

Acanthodactylus masirae ARNOLD, 1980
Masirah Fringe-toed Lizard

Synonymy

None.

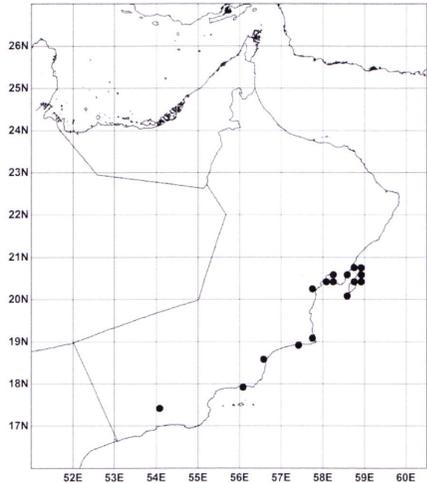
Range. Coastal areas of central Oman.

Size. Up to 52 mm SVL.

Identification. A small species of fringe-toed lizard of moderate build, but with a conspicuously narrow and pointed snout. One row of granules between supraoculars and superciliaries. There are four longitudinal rows of scales along the third and fourth fingers. Subdigital scales with one keel. Pectination on toes moderate. Subocular in contact with lip. Three or four upper labials anterior to centre of eye. Temporals sharply keeled. Dorsal scales coarse, keeled and imbricate posteriorly, 31–36 at mid-body. 10 or 12 ventral scale rows at mid-body.

Juveniles are strongly striped with a mid-dorsal dark stripe and two or three lateral stripes on each side, the most lateral of which extends to the corner of the eye. The mid-dorsal stripe bifurcates anteriorly (sometimes almost throughout its length) and extends from the back of the head to above the vent. The more medial lateral stripes come together over the base of the tail and continue as a single stripe down the tail, which is blue. The background-colour is buff and the flanks are white, and the stripes are blackish. In adults, the dark stripes become progressively more obscure, and many individuals are more or less uniform bronze or buff above.

Biology. A diurnal, ground-dwelling lacertid, with little recorded information. They hunt for insects, including ants, and other invertebrate prey using both passive and active hunting techniques. On hot sand they raise their toes off the surface. They run very fast between areas of cover such as small shrubs, where they dig burrows.



▷ Fig. 220: *Acanthodactylus masirae*, Masirah Island, Oman.

R. SINDACO





Habitat. Generally sandy coastal areas including the beach crest. Also low dunes, sandy hummocks and plains with stones.

Distribution. An Oman endemic known from Masirah Island, the adjacent coastal areas including Barr al Hikman, Khaluf, Ras Madrasah and the Sahil Jazir to Sharbithat. There is also an inland record from near Thumrait.

Pertinent references. ARNOLD 1980a, 1983.