

*Acanthodactylus boskianus* (DAUDIN, 1802)

LC

**Common names:** Bosk's Fringe-fingered Lizard (E), *Acanthodactyle rugueux* (F), *Lagartija rugosa* (S).

**Range:** Extensive distribution in arid regions of the Maghreb, the Sahara Desert and Sahel, Arabia and the Middle East from the Atlantic coast to western Iran, reaching Turkey in the north.

**Distribution in Morocco:** Widespread east, south and west of the High Atlas Mountains, including the Atlantic Sahara. Via the Moulouya Valley, it reaches the Mediterranean coast from Nador to the Algerian border where it is common on beaches and where it has almost entirely replaced *Acanthodactylus erythrurus* which was common at the end of the last century. In the Atlantic Sahara, it reaches the coast through dry wadis while in steppes and beaches only *A. aureus*, *A. margaritae* or *A. busacki* occur.

**Altitude:** 0–1,800 m.

**Identification:** Large size for the genus, reaching a total maximum size of up to 25 cm. Four supraocular scales. Large, flat and strongly keeled dorsal scales, particularly on the back. Ground colour reddish-brown sometimes uniformly whitish (old males), typically with dark longitudinal lines. Juveniles appear shiny, with five broad continuous black stripes on a straw-coloured

ground colour and usually have a red tail (some individuals have a blue tail).

**Habitat:** Present in a wide variety of habitats including slightly sandy areas and steppes, and dry dayas surrounded by dunes where it replaces members of the *Acanthodactylus scutellatus* group. In certain regions where other *Acanthodactylus* species are widespread, *A. boskianus* is restricted to wadi beds, especially along the Atlantic coast.



Fig. 440: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, portrait. Tantan. R. LEÓN VIGARA



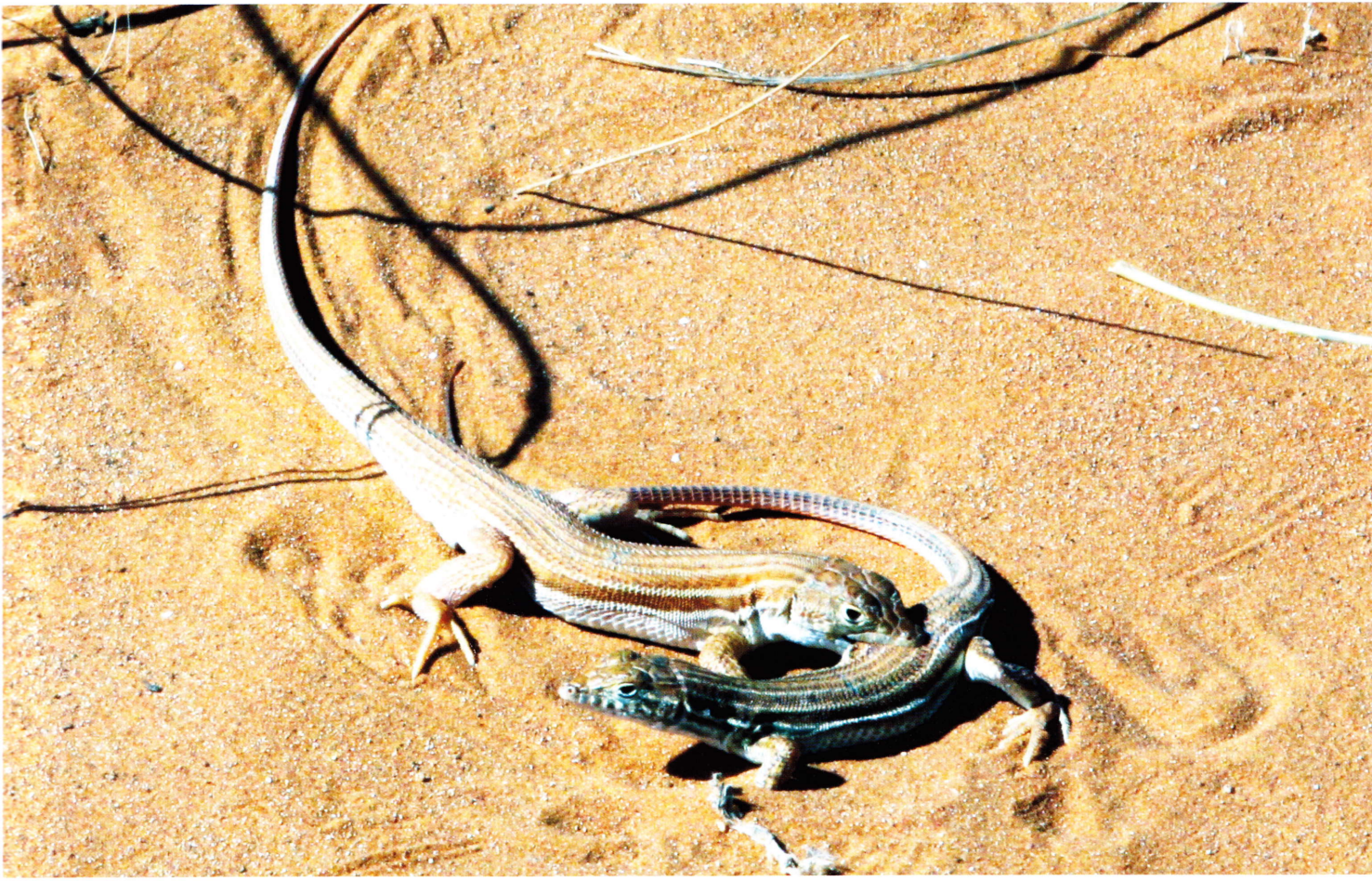
Fig. 441: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, adult female. Surroundings of Ain Beni Mathar.

G. MARTÍNEZ DEL MÁRMOL



Fig. 442: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, gravid female, rare individual with a forked tail. Labyar.

G. MARTÍNEZ DEL MÁRMOL



Figs. 443–444: Mating *Acanthodactylus boskianus*. Matarka.

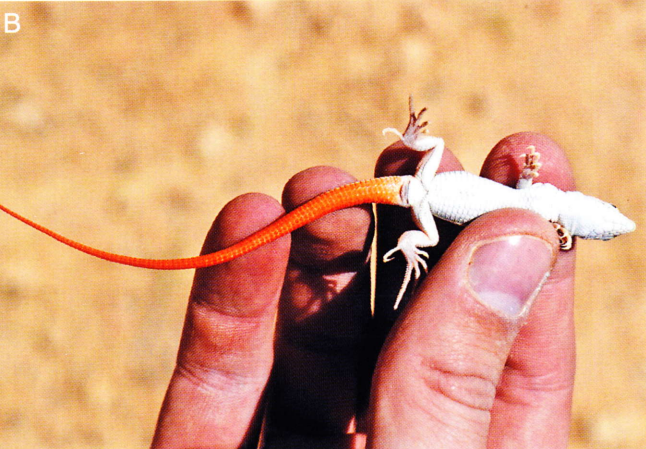


Fig. 445: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, juvenile from the Rekkam.  
O. JIMÉNEZ ROBLES (A), G. MARTÍNEZ DEL MÁRMOL (B)



Fig. 446: Typical pose of a young male *Acanthodactylus boskianus*.  
Ouarzazate. R. LEÓN VIGARA

**Biology:** Diurnal species. Like other members of this genus, it spends much of the day basking and around bushes hunting actively.

**Remarks:** *Acanthodactylus boskianus* probably represents a species complex. It is paraphyletic with respect to *A. schreiberi* BOULENGER, 1878 and shows high genetic and morphological variability over its extensive distribution range, with gene flow between geographic clusters of populations (TAMAR *et al.* 2014). The Moroccan specimens studied, including those from the Atlantic Sahara, fall in a large genetic clade together with populations from Algeria and parts of Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania.



Fig. 447: *Acanthodactylus boskianus*, pregnant female. Ouarzazate.

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