

# Additional specimens of the gecko *Asaccus nasrullahi* Werner, 2006 (Reptilia: Phyllodactylidae), with notes on taxonomy and ecology

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**Abstract.** Eight specimens of the gecko *Asaccus nasrullahi*, which was described by Werner in 2006 based on a single specimen from the western Iranian plateau, were collected from a new locality in the Malekoh region, southern Lorestan province, approximately 178 km west of the type locality. Important morphological features are: no tubercle on arm and occipital, tubercles on neck only very few or absent, tubercles on back in 7-12 rows, dorsal tubercles not keeled and conical, number of postmentals 2-3. The variation of morphological characters and colour pattern in *A. nasrullahi* is described. Based on the new material, the validity of *A. nasrullahi* as a full species, distinct from *A. griseonotus* and other species of *Asaccus*, is confirmed. Observations on taxonomy, ecology and behaviour are given.

**Key words.** *Asaccus nasrullahi*, taxonomy, ecology, behaviour, Iran, Middle East.

## Introduction

Based on the re-identification of the single specimen (ZMUC 3447) that SCHMIDT (1955) had identified as *Ptyodactylus hasselquisti*, WERNER (2006) described a new species from Iran, *Asaccus nasrullahi*. We have recently collected additional specimens of this species, and give here information on the variation, behaviour and ecology of this species in order to assess its validity. Following the recent phylogenetic study by GAMBEL et al. (2008), we place the genus *Asaccus* in the family Phyllodactylidae.

## Material and methods

Characters were selected to optimize comparisons with data in DIXON & ANDERSON (1973), ARNOLD & GARDNER (1994), RASTEGAR-POUYANI (1996), ANDERSON (1999), WERNER (2006) and TORKI & SHARIFI (2007). Measurements and counts were taken on both sides of the body, where appropriate. We have used many of the same characters for description of the additional specimens as were used by WERNER (2006), and 34 characters are employed. Where necessary, the characters are defined when they are mentioned in the description.

Eight specimens (6 adults, 2 juveniles) were collected at Malekoh, where we stayed for several nights and days to study some behavioural and ecological aspects of *Asaccus nasrullahi*. The behaviour was also studied under laboratory conditions. For determination of the head angle, we took photographs with a digital camera and drew and obtained angles with the help of Photoshop 8. Only dead specimens were used for this purpose.

For comparison, we used the description of the holotype of *Asaccus nasrullahi* by WERNER