hormozgan und Bushehr in Höhen von 30 bis 1950 m NN gesammelt. Die Unterart scheint auf das dem Iranischen Plateau vorgelagerten Hügelland beschränkt zu sein, wo die Nominatform nicht vorkommt.

Key words. Iran, zoogeography, subspecies *Laudakia nupta fusca*, distribution.

Introduction

Laudakia nupta was first described as *Agama nupta* by De Fillipi in 1843, based on material from Persepolis 45 km northeast of Shiraz. Two subspecies of this taxon were subsequently identified by Blanford in 1872, *L. nupta nupta* and *L. nupta fusca*. The status of these taxa has changed several times since 1872, but recently RASTEGAR-POUYANI & NILSON (2002) found statistically significant differences in most of the distinguishing metric and meristic characters of these two forms, based on 9 Pakistani specimens of *L. n. fusca* and 51 specimens of *L. n. nupta* from Iran, and concluded that these two forms are different at least at the sub-specific level. KHAN (2002, 2004), in his key and checklist of the lizards of Pakistan, separated them as *L. fusca* and *L. nupta* based on their distribution pattern in Pakistan (KHAN 2005, pers. comm.).

L. nupta is a species of the southern and western periphery of the Iranian plateau that occurs primarily in the outer parts of the plateau (ANDERSON 1999, KAMI 1998). The range of the species as a whole extends from eastern Iraq to Sindh and north to Afghanistan, apparently coinciding rather closely with the Iranian plateau (MINTON 1966), while the extent of the range of *L. nupta fusca* is insufficiently known. It is found in Pakistan from Baloutchistan to south-western Sindh and north-western Punjab (KHAN 2002). In Iran, it has been found only at its type localities, near Kalagan and near Jalq (34°02'N, 64°42'E) in Baloutchistan, near the border with Pakistan, at altitudes of 1000–1150 m above sea level (e.g.