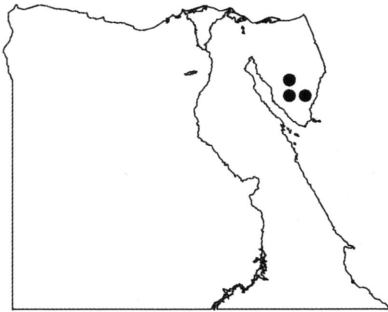


***Mesalina bahaeldini* Segoli, Cohen, and Werner 2002 Mount Sinai Lizard (Fig. 54)**

Mesalina bahaeldini Segoli, Cohen, and Werner 2002: 157. Type locality: St. Katherine, South Sinai, Egypt. Holotype: HUI-R 10712.

Eremias guttulata Anderson 1898 (part), Flower 1933 (part)

Eremias guttulata guttulata Marx 1968 (part), Saleh 1997 (part)



Mount Sinai Lizard
(*Mesalina bahaeldini*)

Arabic: *sihliyat jabal sina'*

Taxonomy: This recently described species differs from its closest congener (*M. guttulata*) in being obviously striped; having on average fewer supralabials; fewer dorsals and ventrals across mid-body; fewer subdigital scales; and longer toes relative to hind limb length (Segoli et al. 2002).

Diagnosis: A rather small slender lizard, with a maximum SVL of 52 mm (Segoli et al. 2002). Snout fairly long, usually with 4 supralabials anterior to the subocular. Lower eyelid with a window made of two

large transparent scales of roughly equal size, each clearly edged with black pigment. Temporals small, smooth; tympanic shield obvious. Dorsal scales medium-sized, granular or subimbricate. Average number of dorsals at mid-body 44 (range 39–49) and ventrals 10, respectively; average number of femoral pores 13 (10–14) (Segoli et al. 2002). Ventral side of lower arm covered with small granules. Dorsal side of tibia covered with slightly keeled scales. Dorsal surfaces usually gray-brown, with alternating dark and light longitudinal stripes; the dark stripes contain white spots, while the light stripes are often interrupted with dark spots. Tail irregularly banded, bluish in young animals. Venter white. Hemipenis very small.

Variation: Young specimens are strongly striped. The diagnostic longitudinal stripes might be somewhat broken up in some older individuals.

Habitat and ecology: Diurnal and ground dwelling. Found mostly above 1,000 m, where it occurs in the Irano-Turanian phytogeographical zone in South Sinai (Segoli et al. 2002). Recorded from the summit of Gebel Katrina, where it is the only active reptile during cold weather (Omar Attum pers. com.). Habitat preferences similar to that of *M. guttulata*, living in rocky habitats on mountains and hill-sides, wadi terraces with scattered stones and boulders.

Range: Apparently endemic to South Sinai.

Distribution in Egypt: Found in the high mountains of South Sinai, particularly common around St. Katherine Monastery.

Status and conservation needs: Locally common and widespread. Classified as Least Concern by IUCN (2005).