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Annotated checklist and distribution of the Socotran Archipelago Herpetofauna (Reptilia)

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Abstract

We update the knowledge on the 30 terrestrial reptile species of Socotra, an archipelago well known for its highly endemic flora and fauna. We use the records obtained during several surveys throughout all the islands of the archipelago, carried out between 2007 and 2010, as well as the bibliographic records. We recorded all the known species of terrestrial reptiles for the islands (*Chamaeleo monachus, Haemodracon riebeckii, Haemodracon trachyrhinus, Hemidactylus dracaenacolus, H. granti, H. homoeolepis, H. flaviviridis, H. forbesi, H. inintellectus, H. oxyrhinus, H. robustus, H. pumilio, Pristurus abdelkuri, P. guichardi, P. obsti, P. insignoides, P. insignis, P. sokotranus, P. samhaensis, Mesalina balfouri, M. kuri, Hakaria simonyi, Trachylepis socotrana, Pachycalamus brevis, Leptotyphlops filiformis, L. macrurus, L. wilsoni, Typhlops socotranus, Ditypophis vivax, Hemerophis socotrae*). We report for the first time the occurrence of *Hemidactylus robustus* in Samha Island. *H. homoeolepis* is excluded from the fauna of Abd al-Kuri Island.

Key words: Socotra, Yemen, reptiles, distribution

Introduction

The Socotran Archipelago (12°30'N; 54°00'E; Fig. 1) is part of the Yemen Republic and it is well known for its highly endemic flora and fauna. The main island is a fragment of Gondwana, isolated in the Indian Ocean during Eocene-Oligocene (34–41 MYBP), when Arabia moved northward into Eurasia (Braithwaite, 1987; Girdler & Styles, 1974).

In 2008 it was recognized as a World Natural Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2010). The main island, Socotra, is situated in the northern part of the Indian Ocean, 230 km off the Horn of Africa and 350 km south of Ras Fartak, on the Arabian coast. It stretches about 130 km East to West, and 25–40 km North to South, with a 3,625 km^2 surface area, and with about 50,000 inhabitants. The archipelago includes three smaller islands: Darsa, located 35 km South-West of Socotra, a small uninhabited island of about 16 km^2, Samha, located 17 Km west of Darsa, with a surface of 40 km^2 and a small village of about 100 fishermen. Samha and Darsa are collectively known as *"Al Ikhwān"* ("The Brothers"). Abd al-Kuri, the westernmost island of the archipelago is situated approximately 100 km from the main island and 90 km from the Horn of Africa. It measures 130 km^2 and is populated by about 300 people.

The Socotran Archipelago is completely void of amphibians (Forbes, 1903: 107) but it is rich in reptile species, most of which are endemic. Despite the numerous accounts on the herpetofauna of Socotra (Balfour, 1881; Blanford, 1881; Günther, 1881; Peters, 1882b; Steindachner, 1899, 1903; Boulenger, 1899, 1903; Forbes, 1903; Hahn, 1978; Arnold, 1986b; Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999; Wranik, 1998a, 1998b; Rösler, 1998; Rösler & Wranik, 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2006a; Joger & Mayer, 2002; Sindaco *et al.*, 2008), the distribution and habitat preference of Socotran reptiles is still weakly defined, and most of their phylogenetic relationships are poorly understood. Most taxa are known only from old records and from a very limited number of sites, most of them in the surroundings of Hadiboh, the main settlement of the island (Forbes, 1903; Wranik, 1998b; Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999). The remote small islands of Darsa, Samha, and especially Abd al-Kuri have been only scantly visited and cursorily by herpetologists. The first herpetological records for Samha were published by Steindachner (1903) and for Darsa by Rösler & Wranik (2000b). Abd al-Kuri was surveyed by both the Austrian (Steindachner, 1903) and British expeditions (Forbes, 1899; Boulenger, 1903). Original herpetological records for these islands were also collected in 1967 by K.M. Guichard (see Arnold, 1986b), and twice in 1999 (Joger, 2000; Joger & Mayer, 2002; Rösler & Wranik, 2004).

In this paper we define the taxonomic status and the distribution and ecology of the terrestrial reptiles of the Socotran Archipelago. We summarize the results of four surveys, accomplished from 2007 to 2010 throughout the entire archipelago, as well as from all the available bibliographic records.

Material and methods

Surveys on Socotra Island took place from 25th September to the 9th of November 2007, during part of the dry season after the monsoon; from the 18th of December 2007 to the 14th of March 2008, during the rainy season and the first part of the dry season; from the 16th December 2008 to the 28th of February 2009; and from the 15th of March to the 9th of April 2010. The records were collected during 215 diurnal and nocturnal transects, based on the Systematic Sampling Surveys (time-constrained) protocol (Heyer *et al.*, 1994). The small islands, Abd al-Kuri, Samha, and Darsa, were surveyed from the 29th of March to the 1st of April 2010. Most of transects were carried out on Socotra Island (Fig. 2). The samplings were conducted by teams ranging from two to seven herpetologists. All the reptiles encountered along the transects were visually identified or captured, photographed, and released. Voucher individuals of each species and tissue samples were collected and deposited in the collections of the Natural History Museums of Pavia and Carmagnola. Opportunistic encounters were recorded as well.

All the records were stored in a georeferenced database, together with all the bibliographic data. The maps of Socotra (e.g. the map by the Royal Geographic Society, 1978) have few and doubtful toponyms, and many of our original data were collected in localities with unreliable names. Therefore, we clustered together our records under 39 areas (Fig. 2), whose names, according to the map in the book by Cheng & DeVantier (2006), are used for the descriptions of the Results section.

In the maps, the records closer than 1 km to each other were clustered into a single dot. The counts of Tab. 1 were based on the UTM 1×1 km grid, in order to avoid redundancy. A detailed niche-factor analysis of the ditribution and the habitat preferences by the geckos is under way (paper in preparation).

Results

The distribution of each species is described from the results of our surveys and from published data. We recorded all the terrestrial species known for the islands, moreover during the surveys we discovered a new species of gecko, *Hemidactylus inintellectus* that was described elsewhere (Sindaco *et al.*, 2009). Previously published data covered 56 UTM 1×1 km squares, while our surveys now provide data for 276 UTM 1×1 km squares.

TABLE 1. Range of each species of terrestrial reptile in the Socotran Archipelago, as number of occupied squares (1×1 km, UTM grid). Frequency is the percentage of occupied squares on the 276 squares with at least one species recorded, calculated on original data only.

Species	Original data	Frequency (%)	Bibliographic data	Total squares
Chamaeleo monachus	20	7.2	14	34
Haemodracon riebeckii	36	13.0	14	49
Haemodracon trachyrhinus	31	11.2	8	38
Hemidactylus dracaenacolus	5	1.8	1	6
Hemidactylus flaviviridis	4	1.5	1	4
Hemidactylus forbesii	3	1.1	3	6
Hemidactylus granti	8	2.9	3	11
Hemidactylus homoeolepis	82	29.7	13	93
Hemidactylus inintellectus	21	7.6	3	24
Hemidactylus oxyrhinus	5	1.8	3	8
Hemidactylus pumilio	51	18.5	8	58
Hemidactylus robustus	12	4.4	2	13
Pristurus abdelkuri	14	5.1	8	21
Pristurus guichardi	23	8.3	5	28
Pristurus insignis	53	19.2	8	60

.....continued on the next page

TABLE 1. (continued)

Species	Original data	Frequency (%)	Bibliographic data	Total squares
Pristurus insignoides	8	2.9	3	10
Pristurus obsti	27	9.8	2	28
Pristurus samhaensis	3	1.1	6	9
Pristurus sokotranus	217	78.6	21	234
Mesalina balfouri	122	44.2	21	141
Mesalina kuri	5	1.8	3	8
Hakaria simonyi	26	9.4	14	39
Trachylepis socotrana	146	52.9	24	167
Pachycalamus brevis	8	2.9	7	15
Leptotyphlops filiformis	1	0.4	4	6
Leptotyphlops macrurus	10	3.6	5	15
Leptotyphlops wilsoni	5	1.8	6	11
Typhlops socotranus	3	1.1	4	7
Ditypophis vivax	15	5.4	14	29
Hemerophis socotrae	19	6.9	22	39

Chamaeleo monachus Gray, 1865

Chamaeleo monachus Gray, 1865: 346—Locus typicus: “Madagascar” (in error).
Chamaeleo cucullatus Gray, 1831.—Duméril & Duméril, 1851: 33.
Chamaeleon verrucosus Blyth, 1854: 646 (*nomen oblitum*).
Chamaeleon [sic] *monachus* Gray, 1865: 470 pl. 31.
Chamaeleon [sic] *monachus*.—Blanford, 1881: 464.
Chamaeleo monachus.—Mertens, 1966: 20.
Chamaeleo (Chamaeleo) monachus.—Klaver & Böhme, 1986: 59.
Chamaeleo monarchus [sic].—Doe, 1992: 131.
Chameleo [sic] *monachus*.—Showler, 1994: 10, pl. 3.
Chamaeleo monachus.—Wranik, 1994: 15, photo.
Chamaeleo (Chamaeleo) monachus.—Necas, 1994: 102.
Chamaeleo monachus.—Wranik, 1997: 172, fig. 11.
Chamaeleon [sic] *monachus*.—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Chamaeleo monachus.—Wranik, 1998a: 150.
Chameleo [sic] *monachus*.—Arnold, 2009: 11.

According to Boulenger (1903), the species is common across the Island of Socotra, especially where the vegetation is abundant, from sea level to 1000 m. Most of the bibliographic data were collected in the central and eastern part of the island, with a single record from the western coast, at Qalansiyah (Steindachner, 1903).

Habitat. palm groves, *Tamarix* bushlands, *Ficus* trees along wadis, *Euclea* shrublands and low bushlands. The species was observed on the whole island from the sea level (S of Shu’ab and Noged—Eco-lodge) up to 1004 m at Qaroni (SW Diksam plateau).

Original data. Fig. 3. NE Coast, Timeroh area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qabheten area, Shu'ab area, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Terr Ditrur, Skand, Wadi Ayhaft, Hadiboh plain.

Bibliographic data. Blanford (1881), Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Showler (1994). Wranik (1998a), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. According to the phylogenetic tree by Macey *et al.* (2008) *C. monachus* is the basal taxon to all the other species of the *Chamaeleo chamaeleon* species group; it originated by an early vicariant isolation of a

Socotran population from African, Mediterranean and Arabian populations, when Socotra detached from the other Gondwanan plates. The type locality of this species is obviously wrong as already noted by Boulenger (1887) and discussed by Hillenius (1959) and by Schätti and Desvoignes (1999).

Haemodracon riebeckii (Peters, 1882)

Diplodactylus Riebeckii Peters 1882b: 43—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Diplodactylus Riebeckii.—Taschenberg, 1883: 165.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Boulenger, 1885: 94.
Ptyodactylus homolepis Blanford, 1877.—Steindachner, 1899: 162.
Ptyodactylus socotranus Steindachner, 1902: 168.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Boulenger, 1903: 78, Pl. 8.
Ptyodactylus sokotranus [sic].—Steindachner, 1903: 12.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Smith 1933: 10.
P.[hyllodactylus] riebecki [sic].—Loveridge, 1947: 238.
Ptyodactylus homolepis sokotranus [sic].—Loveridge, 1947: 274.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Eiselt, 1962: 286 (footnote 2).
Ptyodactylus homolepis socotranus.—Wermuth, 1965: 157.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Kluge, 1967: 32.
Ptyodactylus homolepis socotranus.—Kluge, 1991: 29.
Phyllodactylus riebecki [sic].—Arnold & Gardner, 1994: 440.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Kluge & Nussbaum, 1995: 7.
Phyllodactylus riebecki [sic].—Wranik & Rösler, 1997: 10, 11.
Haemodracon riebeckii.—Bauer, Good & Branch, 1997: 462.
Phyllodactylus riebeckii.—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Haemodracon riebecki [sic].—Joger 2000: 343, 345.
Haemodracon sp.—Joger, 2000: 343, 345.

According to Rösler & Wranik (2003, 2004) this large species is considered widespread especially at higher altitudes but our data show that it is also fairly common close to the coasts, since we recorded it in the Noged, near Shu'ab, near Qalansiyah, near Howlef and along the North-Eastern Coast.

Habitat. We found the species active at night on cliffs, rocks, large boulders, caves, tree trunks (*Dracaena*, *Phoenyx*, *Tamarix* and also *Adenium*), inside buildings, and inactive during daytime under stones in *Croton* bushlands and below *Dracaena* trees, as well as in tree holes (*Boswellia* sp.). We found it from sea level to 938 meters (Tahr).

Original data. Fig. 4. Socotra Island: NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Firmihin, Dheroh, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Shu'ab area, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Wadi Trubah, Wadi Ayhaft, Hadiboh plain, Howlef. Samha Island: inland of the village of Khaysat.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Loveridge (1947), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to the Socotran archipelago: Socotra and Samha Island.

Remarks. The specimen from Samha Island was considered by Joger (2000) as a new species (*Haemodracon* sp.), but it has never been formally described. The specimens found by us on Samha Island were apparently identical to the Socotran ones.

Haemodracon trachyrhinus (Boulenger, 1899)

Phyllodactylus trachyrhynus: Boulenger 1899: 4—Locus typicus: "Jena-agahan, 1200–2500 feet, and Adho Dimellus, 3500–4500 feet".
Phyllodactylas trachyrhinus.—Boulenger, 1903: 79, Pl. 9.1.
Haemodracon trachyrhinus.—Bauer, Good & Branch, 1997: 462.
Phyllodactylus trachyrhinus.—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Haemodracon trachyrhinus.—Joger, 2000: 343.

This small and inconspicuous species has been largely overlooked, and this is probably why Rösler & Wranik (2003) wrote: *"it seems relatively rare, because only few specimens have been recorded so far"*. Most of the bibliographic data are from Hadiboh and the Hajhir massif, with just two exceptions: Homhil and Shu'ab (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999; Rösler & Wranik, 2004). *Haemodracon trachyrhinus* has been reported up to at least 1000 m (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999). We found *Haemodracon trachyrhinus* at only three sites at high altitude: Ma'alah Plateau (at 550 and at 580 m a.s.l), above Firmhin (780 m a.s.l.), and Menhem in the SW Diksam Plateau (870 m), but we also recorded it from several low altitude localities.

Habitat. Our research proved that *Haemodracon trachyrhinus* is fairly common in different habitats including the widespread *Croton* bushes, barren stony plains, vegetated sand dunes, sparse and dense shrublands, wadi areas. During daytime it was found under stones, while at night it was observed active on the ground and also on the trunks of bushes and on *Tamarix* barks.

Original data. Fig. 5. NE Coast, Momi plateau, E Noged, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Meyhah area, Plateau W of Qabhete, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qalansiyah, Mori West, Howlef.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Rösler & Wranik (1998, 2004), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Hemidactylus dracaenacolus Rösler & Wranik, 1999

Hemidactylus dracaenacolus Rösler & Wranik, 1999: 252—Locus typicus "Diksam, 695 m NN (Locus Typicus 12°29.73N, 53°59.18'O), Sokotra".
Hemidactylus dracaenacolus.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 511, Pl. 11.

As indicated by the scientific name, *Hemidactylus dracaenacolus* is thought to be linked to the Dragon's blood Tree (*Dracaena cynnabari*).

This recently described species was known from the two type specimens only, that have been both collected at Diksam at about 700 m a.s.l. (Rösler & Wranik, 1999, 2004).

Habitat. We recorded many individuals in six localities of the Diksam plateau, the most distant locations are within 8.5 km from each other, the altitudes range between 762 and 1004 meters a.s.l. (Qaroni). The species was observed during the day under stones at the base of *Dracaena* trees, and at night active on the trunk, with only one specimen active on the ground.

Original data. Fig. 6. Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam.

Bibliographic data. Rösler & Wranik (1999, 2003, 2004).

General distribution. Apparently endemic to the Diksam Plateau of Socotra Island.

Remarks. Up to now *H. dracaenacolus* was known only from the type locality. If further research will confirm that the distribution of this species is limited to a small area of the Diksam Plateau and to the *Dracaena* trees, *Hemidactylus dracaenacolus* should be considered as critically endangered due to the bad conservation status of the *Dracaena* trees on the island (Adolt & Pavlis, 2004; Attorre *et al.*, 2007).

Hemidactylus flaviviridis Rüppell, 1835

Hemidactylus flaviviridis Rüppell, 1835: 18, tav. 6 fig. 2—Locus typicus: "Insel Massaua und die benachbarte Küstenlandschaft" (Island of Massawa and the adjacent coastal area).
Hemidactylus homoeolepis [partim].—Peters 1882b: 43.
Hemidactylus flaviviridis.—Boulenger, 1903: 82.
Hemidactylus flaviviridis.—Showler, 1996: 185.

This introduced species on Socotra Island is only known from Hadiboh town and outskirts. We unsuccessfully searched for this species in many other villages (e.g. Qalansiyah).

Habitat. We observed it at night time on few buildings in Hadiboh town. It seems always strictly associated to buildings, usually near light spots; the species was also observed inside buildings at daytime.

Original data. Fig. 7. Hadiboh plain.

Bibliographic data. Blanford (1881a), Loveridge (1947), Rösler & Wranik (1998, 2003, 2004), Wranik 1998b.

General distribution. A widespread species distributed across most of India, Nepal, Pakistan and eastern Afghanistan. The species has been found in scattered localities on the coasts of Iran, Arabia, Socotra and along the Red Sea coasts of Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti and northern Somalia (cf. the map by Sindaco & Jeremčenko, 2008: 301). In the western part of its range, as well as in Socotra, it was probably unintentionally introduced by man.

Hemidactylus forbesii Boulenger, 1899

Hemidactylus forbesii Boulenger, 1899: 5—Locus typicus: "Abd al-Kuri".
Hemidactylus homoeolepis [partim].—Steindachner 1903: 12.
Hemidactylus forbesii.—Boulenger, 1903: 95, Pl. 9.2.
Hemidactylus forbesii.—Joger, 2000: 341.
Hemidactylus forbesii.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 512, Pl. 13.
Hemidactylus homoeolepis [partim].—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 515.

Hemidactylus forbesii, like other Abd al-Kuri endemics, is a very poorly known species with unclear phylogenetic relationships. It seems rather widespread across the island where it was found both close to the sea and in the inland. It is strictly nocturnal. In places where it is present, is rather numerous. In March 2010 we found very large eggs under fossil corals and in rock crevices and cracks. Our observations agree with those by W. R. Ogilvie-Grant (in Boulenger, 1903), who reported that the species was "*very common below stones*". Rösler & Wranik (2004) made few interesting behavioural observations including one individual that fled in the marine water and swam to a rock nearby.

Original data. Fig. 8. Abd al-Kuri Island.

Habitat. Rocks, piles of stones or corals close to the sea on sandy ground, among debris.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1899, 1903), Steindachner (1903), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Abd al-Kuri.

Hemidactylus granti Boulenger, 1899

Hemidactylus granti Boulenger, 1899: 4—Locus typicus: "Adho Dimellus, Sokotra, 3500–4500 feet".
Hemidactylus granti.—Boulenger, 1903: 81, pl. 10.3.
Hemidactylus granti.—Wranik, 2003: 133, Pl. 76.
Hemidactylus granti.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 513, Pl. 14.

A poorly known highland endemic species, whose distribution is limited to the Hajhir massif.

Habitat. We found the species in fissured rocks, under barks and especially under stones where sometimes were observed also communal oviposition sites with high numbers of eggs or egg remains (30–80). The ascertained vertical distribution ranges between 970 and 1463 meters a.s.l.

Original data. Fig. 9. Skand, Adho Di Meleh.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1899, 1903), Steindachner (1903), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to high mountains (Hajhir) of Socotra Island.

Remarks. According to the molecular study by Carranza & Arnold (2006) *H. granti* is the sister taxon of *H. dracaenacolus*.

Hemidactylus homoeolepis Blanford, 1881

Hemidactylus (Liurus) homœolepis Blanford, 1881: 464. Fig. 1, pl. 42.2—Locus Typicus: "Socotra".
Hemidactylus homoeolepis.—Peters, 1882b: 43.
Hemidactylus homoeolepis.—Boulenger, 1885: 117.
Hemidactylus homaeolepis [sic].—Wranik, 1998b: Fig. [150].
Hemidactylus homoeolepis.—Rösler & Wranik, 1998: 119.
Hemidactylus homoeolepis.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Hemidactylus cf. *homoeolepis*.—Joger, 2000: 343.

This species is considered "*fairly common, found under rocks and stones generally in the dry beds of the streams*" (Ogilvie-Grant in Boulenger, 1903) but in our experience it is by no means limited to the dry beds of the streams. As usual, most of the bibliographic data are relative to the surroundings of Hadiboh and the Hajhir massif with three exceptions: Qalansiyah (Steindachner, 1903), Homhil (Boulenger, 1903) and Wadi Di-Farhoh (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999).

We observed this species almost everywhere on Socotra Island, from sea level up to 995 m a.s.l. in the Diksam Plateau. This is by far the most widespread and common nocturnal reptile in Socotra (cf. table 1). It seems less common on the small islands of Darsa and Samha.

Habitat. Encountered chiefly in rocky and stony areas. It is active mostly on the ground or in the lower part of big rocks, large boulders and cliffs, but it climbs also trees, palm trunks and buildings (it has been found even inside houses at Hadiboh). During daytime it can be found under stones, trunks and dead vegetation.

Original data. Fig. 10. Socotra Island: NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Plateau W of Qabhete, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Ghubbah area, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Mouri plain, Wadi Trubah, Skand, Wadi Ayhaft, Kadheb E, Hadiboh plain, Howlef, Kariyah area. Samha Island. Darsa Island.

Bibliographic data. Blanford (1881), Steindachner (1903), Boulenger (1903), Schätti & Gasperetti (1994), Wranik (1998b), Rösler & Wranik (1998, 2004), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999).

General distribution. Southern Arabian Peninsula (SW Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman), including the islands of Masirah and Kuria Muria, and the Socotra archipelago. A distribution map was published by Sindaco & Jeremčenko (2008: 302).

All authors reporting this species from Abd al-Kuri Island refer to the paper of Steindachner (1903), but this record is wrong as the specimens that he studied are in fact *H. forbesii*. These specimens are still present in the collection of the Naturhistorisches Museum (Vienna) (NMW 17785:1–2), as verified by two of the authors (R. Sindaco and C. Grieco, May 2010). Despite having been correctly identified by H. Rösler in May 2000, this author continued to report the species as occurring in Abd al-Kuri.

Remarks. According to Arnold (1980), the "*differences between some of the known populations regarded here as belonging to* H. homoeolepis *are greater than those between some recognised species of* Hemidactylus"; therefore the taxonomic status of populations assigned to *H. homoeolepis* needs to be revised also on the basis of molecular studies.

Hemidactylus inintellectus Sindaco, Ziliani, Razzetti, Pupin, Grieco, 2009

Hemidactylus inintellectus Sindaco *et al.* 2009: 86—Locus typicus: "Yemen, Socotra Island, Wadi Ayhaft (12°36'47"N–53°57'52"E), about m 200 a.s.l.".
Hemidactylus granti.—Schätti and Desvoignes, 1999: 108–109, fig. 30.
Hemidactylus aff. *turcicus*.—Rösler & Wranik, 2000a: 24, tab. 1.
[*Hemidactylus*] *turcicus*-like.—Rösler & Wranik (in Wranik 2003: 133).
Hemidactylus sp.—Rösler & Wranik (in Wranik 2003: pl. 74 up).
Hemidactylus sp. B.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 518, pl. 5, fig. 20.
Hemidactylus sp. B.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 127, tab. 1.
Hemidactylus granti.—Sindaco *et al.*, 2008: tab. 1.

This taxon was observed and/or collected by several authors (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999; Rösler & Wranik 2003, 2004, 2006a) but always confused with other taxa or, until two years ago, just suspected to be a new species without any formal description (see Sindaco *et al.*, 2009).

Original data. Fig. 11. NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Firmihin, Dheroh, Central Noged, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Wadi Ayhaft, Kadheb E.

Habitat. This species is a nocturnal rock dwelling gecko. Individuals were observed usually climbing on cliffs, deep crevices, large boulders, tree trunks (including palms and occasionally *Adenium* or *Dracaena*), generally on limestone rocks, but also on granite. Recorded from near sea level up to 762 m a.s.l. (North of Derhoh).

Bibliographic data. This species was reported by some authors (under different names: see synonymy) for a few localities in the central and eastern part of the island.

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Hemidactylus oxyrhinus Boulenger, 1899

Hemidactylus oxyrhinus Boulenger, 1899: 5.—Locus typicus: "Abd al-Kuri".
Hemidactylus oxyrhinus.—Boulenger, 1903: 94, pl. 10.2
Hemidactylus oxyrhinus.—Joger, 2000: 341
Hemidactylus oxyrhinus.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 515, Pl. 17.

This poorly known gecko is quite numerous at least locally in Abd al-Kuri. It was not found climbing, but observations are so scarce that habitat requirements of this species are almost unknown, as well as its life history.

Original data. Fig. 12. Abd al-Kuri Island.

Habitat. It is a ground dwelling gecko found on stony and sandy places of the island, often close to dwarf bushes.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1899, 1903), Steindachner (1903), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Abd al-Kuri Island.

Hemidactylus pumilio Boulenger, 1903

Hemidactylus pumilio Boulenger, 1903: 6—Locus typicus: "Sokotra (Dahamis, 350 feet, and Jena-agahan, 1200–2500 feet)".
Hemidactylus pumilus Boulenger, 1899: 6 (non Hallowell, 1861).
Hemidactylus pumilio Boulenger, 1903: 6 (substitute name).
Hemidactylus pumilio.—Loveridge, 1947: 130.
Hemidactylus pumilio.—Rösler, 1998: 34.

It is one of the world's smallest *Hemidactylus* species and the smaller one in Socotra (SVL up to 32 mm, according to our data); again a common species that was previously recorded for a very limited number of localities. We collected it across most of the island, from the sea level up to 995 m of altitude (Qaroni). Females with fully developed eggs were observed in December, January and May.

Habitat. A nocturnal, ground dwelling gecko observed active on the soil or inactive under stones; mostly observed under scattered stones in flat habitats with hardened soils, usually in less rocky habitats than those preferred by *H. homoeolepis*, although often the species are encountered in syntopy.

Original data. Fig. 13. NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Meyhah area, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Wadi Trubah, Hadiboh plain, Kariyah area.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Loveridge (1947), Wranik (1998b), Rösler & Wranik (1998, 2004), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. G. A. Boulenger originally described the species as *Hemidactylus pumilus* but few years later he redescribed it as *Hemidactylus pumilio* because the original name was not available as it was a junior homonym of *Hemidactylus pumilus* Hallowell, 1861, a Chinese species now in synonymy with *Hemidactylus frenatus* Duméril and Bibron, 1836.

Hemidactylus robustus Heyden, 1827

Hemidactylus robustus Heyden, 1827: 19—Locus typicus "Egypten, Arabien, und Abyssinien".
Hemidactylus turcicus [partim].—Boulenger 1903: 82.
Hemidactylus t. turcicus [partim].—Loveridge, 1947: 101, 142, Tab. [104].
Hemidactylus turcicus "subsp.".—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Hemidactylus turcicus.—Wranik, 1998b: 150.
Hemidactylus turcicus parkeri Loveridge, 1936.—Rösler & Wranik 1998: 119 [132], Tabs 3–4, Fig. 2.
Hemidactylus turcicus.—Joger, 2000: 340. Hemidactylus sp. A.- Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 516, pl. 19.
Hemidactylus form A.- Rösler & Wranik, 2006: 126, Tab. 1.

Socotran specimens of this *taxon* have been doubtfully assigned to *H. turcicus* / *H. robustus* or alternately to an undescribed new taxon "sp. A" (Rösler & Wranik, 1998; Wranik, 1998b, 2004; Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999). The specific identities of *H. turcicus* and *H. robustus* were demonstrated by the discovery of an area of simpatry along the Red Sea coast of Egypt (Baha El Din, 2005) and by their high genetic divergence (Carranza & Arnold 2006).

Original data. Fig. 14. Socotra Island: Qalansiyah, Kadheb E, Hadiboh plain, Howlef. Samha Island. In Socotra we observed *H. robustus* at low altitude only in coastal areas (up to 50 m a.s.l.) around the two main villages (Hadiboh, Qalansiyah) and the harbour of Hadiboh. In Samha Island the species was observed in and near the main village (Khaysat).

Original data. Socotra: Hadiboh plain, Howlef, Qalansiyah. Samha: Khaysat village.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Loveridge (1947), Rösler & Wranik (1998, 2003, 2004), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes 1999.

General distribution. NE Afrotropical, from SE Egypt to Somalia and NE Kenya, most of the Arabian Peninsula, southern Iran and Pakistan (a distribution map was published by Sindaco & Jeremčenko, 2008). In the Socotran Archipelago it is likely introduced.

Remarks. *H. robustus* is here reported for the first time from Samha.

The record of "*H. turcicus* subsp." by Rösler (1998a) from "Dixan" (sic!) at 680 m a.s.l. very probably refers to *H. inintellectus*.

Pristurus abdelkuri Arnold, 1986

Pristurus abdelkuri Arnold, 1986b: 359, Fig. 7—Locus typicus: "Abd el Kuri".
Pristurus rupestris Blanford, 1874 [partim].—Boulenger 1903: 94.
Pristurus abdelkuri.—Arnold, 1993: 358 [368, 375, 377, 379]. Figs 1–6 (ecology, behaviour).
Pristurus cf. *abdelkuri*.—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Pristurus abdelkuri.—Wranik, 1998b: 149, Tab. 1.
Pristurus abdelkuri.—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 20, 21.

In Abd al-Kuri this gecko can be observed on rock or gravel grounds with scattered rocks (Rösler & Wranik, 2004 and our original data). There are some populations in Socotra Island that have been attributed to this species, although its taxonomy is not clear and therefore some authors refer to these as *Pristurus* cf. *abdekuri*. If populations of Socotra Island will be proved to belong to *P. abdelkuri*, they could have been only recently introduced from Adb al-Kuri, as hypothesized by Rösler & Wranik (2003, 2004), since they seem to be restricted to the shores near Hadiboh and east of this town up to Bindar di-Lishah, and to two other littoral areas: Noged at 12°18' N–53°48' E (Rösler & Wranik, 2004) and Qalansiyah (our data). Preliminary genetic data seems support the hypotesis of an introduction (S, Carranza in litt.)

Habitat. In Socotra we observed the species on coastal rocks (just N of Qalansiyah and near Hawlef harbour) but also in sandy and gravel coasts (including the "vertical" dunes above Hawlef, up to 50 m of elevation), or beaches with presence of fossil corals and scattered vegetation, dead trunks and other debris. In Abd al-Kuri we found the species on rocks, piles of stones, hardened ground with stones or corals.

Original data. Fig. 15. Socotra Island: Qalansiyah, Howlef, Di Lishah area. Abd al-Kuri Island.

Bibliographic data. Steindachner (1903), Arnold (1986c), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Abd al-Kuri and Socotra Islands.

Remarks. The distinctiveness of this *Pristurus* species from Abd al Kuri was suggested for the first time by Parker (1938): "*At present it seems advisable to use the name* sokotranus *for the* Pristurus *of Abd-el-Kuri also, though further collecting may reveal that the colour differences are sufficiently constant and well-marked to warrant the use of a distinctive name*".

Pristurus guichardi Arnold, 1986

Pristurus guichardi Arnold, 1986b: 356, Figs 4–6—Locus typicus: "Haggier (= Hajhir, 12°34'N 54°02'E)".
Pristurus rupestris Blanford, 1874 [partim].—Boulenger, 1903: 77.
Pristurus sokotranus Parker, 1938.—Loveridge, 1947: 74.
Pristurus guichardi.—Arnold, 1993: 358, Figs 1–6.
Pristurus guichardi.—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 20, 21.

Pristurus guichardi was described and originally reported from a very limited area of the island, the Hajhir Massif, over 700 m. Unpublished genetic data (S. Carranza in litt.) seem to confirm this pattern, but with a wider altitudinal range between 90 m (Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh) and 1030 m (Skand area).

Habitat. *P. guichardi* is strictly arboreal; we observed this species on branches and tree trunks and medium size shrubs; we found *P. guichardi* on the ground only once, near the base of a *Dracaena* tree trunk. The species occurs in woods and forests on highlands, bushes mixed with *Dracaena* (however, it has never been observed on its stems), and on palms and other trees along the wadis.

Original data. Fig. 16. Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Firmihin, Dheroh, Skand.

Bibliographic data. Arnold (1986c), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes 1999, Rösler & Wranik (1999, 2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Pristurus obsti Rösler & Wranik, 1999

Pristurus obsti Rösler & Wranik, 1999: 254—Locus typicus: "südwestl. von Qalansiyah, Bucht von Shu'ab (Locus typicus 12°34.67'N, 53°23.87O), Sokotra" [= SW of Qalansiya, Shu'ab Gulf].
Pristurus obsti.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 522, Pl. 27, 28.
Pristurus obsti.—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 16.

P. obsti was originally recorded from the mangroves of Shu'ab Gulf and Nit [= Neet] by Rösler & Wranik (1999, 2004) and since then considered a mangrove endemic species.

Habitat. Like *P. guichardi*, also *P. obsti* is purely arboreal. We observed it on branches and trunks of trees and medium size shrubs; it occurs on palms, trees along the wadis, on *Tamarix* bushes, on *Croton* trunks in the western Noged plain, and on mangroves (*Avicennia marina*); all genetically identified samples come from low-altitude localities (less than 100 m), except two samples from Menhem (SW Diksam Plateau) at 700 meters.

Original data. Fig. 17. Specimens identified by the genetic analyses (unpublished data by S. Carranza) were found in SW Diksam Plateau, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Meyhah area, Neet, Shu'ab area.

Bibliographic data. Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (1999, 2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. *P. obsti* and *P. guichardi* are morphologically very similar. High altitude populations of *P. guichardi*, living in higher wooded covers and therefore in cooler and moister habitats, are usually darker, while the populations of *P. obsti*, living on mangroves or at lower altitudes in areas with more sparse vegetation and drier climate, are usually lighter. Moreover, the differences in the orange flank patterns in males of *P. obsti* and *P. guichardi* reported by Rösler & Wranik (2004) seem to be subtle in many of the observed individuals. These species have been so far considered differentiated both in habitat and in distribution (coastal mangrove endemic vs. mountain endemic), but our findings show a much more continuous distribution of *P. obsti*. This is the reason why we lumped the data in a single distribution map (Fig. 16b) and indicated as *P. guichardi* vel *obsti* all specimens not identified genetically.

Pristurus insignis Blanford, 1881

Pristurus insignis Blanford, 1881: 466, pl. 42.1—Locus typicus: “Socotra”.
Pristurus insignis.—Peters, 1882b: 44.
Pristurus insignis.—Boulenger, 1885: 54.
Pristurus insignis [partim].—Boulenger, 1903: 75.
Pristurus insignis.—Arnold, 1986b: 353, Figs 1–3.
Pristurus insignis.—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 16, 20, 21.

Habitat. This species is associated with rocks and cliffs. Our records included mostly large rocks of extensive geological complexes, whereas small and isolated rocks seemed unsuitable for the species. It is also rather frequent along wadis; in this habitat it was observed also on large boulders and stone walls in palm groves. It presents a wide altitude range from near sea level (Ras Shu’ab) up to 1170 m on the Hajhir (Skand area). Both recent surveys and bibliographic data show that the species is widespread, although more common in the eastern part of the island. The scarcity of records in the western side of the island is also probably due to a lower availability of its favourite habitat (large rocks, cliffs). In February and March numerous specimens were found at night sleeping on branches of bushes close to rocks.

Original data. Fig. 18. NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, E Noged, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, Diksam SW, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Shu'ab area, Qalansiyah inland, Wadi Trubah, Skand, Adho Di Meleh, Wadi Ayhaft.

Bibliographic data. Blanford (1881), Boulenger (1903), Loveridge (1947), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004)

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Pristurus insignoides Arnold, 1986

Pristurus insignoides Arnold, 1986b: 353, Figs 1–3—Locus typicus: “Adho Dimellus (Adhoh di-Melhoh, 12°33’N 54°02’E)”.
Pristurus insignis Blanford, 1881 [partim].—Boulenger, 1903: 75.
Pristurus insignoides.—Arnold, 1993: 358 [368, 375], Figs 1–6.
Pristurus insignoides—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 20, 21.

This species was recorded on the highlands of the Hajhir mountains between 800 and 1050 m, at two close localities only: Adho Dimellus [= Adho Di Meleh] (Arnold 1986b), Firmihin (Rösler & Wranik, 2004), Dihaal pass [= Adho Di Meleh] (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999). We also observed it around the Skand area in seven close localities at slightly higher altitudes between 1030 and 1473 m.

Habitat. *P. insignoides* was considered a strictly rocky gecko, like *P. insignis* (Rösler & Wranik, 2004), but during recent surveys, a few populations of this gecko were found to inhabit the montain forest at Skand, where several individuals were observed on tree trunks, branches, small rocks and stone walls in the glades.

Original data. Fig. 19. Skand, Adho Di Meleh.

Bibliographic data. Arnold (1986b), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to the higher mountains of Socotra Island.

Remarks. Although *P. insignoides* and *P. insignis* occur in contiguous areas, until now they have never been observed in sintopy. *P. insignoides* is found at higher, more vegetated, cooler and moister habitats, while *P. insignis* occurs in dryer, more open and warmer habitats.

Pristurus samhaensis Rösler & Wranik, 1999

Pristurus samhaensis Rösler & Wranik, 1999: 259 —Locus typicus: “Samhah, 240 m NN (Locus typicus 12°10.00' N, 53°01.50' O)”.
Pristurus samhaensis.—Rösler & Wranik, 2000b: 86.
Pristurus samhaensis.—Arnold, 2009: 3, 7.

Pristurus samhaensis is a very common Semaphore gecko, which replaces *P. sokotranus* in the small islands of Samha and Darsa. It was dubitatively reported from Socotra too, near Shu'ab and from the Noged at 12°39'N–54°01'E by Rösler & Wranik (2004: 522).

Habitat. On rocks and on the ground in stony places. Rösler & Wranik (2006b) reported that this species shows ecological and behavioural traits similar to *P. sokotranus: "Im Vorkommen und Verhalten zeigt sich eine weitgehende Übereinstimmung mit* P. sokotranus*"*.

Original data. Fig. 20. Samha and Darsa Islands.

Bibliographic data. Rösler & Wranik (1999, 2004, 2006b), Rösler (2000).

General distribution. Probably a Samha and Darsa endemic; its occurrence in Socotra needs to be confirmed by genetic studies. The coordinates of the doubtful locality of the Noged indicated by Rösler & Wranik (2004) are wrong, because the point falls on the northern coast of Socotra.

***Pristurus sokotranus* Parker, 1938**

Pristurus sokotranus Parker, 1938: 306—Locus typicus: "Dahamis, Sokotra".
Pristurus rupestris Blanford, 1874.—Blanford, 1881: 465.
Pristurus rupestris.—Anderson, 1896: [23] 24.
? *Pristurus crucifer* [partim].—Steindachner, 1903: 11.
Pristurus rupestris [partim].—Boulenger, 1903: 76.
Pristurus sokotranus [partim].—Loveridge, 1947: 72 [key], 74, Tab.
Pristurus socotranus [sic].—Arnold, 1986b: 356–359.
Pristurus socotranus [sic].—Arnold, 1993: 358 [368, 375, 379], Figs 1–6.
Pristurus sokotranus.—Rösler, 1998: 35.
Pristurus sokotranus.—Arnold, 2009: 3, 16.
Pristurus socotranus [sic].—Arnold, 2009: 1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 20, 21.

This species is the most common reptile on Socotra Island and can be observed almost everywhere from the sea level up to 1298 m (at Skand).

Habitat. The species presents very wide habitat requirements; it was found from coastal sand dunes (Noged) to mountain habitats, including tree trunks, barks, barren terrains and villages.

Original data. Fig. 21. NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, E Noged, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Meyhah area, Plateau W of Qabhete, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Qalansiyah inland, Ghubbah area, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Di Rohan, Mouri plain, Wadi Trubah, Skand, Adho Di Meleh, Wadi Ayhaft, Kadheb E, Hadiboh plain, Howlef, Di Lishah area, Kariyah area, Rokeb area.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Loveridge (1947), Rösler & Wranik (1998b, 2004), Wranik (1998), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

***Mesalina balfouri* (Blanford, 1881)**

Eremias (Mesalina) balfouri Blanford 1881: 467—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Eremias Balfouri.—Peters, 1882b: 45.
Eremias (*Mesalina*) *Balfouri*.—Taschenberg, 1883: 167.
Eremias guttulata.—Anderson, 1898: 175, 177 (Tab.), 178 (Tab.).
Eremias guttulata.—Boulenger, 1903: 84.
Eremias guttulata balfouri.—Neumann, 1905: 397.
Eremias olivieri balfouri.—Haas, 1951: 276.
Mesalina balfouri.—Arnold, 1986a: [1243] 1254, Fig. 11h.
Mesalina balfouri.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Mesalina cf. *balfouri*.—Joger, 2000: 343.

This lacertid lizard is the third most common diurnal species observed in Socotra after *Pristurus sokotranus* and *Trachylepis socotrana*.

Habitat. In Socotra Island we recorded it from coastal plains and shores up to 1030 m at Skand. Rösler & Wranik (2004) observed it at 980 m (Diksam) and 940–1045 m (Firmihin). This species is particularly common in open sandy areas, gravel and rock substrates, but it can be observed also in areas with good vegetation cover. On Darsa it is frequent in flat areas with dwarf bushes, while on Samha we found it in a stony hill.

Original data. Fig. 22. Socotra Island: NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, E Noged, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Meyhah area, Plateau W of Qabhete, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah inland, Ghubbah area, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Mouri plain, Wadi Trubah, Skand, Kadheb E, Hadiboh plain, Howlef, Di Lishah area, Kariyah area, Rokeb area. Darsa Island. Samha Island.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes 1999, Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra , Samha and Darsa Islands.

Mesalina kuri Joger & Mayer, 2002

Mesalina kuri Joger & Mayer, 2002: 502—Locus typicus: “Abd al-Kuri”.
Eremias guttulata [partim].— Steindachner 1903: 12.
Mesalina cf. *balfouri*.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Mesalina kuri.— Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 526, pl. 37.
Mesalina kuri.— Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126.

Habitat. This lizard is common in flat areas on sandy or hardened ground with more or less dense scrubs; it is the geographical vicariant of *M. balfouri* in Abd al-Kuri.

Original data. Fig. 23. Abd al-Kuri Island.

Bibliographic data. Steindachner (1903), Joger & Mayer (2002), Rösler & Wranik (2004, 2006a).

General distribution. Endemic to Abd al-Kuri Island.

Remarks. This species, formerly included in *Mesalina balfouri*, has been recognized as an independent species based on morphological and molecular data.

Hakaria simonyi (Steindachner, 1899)

Sepsina (Hakaria) Simonyi Steindachner, 1899: 161—Locus typicus: “Hakari auf Sokotra”.
Parachalcides socotranus Boulenger, 1899: 6.
Parachalcides socotranus.—Boulenger, 1903: 86, Pl. 11.1.
Parachalcides sokotranus [sic].—Steindachner, 1903: 13.
Scelotes simonyi.—Barbour & Loveridge, 1928: 64.
Hakaria simonyi.—Loveridge, 1935: 188.
Paracalcides [sic] *socotranus*.—Rösler, 1998: 35.
Parachalcides socotranus.—Wranik, 1998b: 150.
Hakaria simonyi.—Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999: 120.
Parachalcides socotranus.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Hakaria simonyi.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 523.

This skink was previously known for the central area of Socotra and the Noged, where the species was described. We recorded it also in the western part of the island in a large sinkhole crater in the limestone plateau (inland of Neet) and in the palm grove near Qeysoh (SW of Qalansiyah).

Habitat. Observed mainly in areas with some vegetation cover (bushes, grass, trees) and sparse stones; we collected it from 10 m of altitude in the palm grove close to the beach in Bidholeh, Central Noged (not far from the type locality, Haqari village) up to 1463 m in the Skand area.

Original data. Fig. 24. Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Plateau W of Qabhete, Qeysoh, Skand, Adho Di Meleh, Hadiboh plain.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. Boulenger (1899) described this specie as *Parachalcides socotranus*, but his paper was preceded by just a few days by Steindachner's 1899 publication, who named the same species *Sepsina (Hakaria) simonyi.* Loveridge (1935) proved that the paper by Boulenger had been published on the 18th May 1899 while the one by Steindachner between the 5th and 15th of May 1899.

In addition to the type-specimens listed by Schätti & Desvoignes (1999: 121), four syntypes from Sokotra are listed in the catalogue of the Turin's Museum (Elter, 1982); at least two specimens from Hakari (MZUT R2834) are still present (R. Sindaco obs.).

Trachylepis socotrana (Peters, 1882)

Euprepes (Euprepis) socotranus Peters, 1882b: 45—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Euprepes perrotteti [sic] Duméril & Bibron, 1839 ["var."].—Blanford, 1881: 469.
Mabuia [sic] *socotrana*.—Boulenger, 1887: 168.
Mabria socotran [sic].—Doe, 1992: 131.
Mabuya socotranus [sic].—Showler, 1996: 186.
Mabuya socotrana.—Rösler, 1998: 34.
Mabuya "(?) sp.".—Rösler 1998: 34.
Mabuya soqotranus [sic],—Wranik, 1998b: Tab. 1.
Mabuya socotranus [sic].—Wranik, 1998b: Fig. [151].
Mabuya socotrana.—Wranik, 1998b: 150, Tab. 3.
Mabuya socotrana.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Mabuya cf. *socotrana*.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Euprepis socotranus.—Mausfeld & Schmitz, 2003: 165.
Trachylepis socotrana.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126.

This large skink is the second commonest diurnal species of Socotra; we collected it from the sea level up to 1180 m a.s.l. (at Skand), but Schätti & Desvoignes (1999) report it up to 1300 m.

Habitat. Found in most of the habitats of Socotra (including many gardens inside Hadiboh city) the species seems to avoid only the open areas that do not offer enough shelter. In Darsa Island we found it in places with dense bush cover and large stones, while in Samha Island we observed it in rocky hills with very scarce vegetation; in Abd al-Kuri Island we found an individual along a small wady with large thorny *Acacia* bushes.

Original data. Fig. 25. Socotra Island: NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, Timeroh area, Go'o area, Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh, E Noged, Wadi Di Asrhon, Firmihin, Dheroh, Diksam plateau, SW Diksam, Central Noged, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Meyhah area, Plateau W of Qabhete, Neet, Shu'ab inland, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Qeysoh, Qalansiyah, Qalansiyah inland, Ghubbah area, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Mouri plain, Wadi Trubah, Skand, Wadi Ayhaft, Kadheb E, Hadiboh plain, Di Lishah area, Kariyah area, Rokeb area. Samha Island. Darsa Island. Abd al-Kuri Island.

Bibliographic data. Blanford (1881), Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to the Socotran Archipelago: Socotra, Samha, Darsa and Abd al-Kuri islands.

Remarks. Molecular studies (Honda *et al.*, 1999) showed that the large and almost cosmopolitan genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 was paraphyletic; few years later Mausfeld *et al.* (2002) on the basis of rRNA studies split up this *taxon* into four genera and *Mabuya* was restricted to the American species. Mausfeld & Schmitz (2003) then assigned the Socotran species to the Afro-Malagasy clade and termed it *Euprepis socotranus.* Bauer (2003) showed that the name *Euprepis* is invalid and that the generic available name for the African and Middle East *taxa* is *Trachylepis* Fitzinger, 1843. According to Mausfeld & Schmitz (2003) the species *Trachylepis socotrana* is related to the East African and southern Arabian species *Trachylepis brevicollis* Wiegmann, 1837.

Pachycalamus brevis Günther, 1881

Pachycalamus brevis Günther, 1881: 462—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Pachycalamus brevis.—Peters, 1882a: 583.

Pachycalamus brevis.—Gans, 1960: 178.
Pachealamus [sic] *brevis*.—Doe, 1992: 131.
Pachycalamus brevis.—Hallermann, 1998: 201.
Pachycalamus brevis.—Kearney, 2003: 13 (fig. 8).
Pachycalamus brevis.—Gans, 2005: 43.

A burrowing species, rarely detected because of its mainly fossorial habits.

Habitat. It can be observed under stones or beneath rotten vegetation in habitats with rather deep soils (forested valleys, palm grooves along wadis, bushlands). It was reported also among droppings of goats (Schätti & Desvoignes 1999). We have collected it from 20 m of altitude at Wadi Qishn to 380 m south of Rokeb, but the species was collected at Diksam (695 m) by H. Rösler (Rösler & Wranik, 2004) and Schätti & Desvoignes (1999) cited it from Homhil at 700 m.

Original data. Fig. 26. Go'o area, Qeysoh, Wadi Ayhaft, Hadiboh plain, Di Lishah area, Rokeb area.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Loveridge (1941), Gans (1960), Schätti & Gasperetti (1994), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. Our record from Qeysoh palm grove is the first from the western part of the island.

Leptotyphlops filiformis (Boulenger, 1899)

Glauconia filiformis Boulenger 1899: 7—Locus typicus: "Sokotra (Dahamis, 350 feet; Jena-agahan, 1200–2500 feet; and Homhil, 1500–2500 feet)".
Glauconia filiformis.—Boulenger, 1903: 88, Pl. 11.2.
Leptotyphlops filiformis.—Parker, 1949: 20.
Leptotyphlops filiformis.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126.
Leptotyphlops cf. *filiformis*.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 127.
Myriopholis filiformis.—Adalsteinsson, Branch, Trape, Vitt & Hedges, 2009: 11, 28, 38.

This rare worm snake has been previously reported from only few localities in the central and southern part of the island. We have only been able to collect two specimens at the end of January 2009 in a locality at low altitude situated in the western part of the island.

As stated by Schätti & Desvoignes (1999) the drawings in the paper by Hahn (1978) are quite misleading; these drawings were reproduced by Rösler & Wranik (2003: 144). Rösler & Wranik (2006a) compared the lectotype of the species to few specimens held in the collections of the Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig (Bonn) and noted that one specimen presented a larger total length, higher number of dorsal scales and smaller diameter at midbody.

Habitat. We found two specimens under palm leaves on rough soil in a palm grove.

Original data. Fig. 27. Qeysoh.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1899), Steindachner (1903), Rösler & Wranik (2006a), Parker (1949).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. Adalsteinsson *et al.* (2009) "*provisionally assigned* [the worm snakes of Socotra] *to* [the new genus] Myriopholis, *although their isolation on this Gondwana fragment may indicate deeper divergence*" but these authors never analyzed any *Leptotyphlops* from Socotra and based their conclusion only on the morphological data by Rösler & Wranik (2006a). In the absence of genetic evidence and in order to avoid taxonomic instabilty, we prefer to maintain the Socotran worm snakes in the genus *Leptotyphlops* pending further studies on Socotran specimens too.

Leptotyphlops macrurus (Boulenger, 1903)

Glauconia macrura Boulenger 1903: 89—Locus typicus: "Dahamis, 350 feet; Jena-agahan, 1200–2500 feet; and Homhil, 1500–2500 feet".
Glauconia longicauda Boulenger, 1899: 7 (non *Stenostoma longicaudum* Peters).
Glauconia macrura Boulenger, 1903: 89, PI. 11.3 (substitute name for *G. longicauda* Boulenger).

Leptotyphlops macrura.—Parker, 1949: 20.
Leptotyphlops macrurus.—Hahn, 1978: 480, Fig. 2, Tab. 1.
Leptotyphlops macrurus.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126, 127.
Myriopholis macrura.—Adalsteinsson, Branch, Trape, Vitt & Hedges, 2009: 11.

The largest and commonest Socotran worm snake, whose original and bibliographic data are scattered on the whole island ranging from near sea level (south of Sherubrub, Shu'ab area) up to 995 m at Qaroni (Diksam Plateau).

Habitat. Surveys carried out in January 2008, during the rainy season, showed that the species was common in a forested area at Wadi Ayhaft (290 m a.s.l.) with deep soil and scattered stones; it also occurs in other habitats including palm groves, open sandy areas with rocks, sparse shrubs with scattered stones, stony hills with or without vegetation and along wadis.

Original data. Fig. 28. Timeroh area, Diksam plateau, Qabheten area, Shu'ab area, Ghubbah area, Terr Ditrur, Wadi Ayhaft, Hadiboh plain, Rokeb area.

Bibliographic data. Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2006a), Parker (1949).

General distribution. A Socotran endemic.

Leptotyphlops wilsoni Hahn, 1978

Leptotyphlops wilsoni Hahn, 1978: 478, Fig. 1, Tab. 1.—Locus typicus: "Kirschon, Socotra Island; elevation 634 meters".
Leptotyphlops "spp.".—Corkill & Cochrane, 1966: 496.
Leptotyphlops wilsoni.—Hahn, 1980: 82.
Leptotyphlops cf. *wilsoni*.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 527, Pl. 41.
Leptotyphlops wilsoni.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126, 128.
Leptotyphlops sp.—Rösler & Wranik, 2006a: 126, 128.
Myriopholis wilsoni.—Adalsteinsson, Branch, Trape, Vitt & Hedges, 2009: 11, 28, 38.

Known from several localities of the Hajhir massif, with a single old lowland record from Hakari in the Noged plain, recently studied by Rösler & Wranik (2004); our records confirm this scenario.

Habitat. Sparse and dense *Croton* and *Buxus* shrublands with scattered trees (*Dracaena* and *Boswellia*), forested areas, palm groves near the seacoast, along wadis, often with scattered stones, up to 995 m (Qaroni).

Original data. Fig. 29. Go'o area, Diksam plateau, Central Noged, Wadi Ayhaft.

Bibliographic data. Corkill & Cochrane (1966), Hahn (1978), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004, 2006a).

General distribution. A Socotran endemic.

Remarks. Rösler & Wranik (2004) observed relevant morphological variation among the specimens examined and provisionally assigned them to *Leptotyphlops* cf. *wilsoni*. Two years later these authors further improved their taxonomical hypotheses assigning part of the material they studied to *Leptotyphlops wilsoni* and part to a new undescribed species "*Leptotyphlops* sp." (Rösler & Wranik, 2006a). Adalsteinsson *et al*. (2009) followed Rösler & Wranik (2006a) indicating four species of worm snakes (*Myriopholis*) distributed on Socotra Island. Since Rösler & Wranik (2006a) have never formally described their unnamed taxon, we adopt here a conservative approach considering all these specimens as conspecific, pending further evidence.

Typhlops socotranus Boulenger, 1889

Typhlops socotranus Boulenger, 1889: 362—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Typhlops sp.—Günther 1881: 462.
Typhlops socotranus.—Boulenger, 1893: 21, Pl. 2.2[a]–c.

This species is known from only few specimens: Steindachner (1903) reports it from Aqarhi [Hakari] in the southern plain (Noged), and an area North of Ras Shu'ab; Boulenger (1889) cites a specimen from Dahamis [in the Hadibu Plain]; Rösler & Wranik (2004) observed two additional individuals from Hasaant (South of Hajhir).

Habitat. We collected this species in stony highlands with *Croton* bushes, sparse shrubs with scattered stones, humid forest with deep soil, between 290 and 550 m a.s.l.

Original data. Fig. 30. Ma'alah plateau, Wadi Ayhaft, Rokeb area.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1889, 1893), Steindachner (1903), Parker (1949), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. Rösler & Wranik (2004) report that the species "*inhabits areas with little moisture and vegetation*", our observation agree with them, as we also found two individuals in a very humid forested area at Wadi Ayhaft (290 m a.s.l.).

Ditypophis vivax Günther, 1881

Ditypophis vivax Günther, 1881: 462—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Ditypophis vivax.—Peters, 1882b: 46.
Didypophis [sic] [*vivax*].—Dowling & Duellman, 1978: 112b.l.
Ditypophis vivax.—Leviton & Aldrich, 1984: XXIII.

This species is regarded as a nocturnal species (Rösler & Wranik, 2004), and our data agree with this reference as active individuals were found only during nocturnal transects. Inactive specimens were recorded during day, resting under stones. *Ditypophis vivax* is not *"confined to the mountainous regions"* as reported by Rösler & Wranik (2004) as we collected it also in several localities at low altitude including Temedeh (10 m a.s.l.) along North-Eastern coast and Wadi Di Fa'ar North of Mahfirhin (42 m a.s.l.) in Eastern Noged; our highest altitude record is Wadi Zeriq (870 m) in the Diksam Plateau.

Habitat. We observed the species in sparse *Croton* and *Jatropha* bushlands, stone walls in date palm groves and stony slopes.

Original data. Fig. 31. NE Coast, Homhil, Momi plateau, E Noged, Firmihin, Dheroh, SW Diksam, Plateau W of Qabhete, Ma'alah plateau, Qalansiyah, Ghubbah area, Wadi Ayhaft.

Bibliographic data. Boulenger (1903), Steindachner (1903), Parker (1949), Corkill (1962), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to Socotra Island.

Remarks. A drawing of the maxilla is available in Parker (1949), while a representation the hemipenis is present in Rösler & Wranik (2004). The molecular investigations by Nagy *et al.* (2003) allocated *Ditypophis* in the subfamily Pseudoxyrhophiinae, later included by Zaher *et al.* (2009) in the family Lamprophiidae.

Hemerophis socotrae (Günther, 1881)

Zamenis socotræ Günther, 1881: 463, Pl. 41—Locus typicus: "Socotra".
Zamenis socotrae.—Peters, 1882b: 46.
Zamenis sokotrae [sic].—Steindachner, 1903: 14.
Coluber socotrae.—Parker, 1949: 44.
Coluber socotranus [sic].—Balletto, 1968: 212 (lapsus calami).
Coluber socotrae.—Schätti & Wilson, 1986: 399.
Coluber socotrae.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Coluber cf. *socotrae*.—Joger, 2000: 343.
Hemerophis socotrae.—Schätti & Utiger, 2001: 926.
Hemerophis socotrae.—Rösler & Wranik, 2004: 528, pl. 42–43.

This snake is known from several localities spread over the whole of Socotra Island, from sea level to about 900 m at Dihaal Pass in upper Wadi Qishn (Schätti & Desvoignes, 1999); it is also known from "the Brothers" (Darsa and Samha).

Habitat. We observed the species in sparse shrublands (*Limonium, Suaeda, Croton, Euphorbia*), on sandy and stony ground, inside the sinkhole near Gubbah, from near sea level up to 696 m a.s.l in the Ma'alah Plateau.

Original data. Fig. 32. Socotra Island: NE Coast, Homhil, Qa'arah area, Qabheten area, Shu'ab area, Ma'alah plateau, Ghubbah area, Mori West, Terr Ditrur, Mouri plain, Hadiboh plain, Di Lishah area. Darsa Island (shedded skins).

Bibliographic data. Steindachner (1903), Parker (1949), Corkill & Cochrane (1966), Showler (1994), Wranik (1998b), Schätti & Desvoignes (1999), Schätti & Utiger (2001), Rösler & Wranik (2004).

General distribution. Endemic to the Socotran Archipelago: Samha, Darsa and Socotra Islands.

Remarks. This species, originally described as *Zamenis socotrae*, was assigned by Schätti & Utiger (2001) to the new monotypic genus *Hemerophis* on the basis of morphology and mitochondrial gene sequences. According to these authors the species "*branched off from a hypotetical ancestral stock prior to the radiation leading to recent Old World racer genera*" and "*there is reason to believe that* H. socotrae *is phylogenetically closest to Afrotropical, and possibily Malagasy, colubrids"*. These results have been confirmed by subsequent studies by Nagy *et al.* (2003, 2004) and Schätti & Monsch (2004).

Probably *H. socotrae* belongs to an ancient lineage of Gondwanan elements now extinct in the continents, and surviving only in remote and isolated islands such as Socotra and Madagascar.

Conclusions

The Socotran herpetofauna is extremely interesting, given its high and uncommon endemicity rate, and the presence of ancient lineages of Gondwanan origin (Schätti & Utiger, 2001, Nagy *et al.*, 2003), often basal to more recent relatives occurring on mainland (Macey *et al.* 2008). Another peculiarity is the occurrence of an intra-island speciation and, in some cases, radiation of different genera (i.e. *Pristurus, Hemidactylus, Haemodracon, Leptotyphlops*), and the evidence of some closely related species showing a clear altitudinal vicariance, such as *Hemidactylus dracaenacolus* and *H. granti*, *Pristurus guichardi* and *P. obsti*, or *P. insignis* and *P. insignoides*, while other species can be found in sympatry but differ greatly in size, as is the case of *Haemodracon ribeckii* and *Haemodracon trachyrhinus*.

Despite its great scientific interest and the avaliability of a rather rich literature, the herpetofauna of the Socotran Archipelago is still poorly known; up to now many species were known from a very limited number of specimens from a few localities, and their supposed rarity was based on anecdotical reports. Also the systematics of some groups is still unresolved (Rösler & Wranik, 2004, 2006), as evidenced by recent discovery of new species (Sindaco *et al.*, 2009), as well as their relationships.

The lack of knowledge of the biology and distribution of most of the species and the systematics of some genera (e.g. *Pristurus* and *Hemidactylus*) make difficult to assess proper management and conservation plans for the most endangered species of the archipelago.

The aim of this paper was to fill one of these gaps by providing an updated picture of the distribution of the reptile fauna of the Socotran Archipelago on the basis of more robust field data. The results show that many species previously considered rare and localized are much more widespread than it was thought on the basis of the previous published data.

Some of the species are widespread in different habitats where are often very common, namely *Pristurus sokotranus, Trachylepis socotrana, Mesalina balfouri, Hemidactylus homoeolepis*; other are widespread but less abundant like *Chamaeleo monachus, Haemodracon trachyrhinus, Hemidactylus pumilio, Ditypophis vivax, Hemerophis socotrae*.

Many *taxa* are associated with specific habitats like: *Haemodracon riebeckii, Pristurus insignis, Hemidactylus inintellectus* on cliffs, rock outcrops and large boulders; *Pristurus obsti* and *Pristurs guichardi* on branches and trunks of trees and medium size shrubs; *Hakaria simonyi* in areas with good vegetation cover.

Fossorial reptiles belonging to the genera *Leptotyphlops, Typhlops* and *Pachycalamus*, although rarely detected because of their lifestyle, seem less rare than previously suspected.

Finally, the introduced species *Hemidactylus flaviviridis* and *Hemidactylus robustus*, are common only within and around villages and do not seem to have invasive habits that might affect the authochtonous ones, as well as *Pristurus abdelkuri* in Socotra.

Furthermore our data suggest that it would be important to promote action plans for the most endangered species and especially the highland endemics, whose distribution is limited to the Hajhir massif like: *Hemidactylus granti, Pristurus insignoides*, and especially the critically endangered *Hemidactylus dracaenacolus*, probably one of the reptiles with the smallest distribution range in the world.

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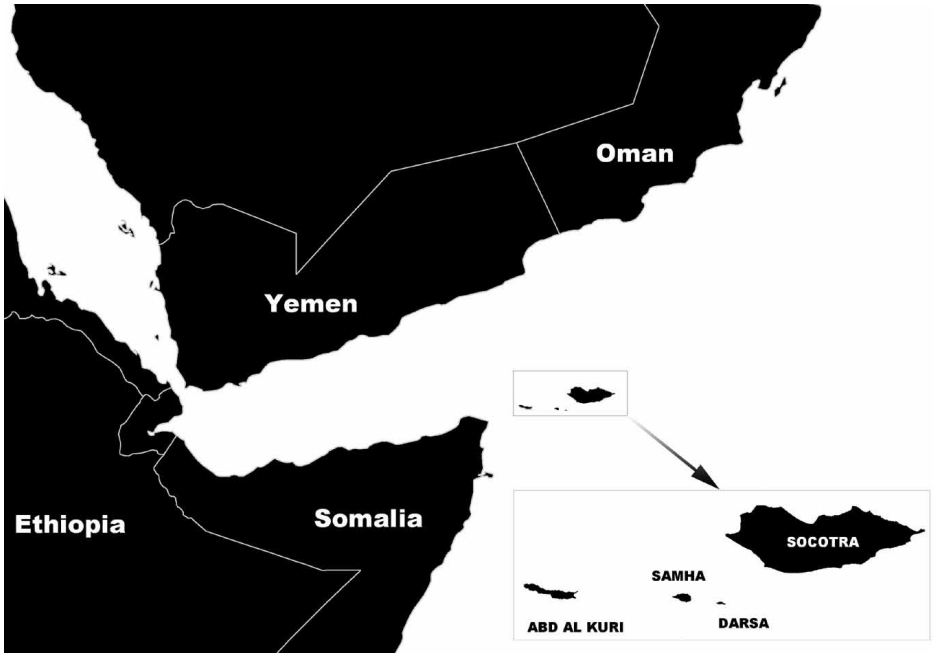


FIGURE 1. The geographic position of the Socotran Archipelago.

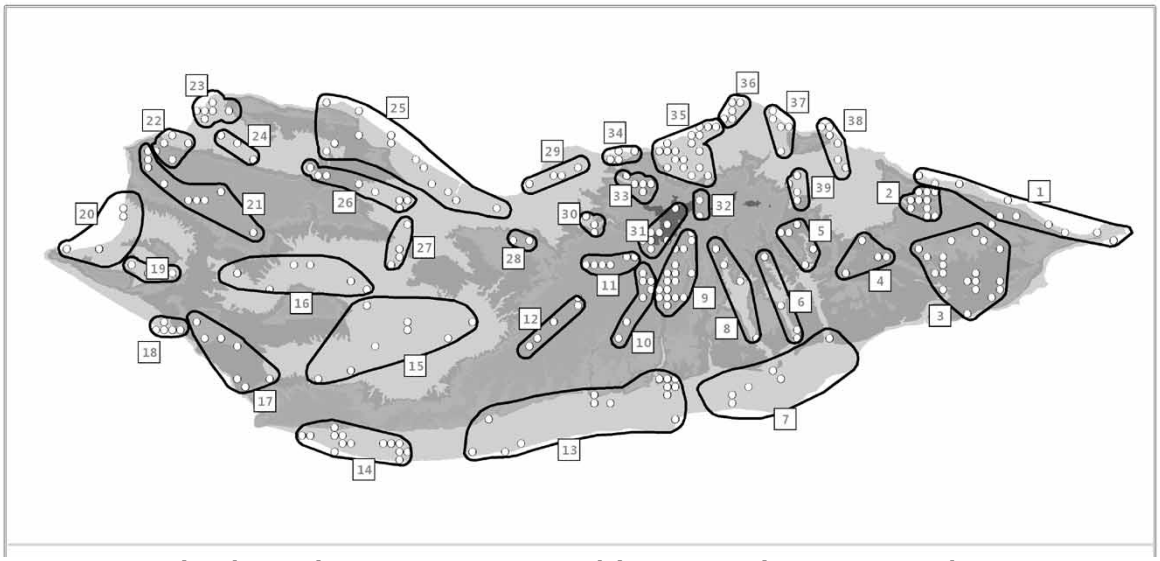
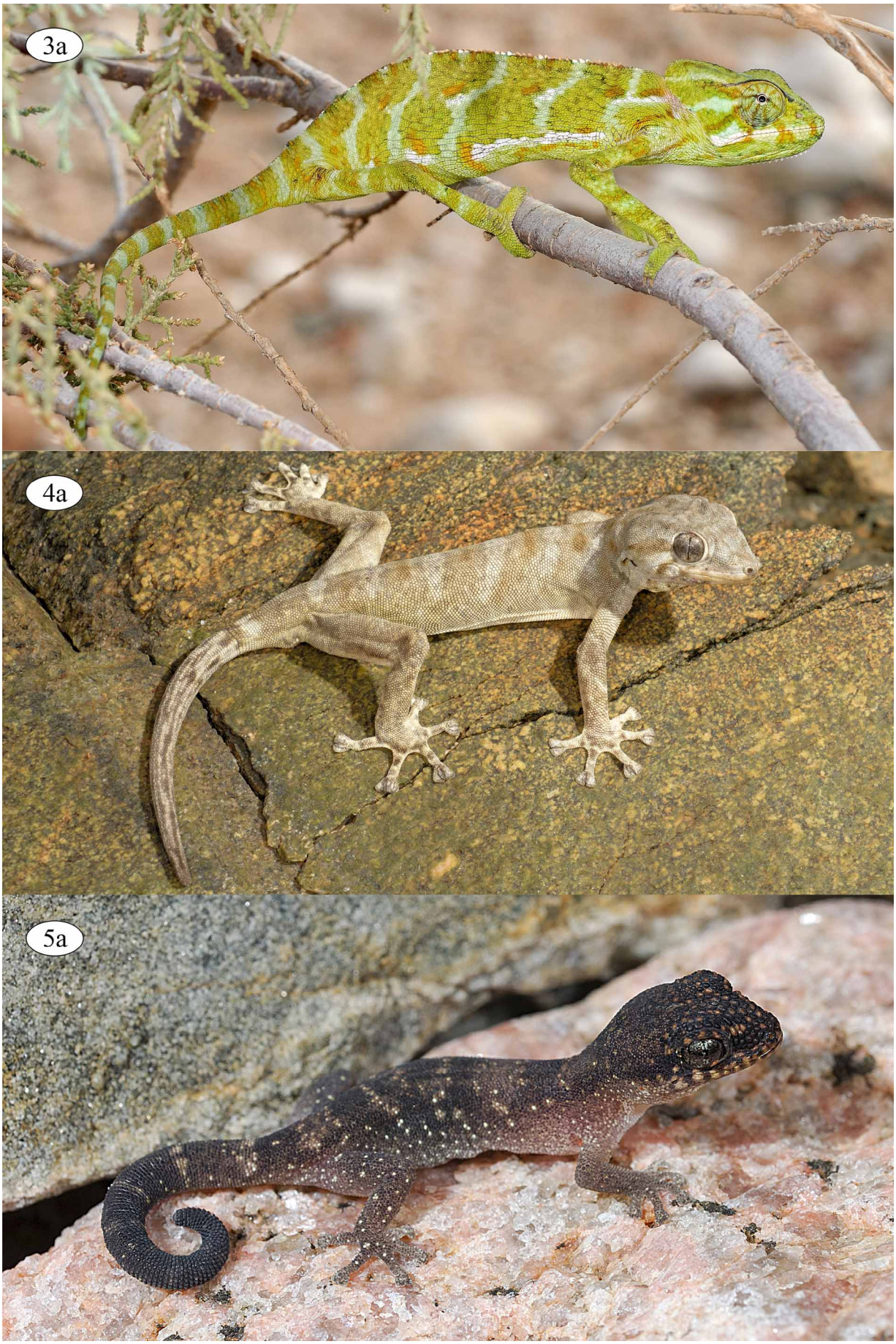


FIGURE 2. Areas cited in the Results. 1—NE Coast; 2—Homhil; 3—Momi plateau; 4—Timeroh area; 5—Go'o area; 6—Wadi Di-Fa'rhoh; 7—E Noged; 8—Wadi Di Asrhon; 9—Firmihin; 10—Dheroh; 11—Diksam plateau; 12—Diksam SW; 13—Central Noged; 14—Qa'arah area; 15—Qabheten area; 16—Meyhah area; 17—Plateau W of Qabhete; 18—Neet; 19—Shu'ab inland; 20—Shu'ab area; 21—Ma'alah plateau; 22—Qeysoh; 23—Qalansiyah; 24—Qalansiyah inland; 25—Ghubbah area; 26—Mori West; 27—Terr Ditrur; 28—Di Rohan; 29—Mouri plain; 30—Wadi Trubah; 31—Skand; 32—Adho Di Meleh; 33—Wadi Ayhaft; 34—Kadheb E; 35—Hadiboh plain; 36—Howlef; 37—Di Lishah area; 38—Kariyah area; 39—Rokeb area; 40—Darsa; 41—Samha; 42—Abd al-Kuri. Empty dots indicate sampling sites surveyed by the authors on a UTM grid 1x1 km.



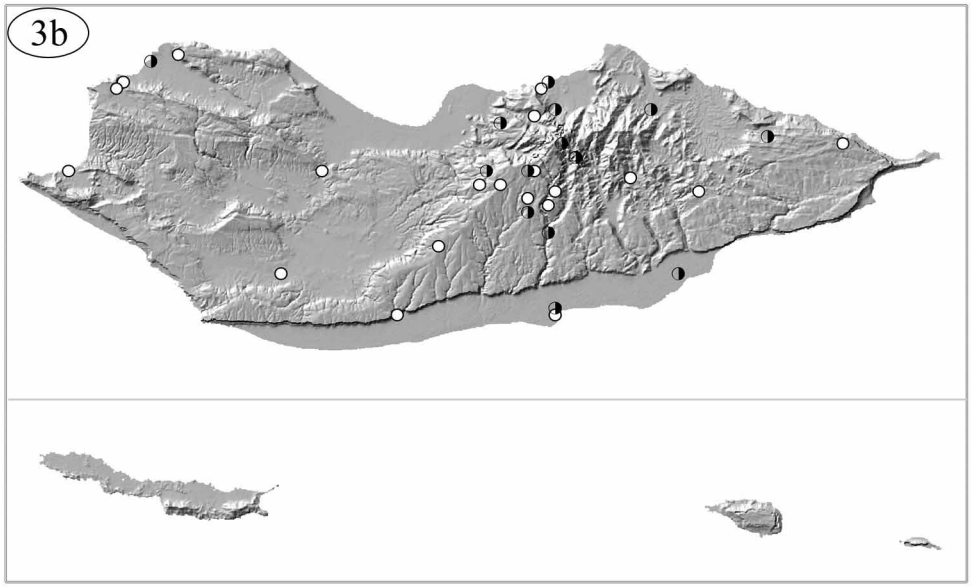


Fig. 3 – *Chamaeleo monachus*
(Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

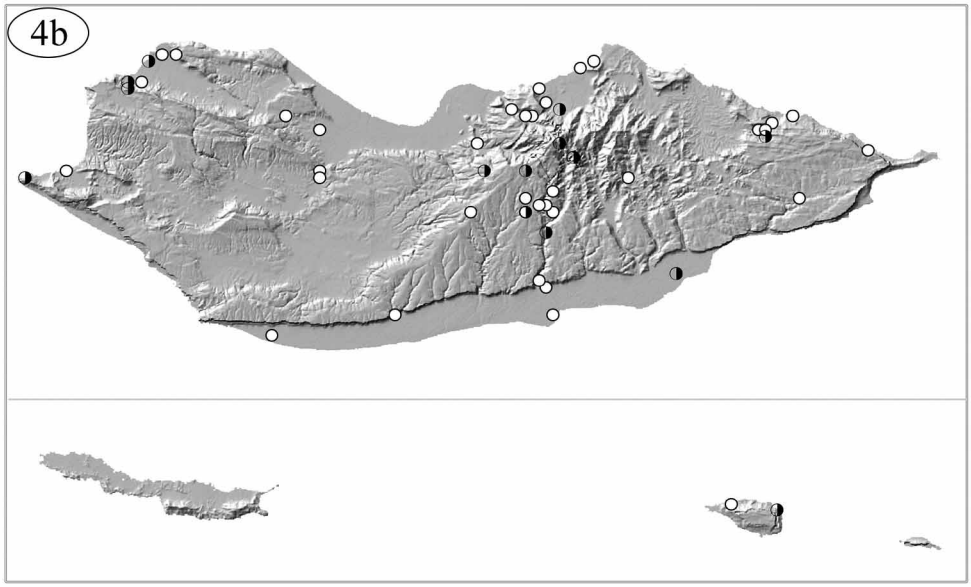


Fig. 4 - *Haemodracon riebeckii*
(Symbols as in Fig. 3).

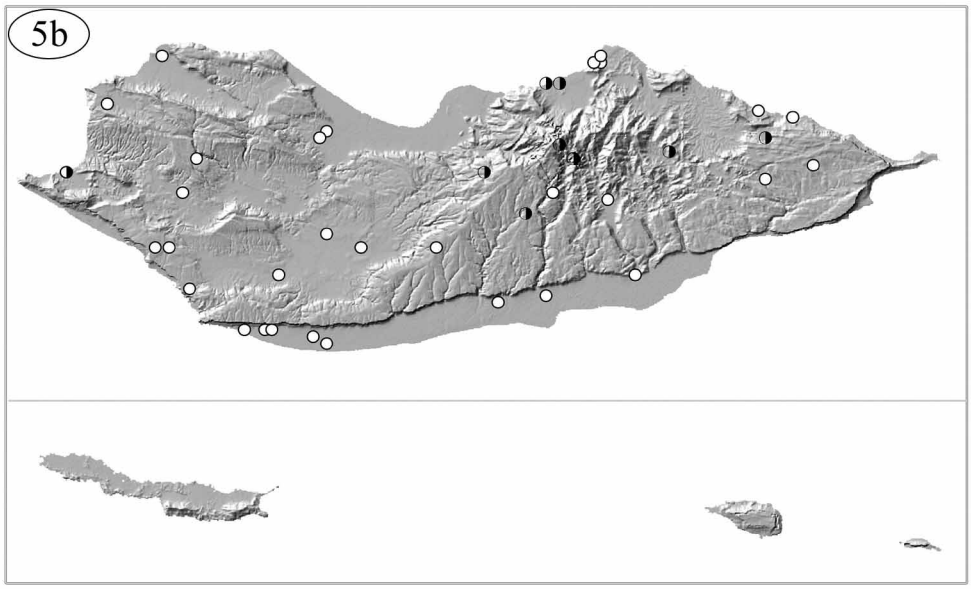
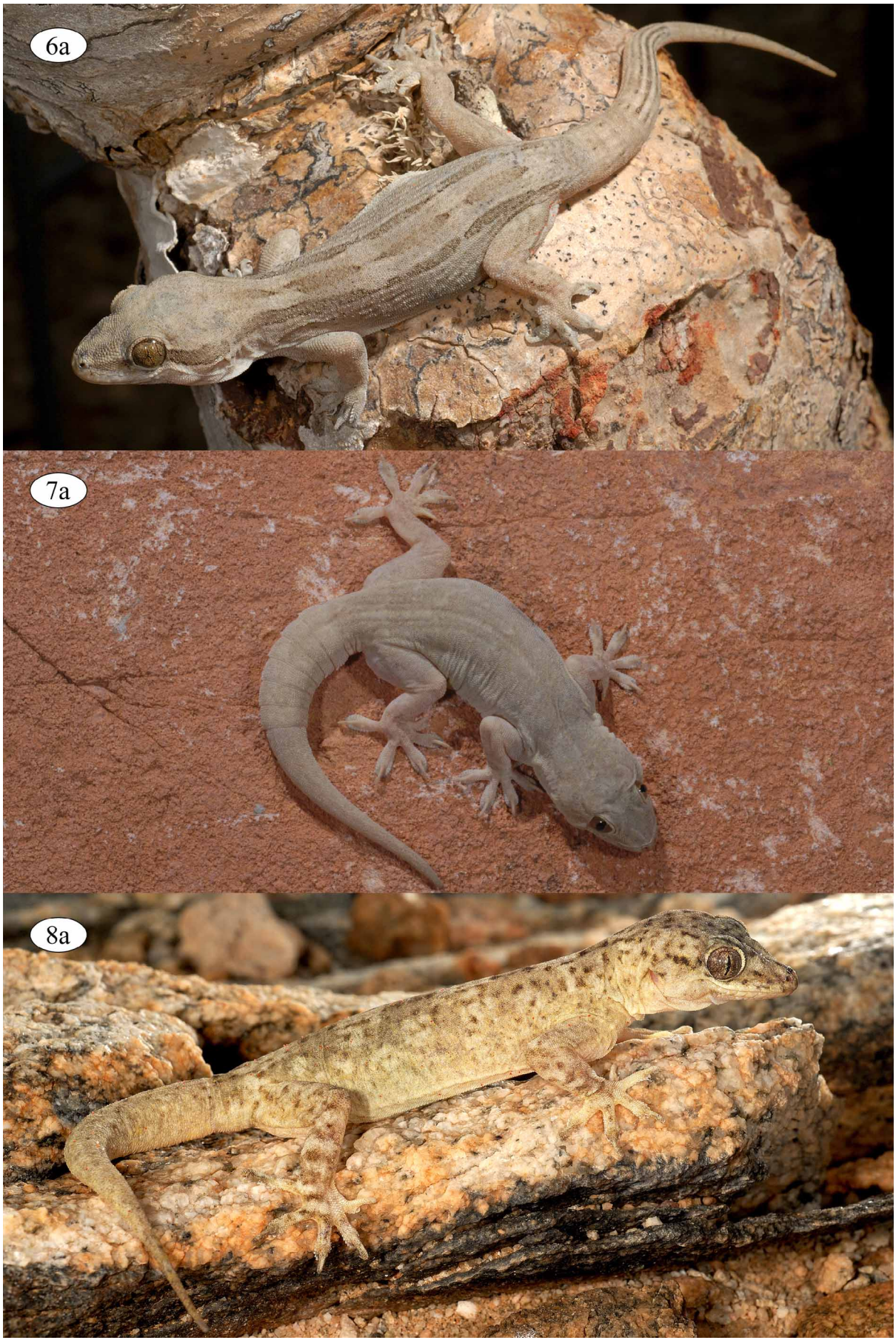


Fig. 5 - *Haemodracon trachyrhinus*
(Symbols as in Fig. 3).



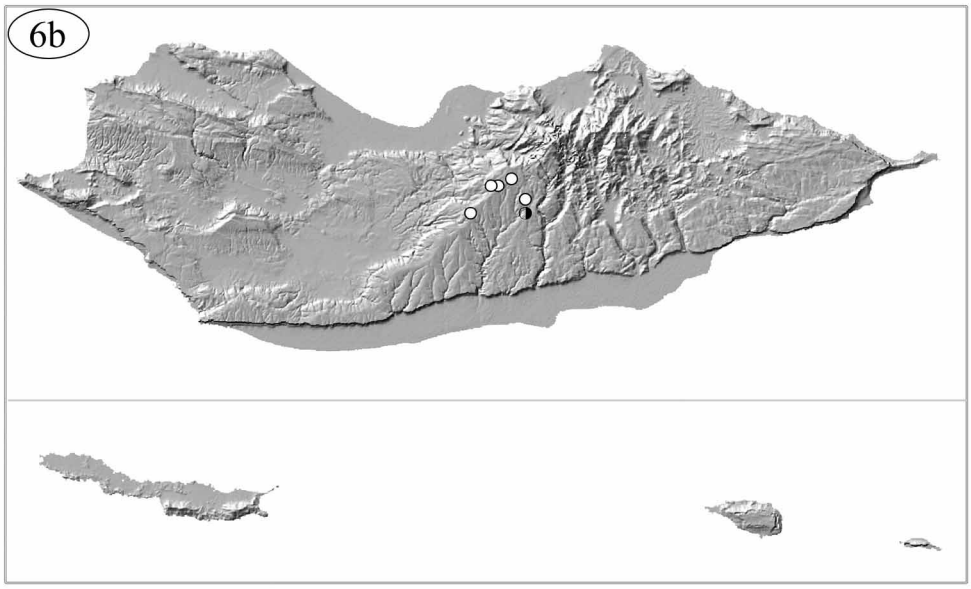


Fig. 6 – *Hemidactylus dracaenacolus* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

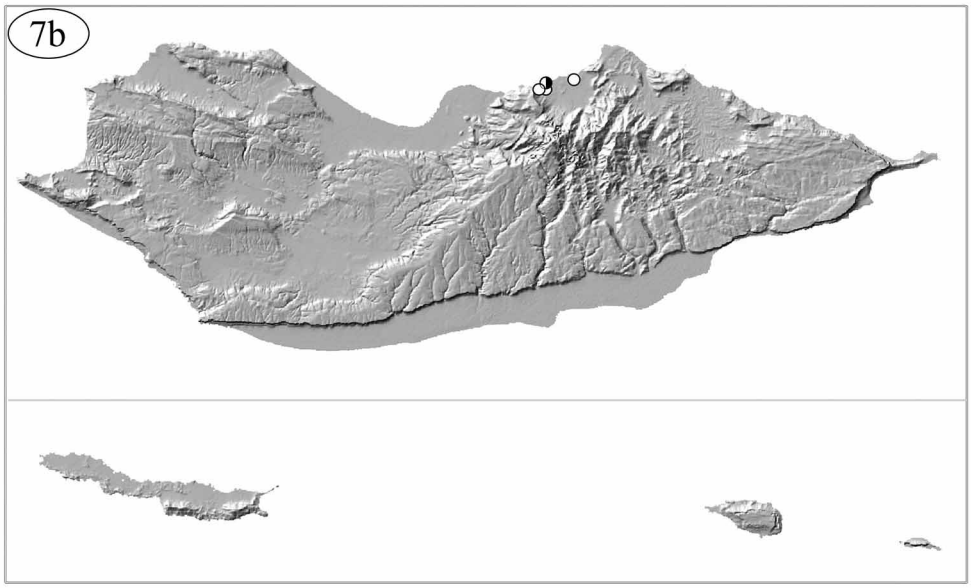


Fig. 7 - *Hemidactylus flaviviridis* (Symbols as in Fig. 6).

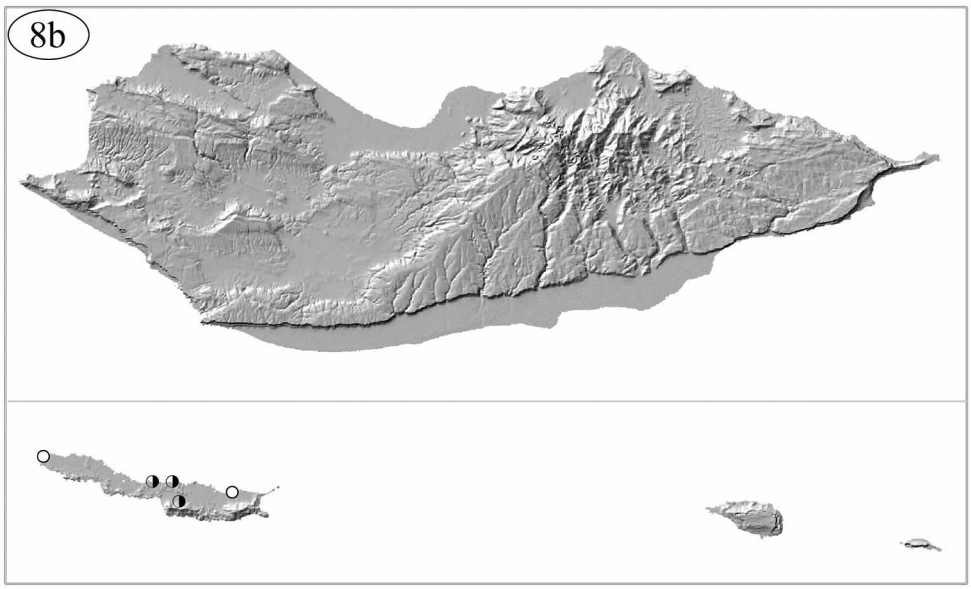


Fig. 8 - *Hemidactylus forbesii* (Symbols as in Fig. 6).

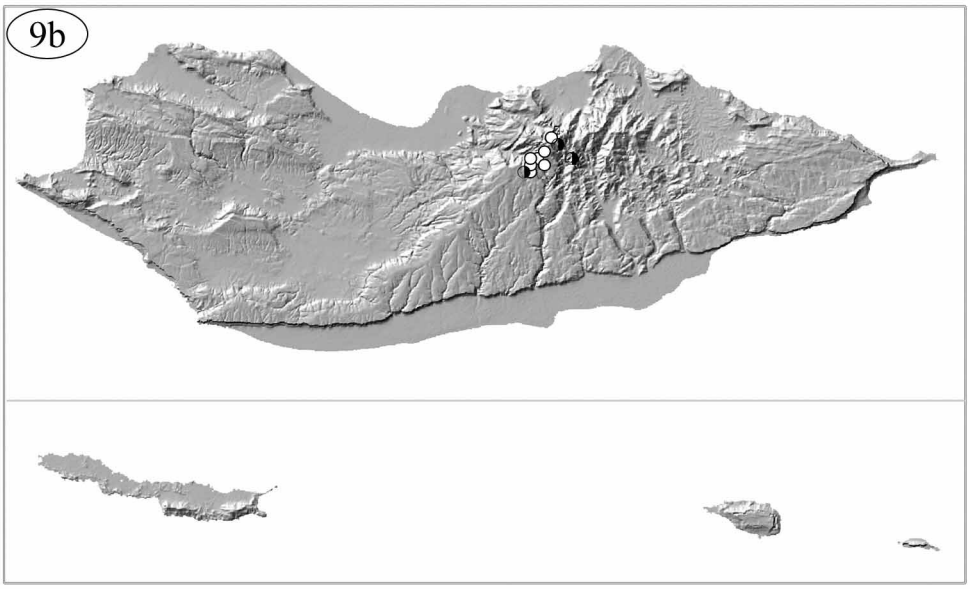


Fig. 9 – *Hemidactylus granti*
(Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

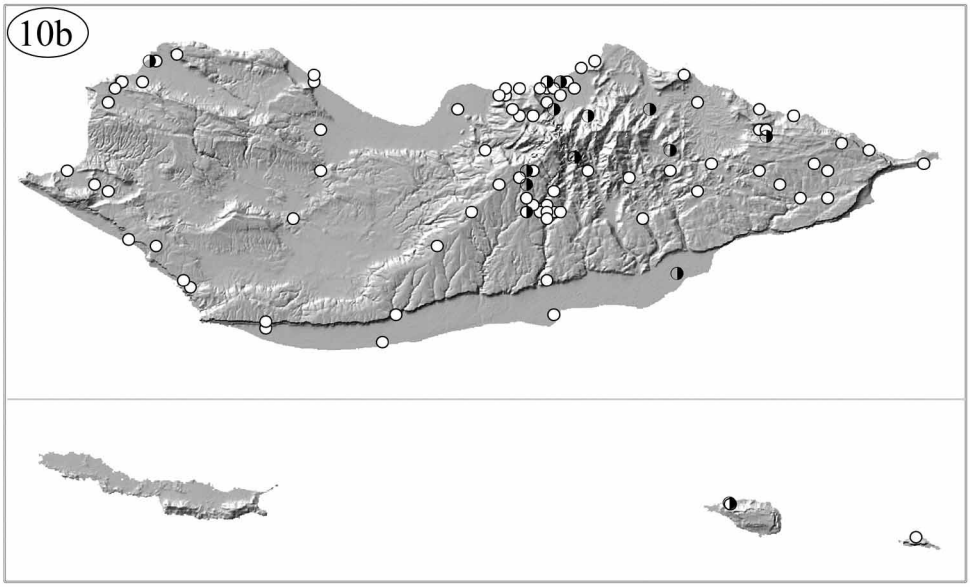


Fig. 10 - *Hemidactylus homoeolepis*
(Symbols as in Fig. 9).

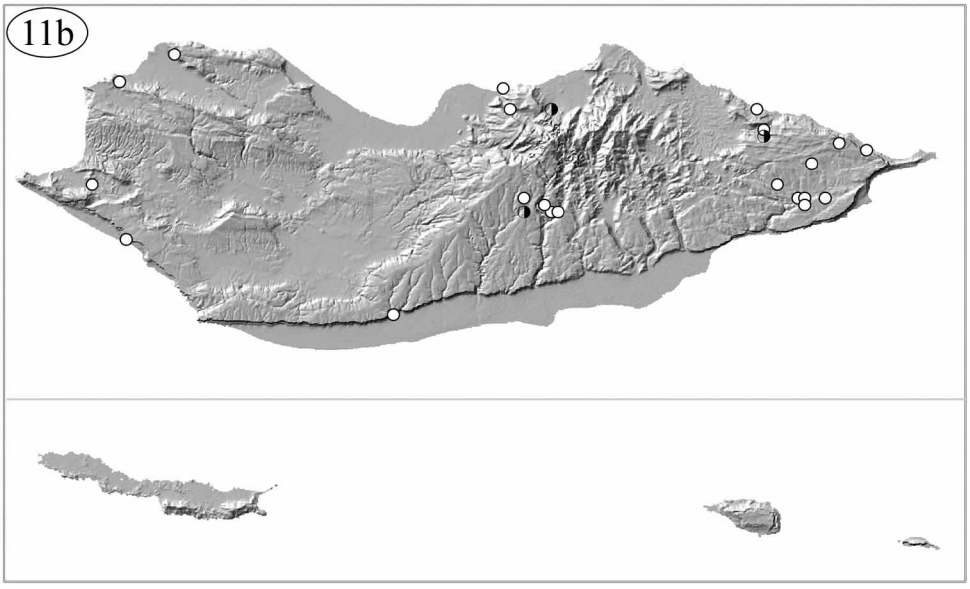
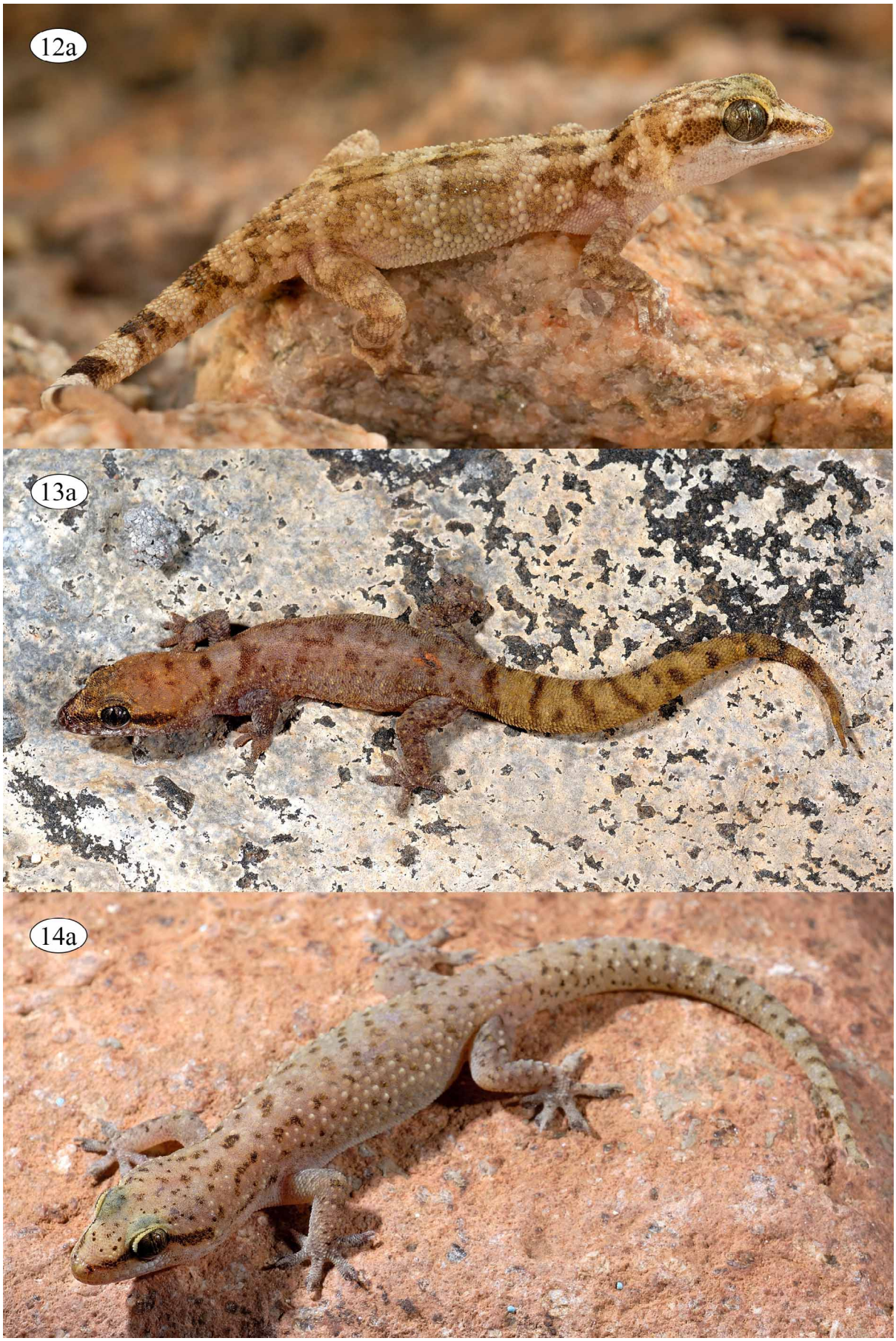


Fig. 11 - *Hemidactylus inintellectus*
(Symbols as in Fig. 9).



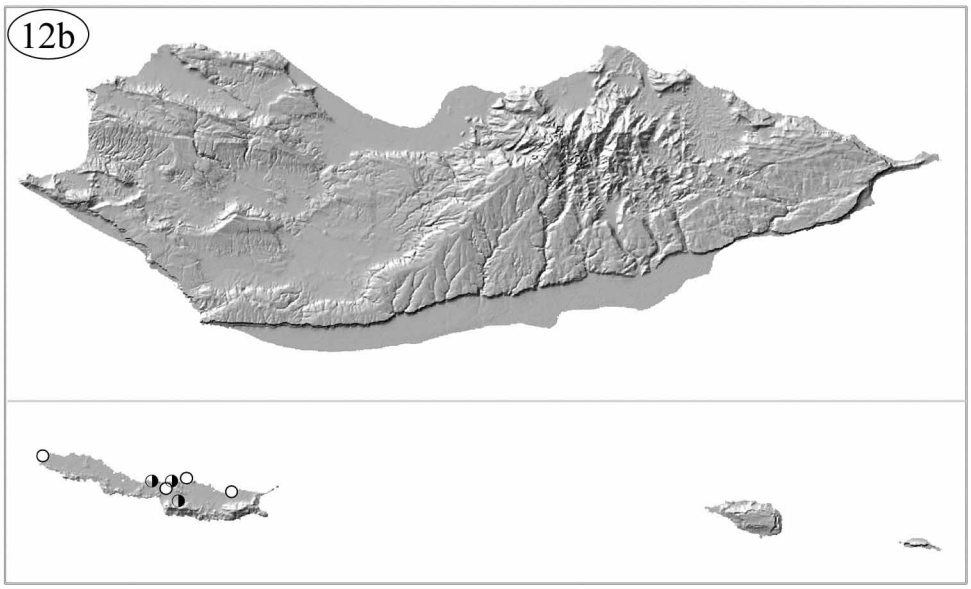


Fig. 12 – *Hemidactylus oxyrhinus* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

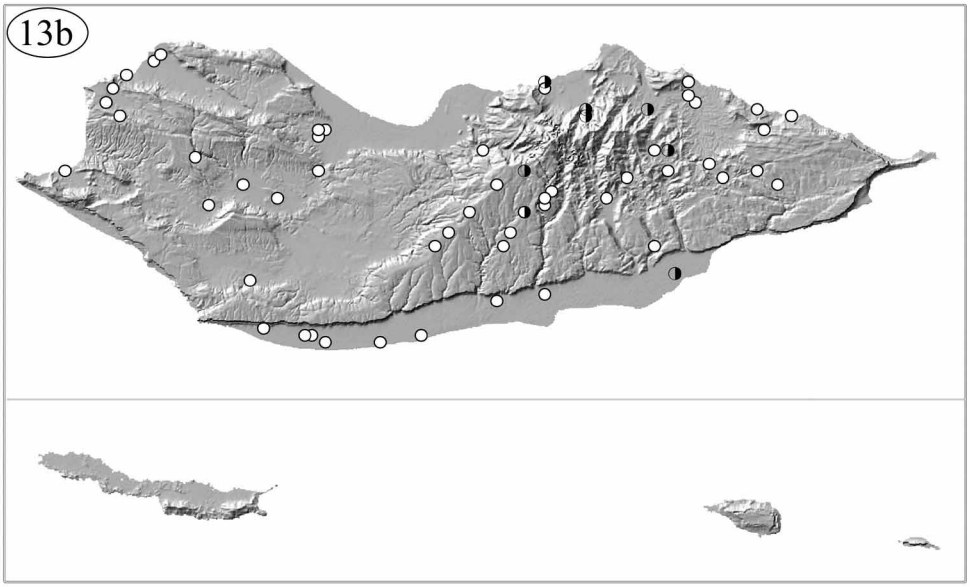


Fig. 13 - *Hemidactylus pumilio* (Symbols as in Fig. 12).

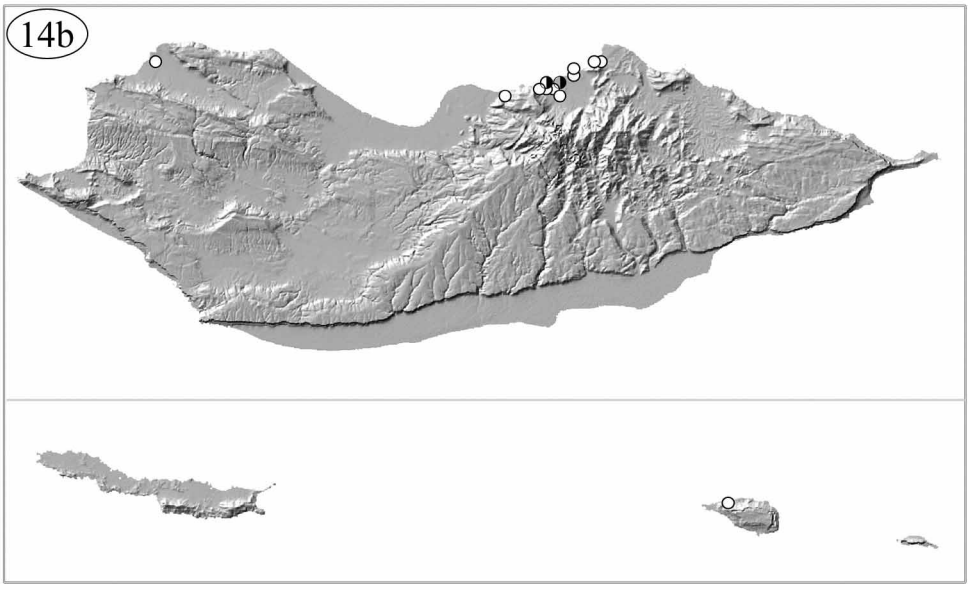
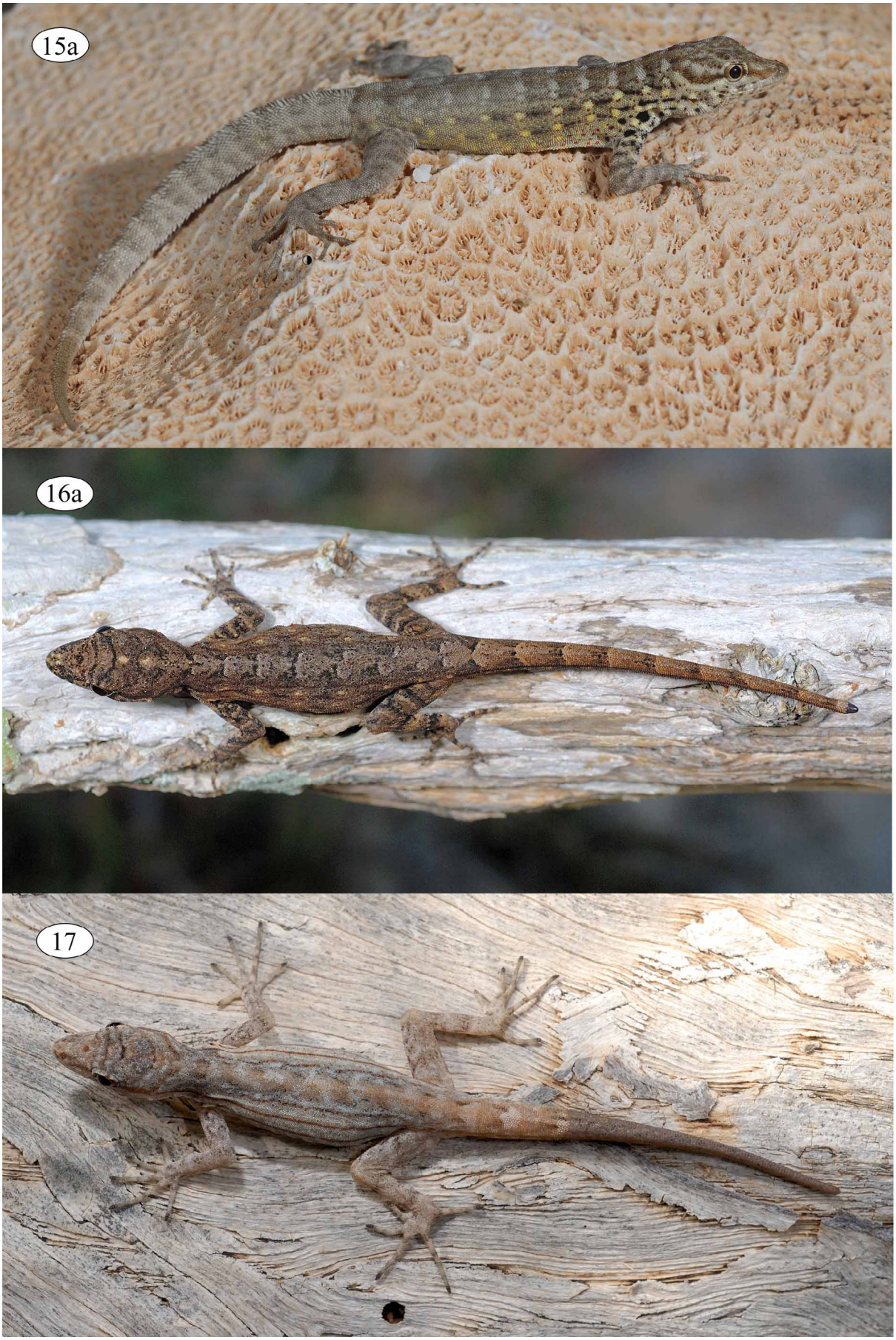


Fig. 14 - *Hemidactylus robustus* (Symbols as in Fig. 12).



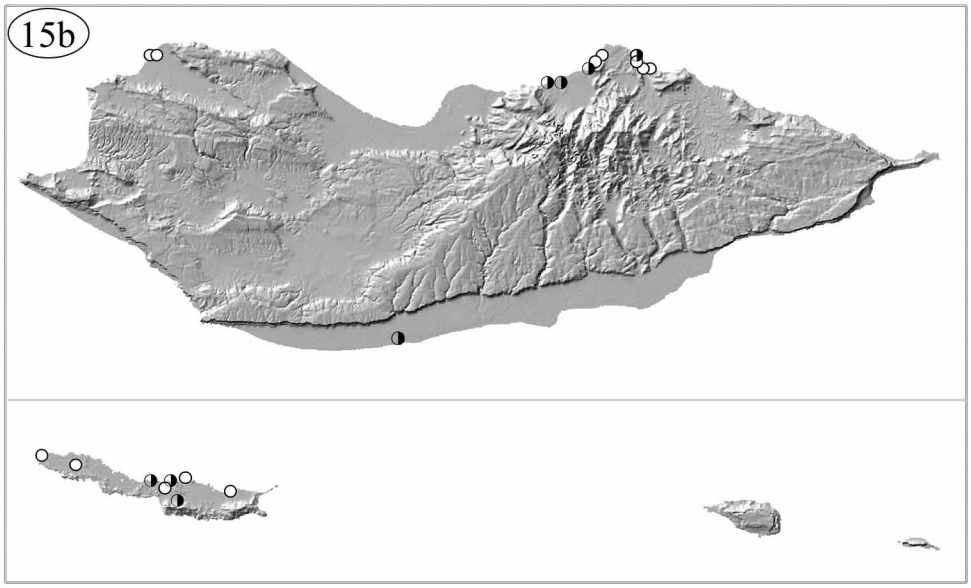


Fig. 15 – *Pristurus abdelkuri* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

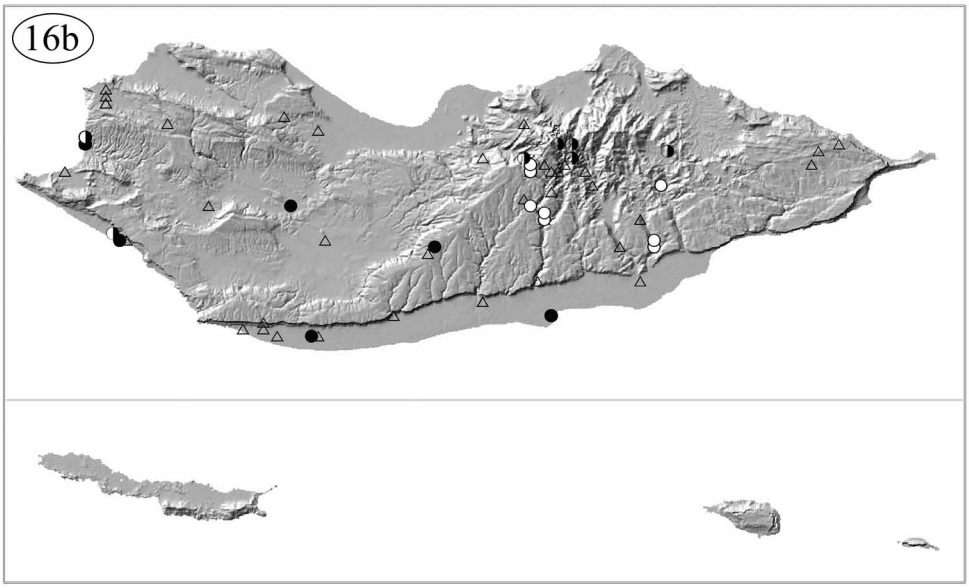


Fig. 16a - *Pristurus guichardi*
Fig. 16b - Distribution of *P. guichardi* and *P. obsti*. Black dots = *P. obsti* confirmed by genetical analyses; white dots = *P. guichardi* confirmed by genetical analyses; Empty triangle = original data of *P. guichardi* or *P. obsti*; half black/empty dots = *P. guichardi* bibliographic data; half black/white dots = *P. obsti* bibliographic data).

Fig. 17 - *Pristurus obsti*

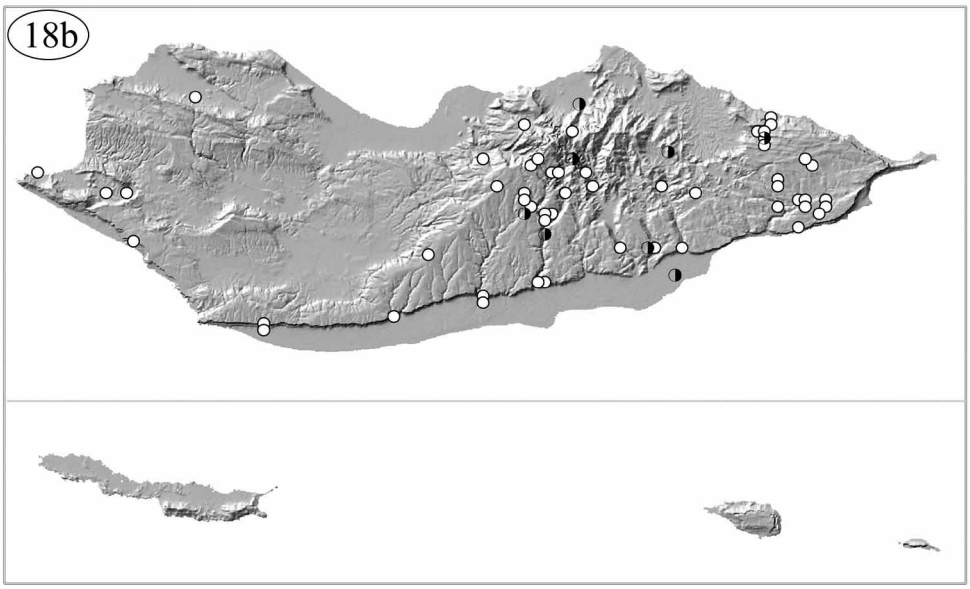


Fig. 18 – *Pristurus insignis* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

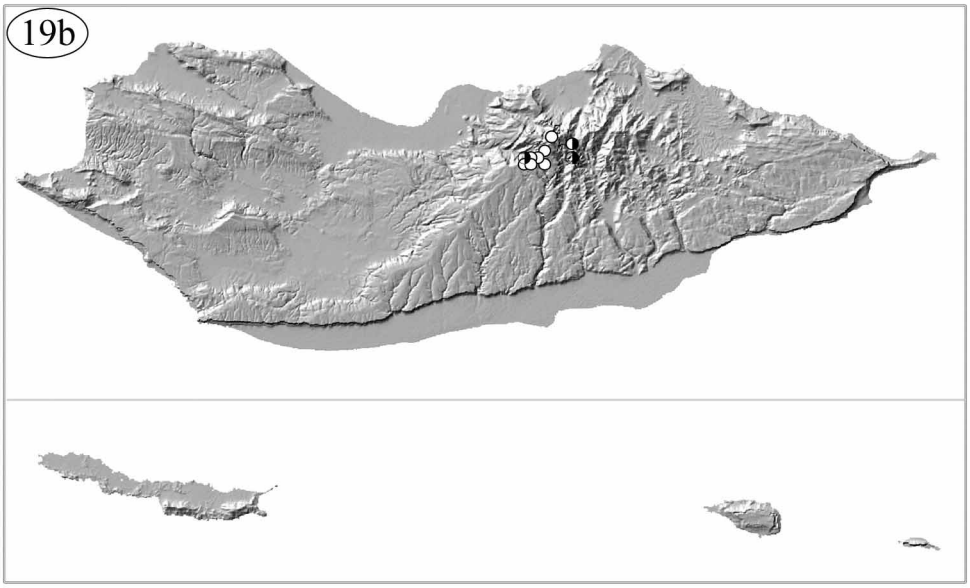


Fig. 19 - *Pristurus insignoides* (Symbols as in Fig. 18).

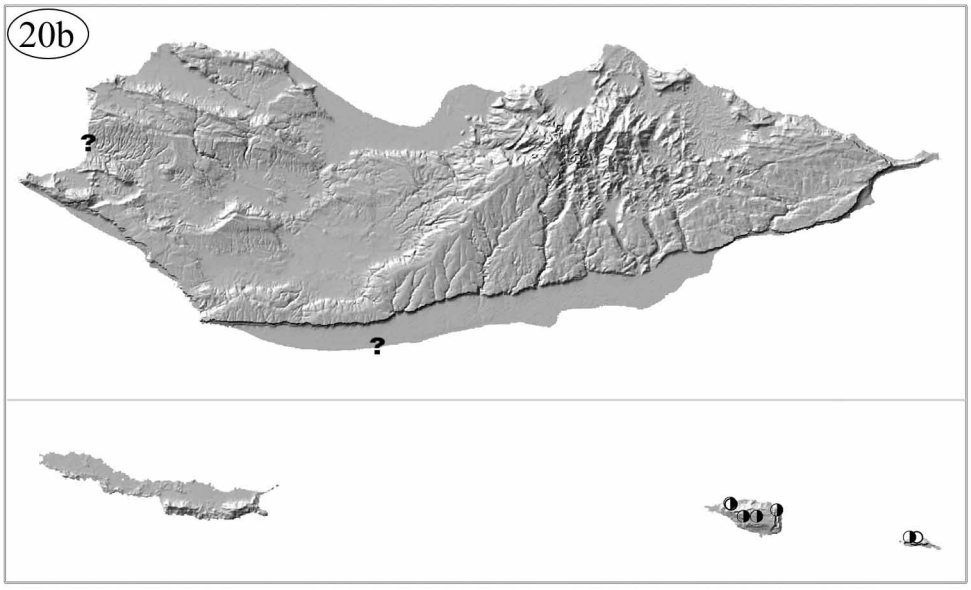


Fig. 20 - *Pristurus samhaensis* (Symbols as in Fig. 18).

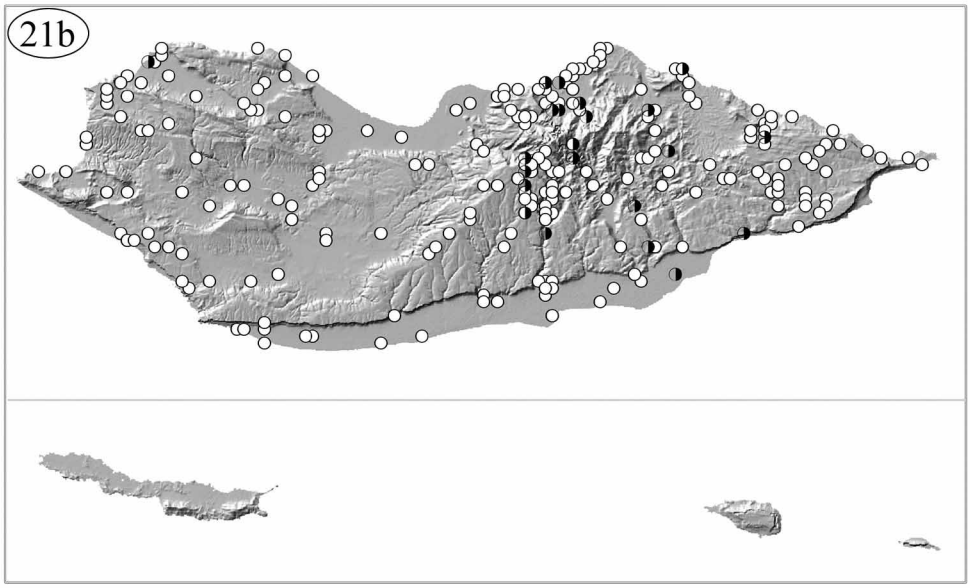


Fig. 21 – *Pristurus sokotranus*
(Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

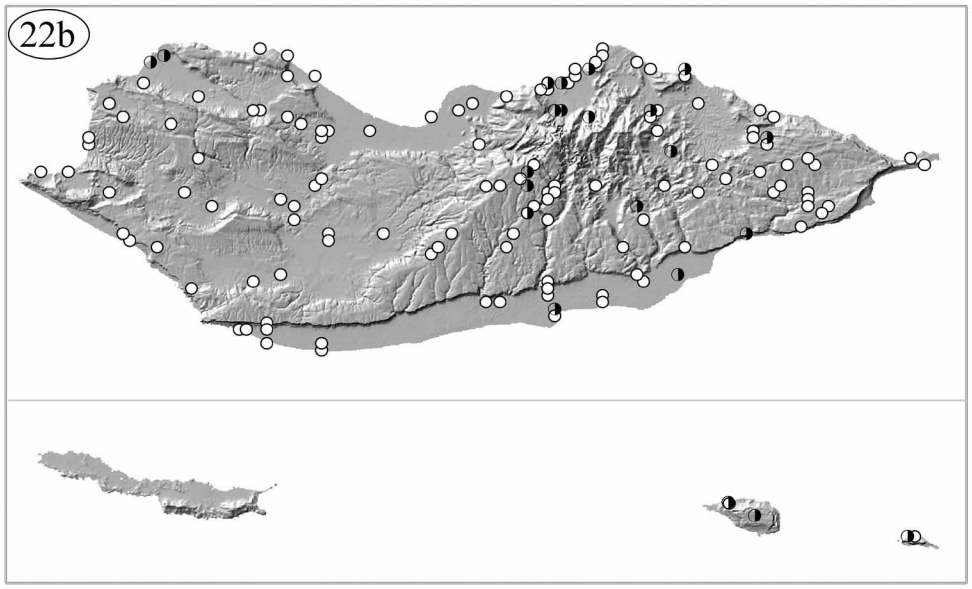


Fig. 22 - *Mesalina balfouri*
(Symbols as in Fig. 21).

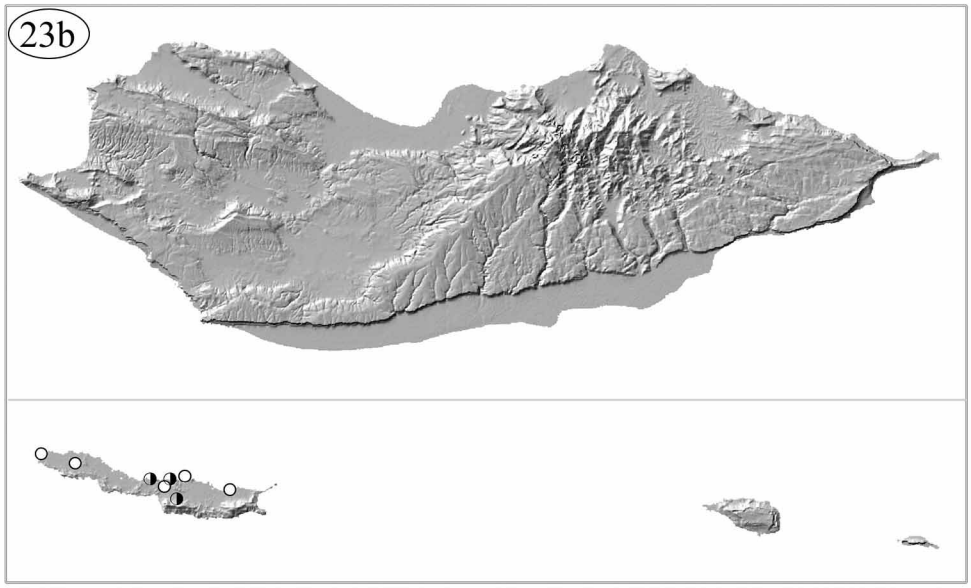


Fig. 23 - *Mesalina kuri*
(Symbols as in Fig. 21).

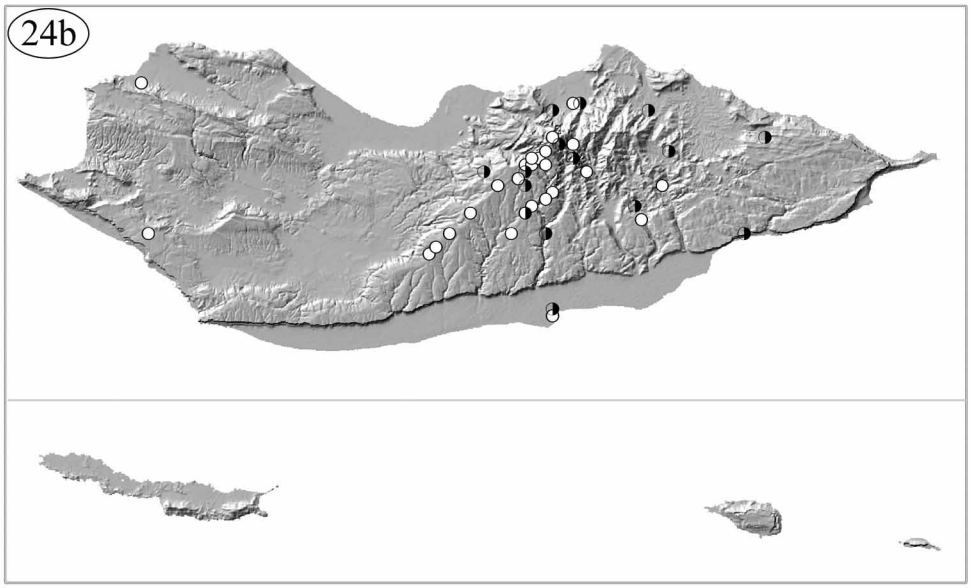


Fig. 24 – *Hakaria simonyi* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

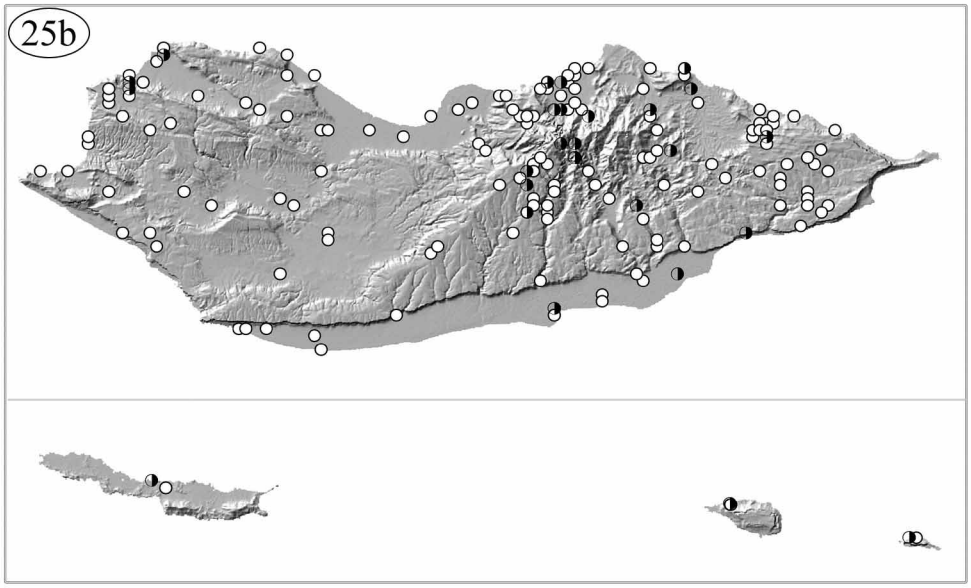


Fig. 25 - *Trachylepis socotrana* (Symbols as in Fig. 24).

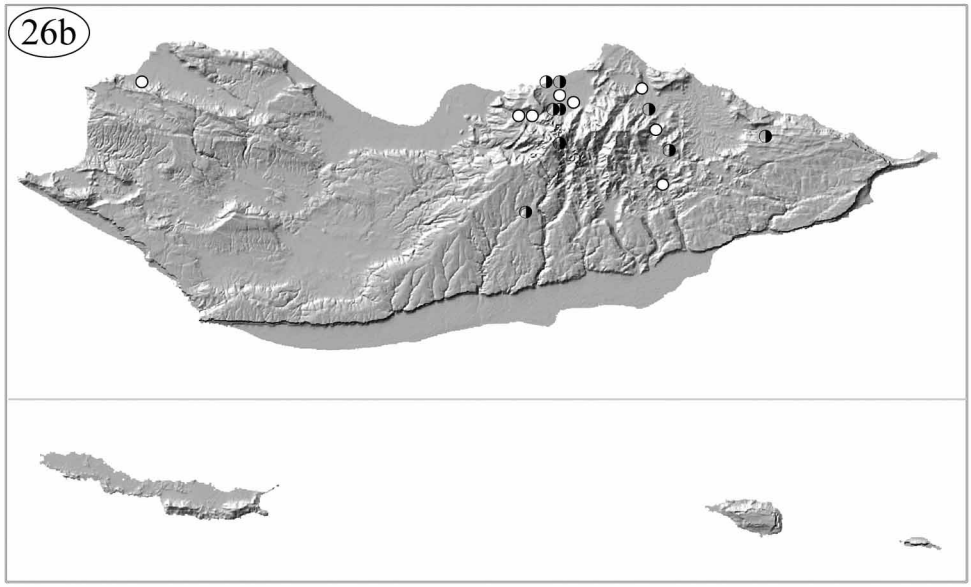
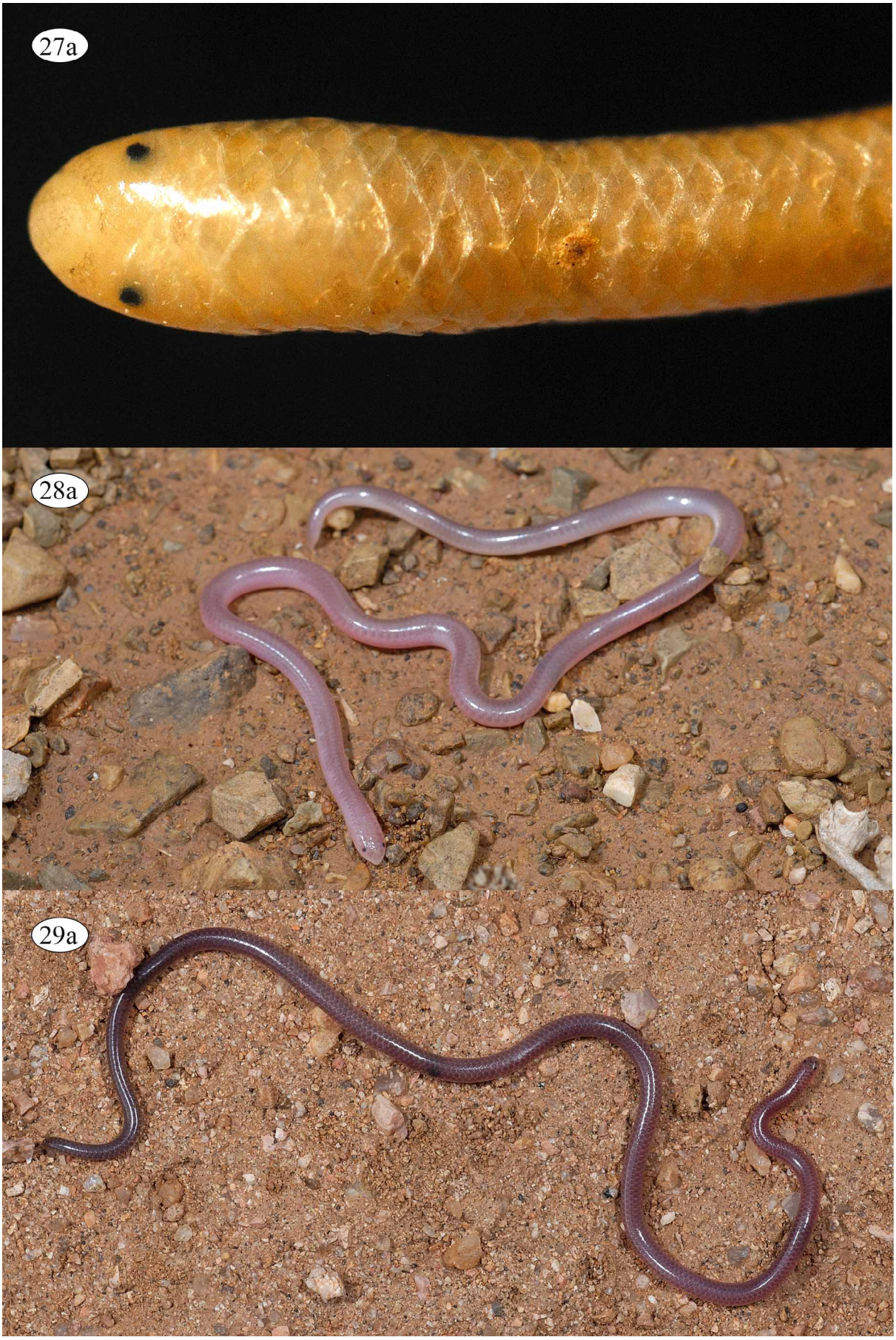


Fig. 26 - *Pachycalamus brevis* (Symbols as in Fig. 24).



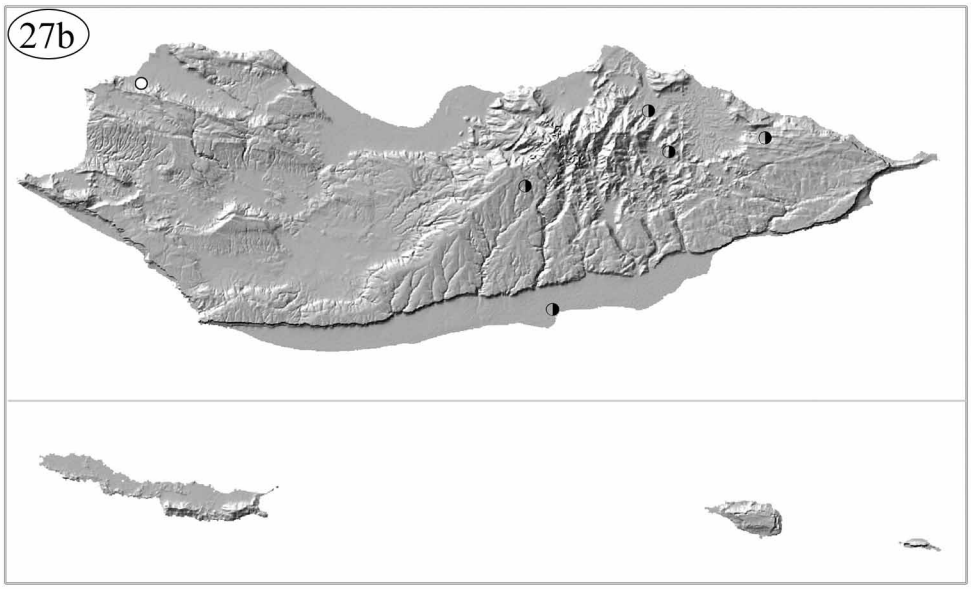


Fig. 27 – *Leptotyphlops filiformis* (Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

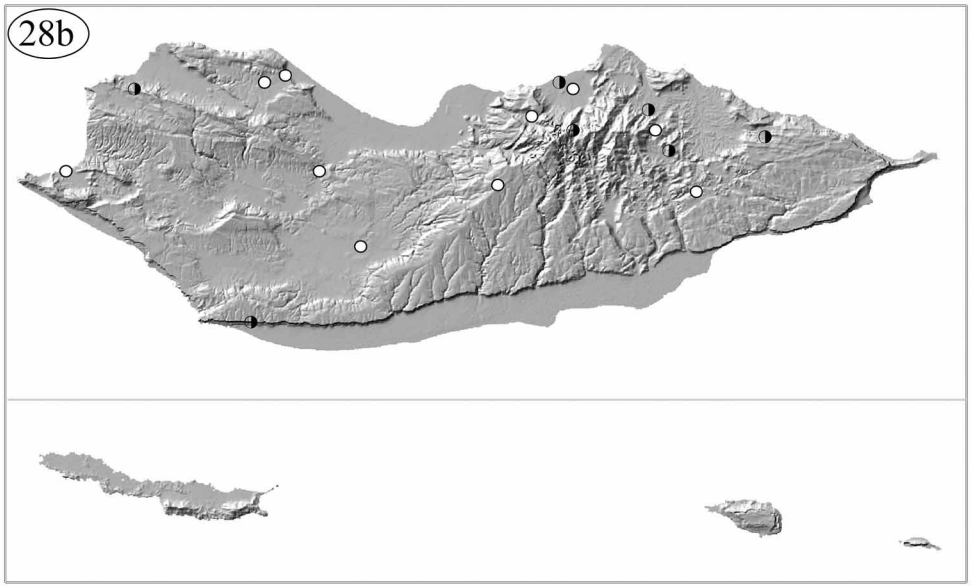


Fig. 28 - *Leptotyphlops macrurus* (Symbols as in Fig. 27).

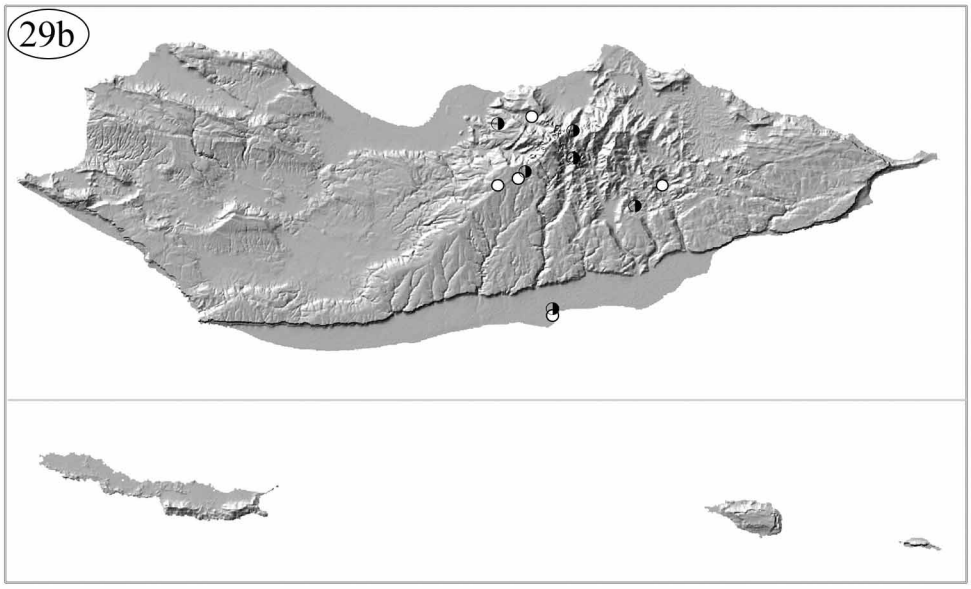


Fig. 29 - *Leptotyphlops wilsoni* (Symbols as in Fig. 27).

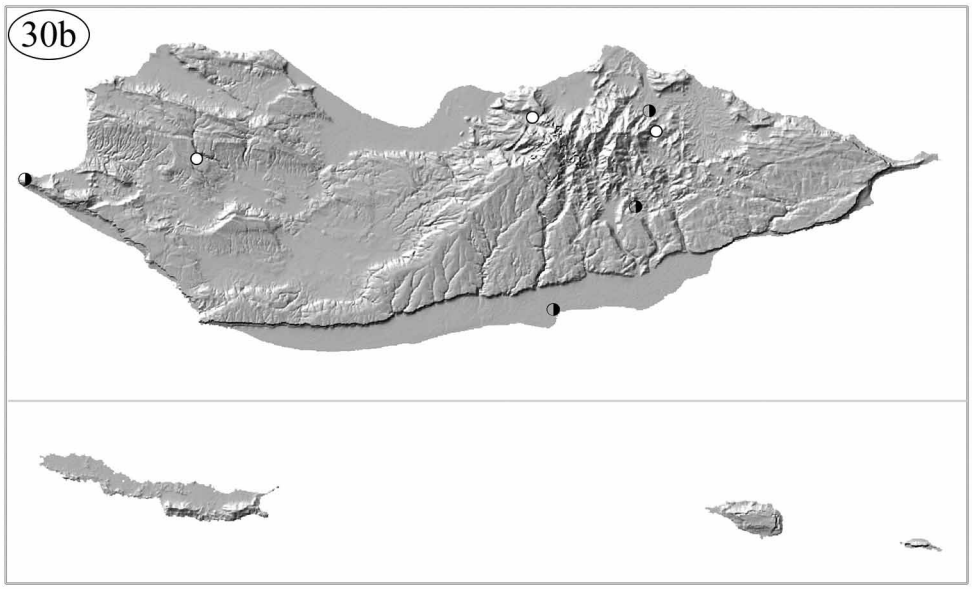


Fig. 30 – *Typhlops socotranus*
(Full dots = original data; half dots = bibliographic data).

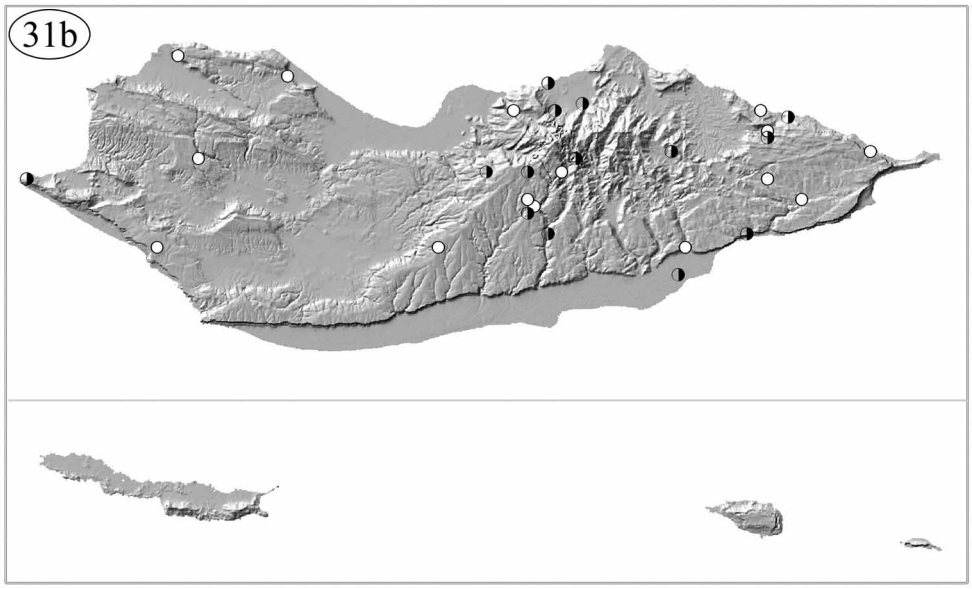


Fig. 31 - *Ditypophis vivax*
(Symbols as in Fig. 30).

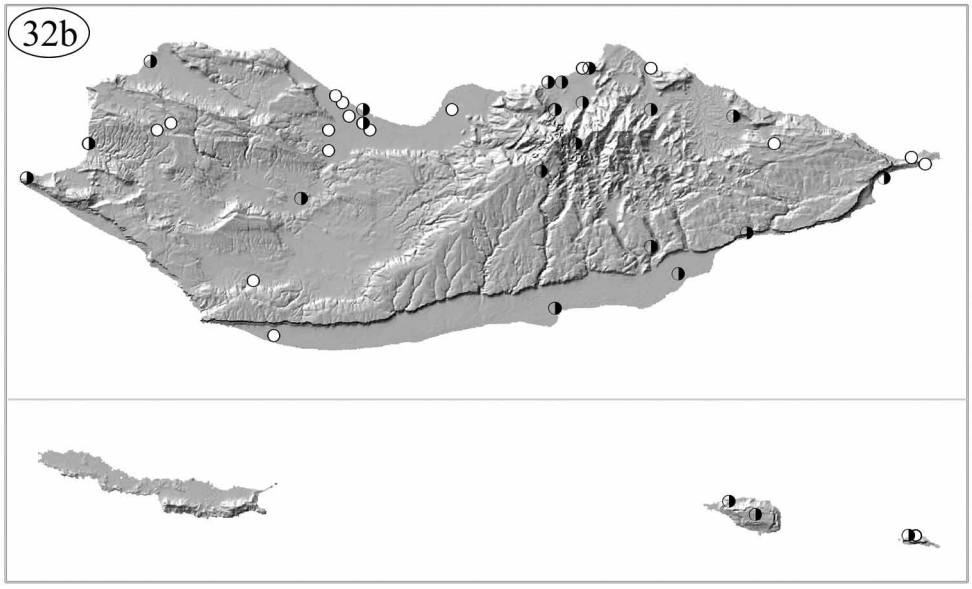


Fig. 32 - *Hemerophis socotrae*
(Symbols as in Fig. 30).