

Reproduction in the lizard *Scelarcis perspicillata*: effect of climate and body shape

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Scelarcis perspicillata is a small lizard endemic to North Africa (Morocco and Algeria) with an insular introduced population in Menorca (Balearic Islands). This species has recently been separated from the genus *Lacerta*, being *S. perspicillata* the only species included in its genus. Species systematics is not clear, but recent DNA studies confirm that this group comprises several species. *S. perspicillata* is a climbing species, highly adapted to vertical rocky surfaces and stony damp habitats. Its biology is poorly known, and few studies are available. Regarding to their reproductive characteristics, data are reduced to field observations in continental North African populations on clutch size and hatchings, and on the existence of mating plugs.

We analysed the reproductive characteristics of a population living in an open-air quarry in the island of Menorca. *S. perspicillata* moves mostly on the vertical walls of the quarry, searching for food and escaping from predators. We use both field observations and breeding in captivity to study its reproductive phenology and clutch and egg characteristics. Results show that *S. perspicillata* has a reproductive pattern similar to that observed in other lacetids living in mild temperate climates. However, the flattered shape and small size of this species, adapted to vertical surfaces and crevices, constrains its reproductive strategy. We discuss the influence of the foraging mode and predator escape tactics on its reproductive characteristics.