

Family Lacertidae

Nucras lalandii (Milne-Edwards, 1829)

Delalande's Sandveld Lizard

Regional endemic

■ LC – Least Concern (Global)

Assessors: Burger, M., Tolley, K.A.

Previous Red List categories:

2018: Least Concern (Global IUCN assessment).

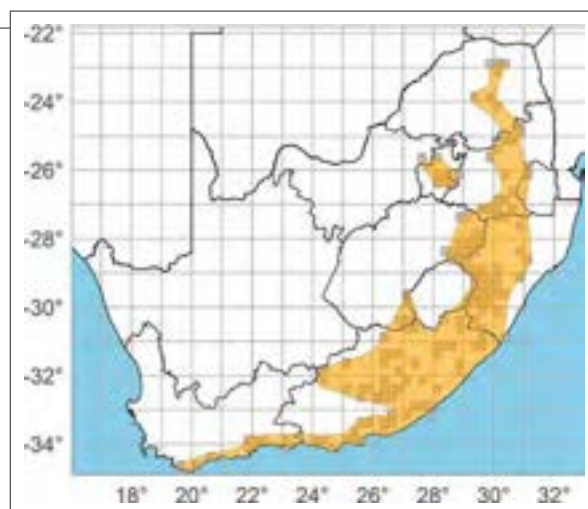
2017: Least Concern (Global IUCN assessment).

2014: Least Concern (SARCA).

Assessment rationale: Widely distributed, but within its range it is generally limited to montane habitats. Although habitat quality in some areas has been negatively impacted by afforestation and increased burning for agricultural purposes, these impacts are not considered significant threats.

Taxonomic notes: A molecular phylogeny of the genus shows deep divergence within the species, which could indicate cryptic diversity (see Branch et al. 2019b). *Other important names:* none.

Distribution: Occurs in southern and eastern South Africa (Jacobsen 1989; Bourquin 2004) extending marginally into Eswatini and Lesotho (De Waal 1978; Boycott 1992a; Bates 1996b; Ambrose 2006). There



is a subpopulation centred in Gauteng province that might be disjunct from the main distribution. *EOO*: 659 000 km²; *Distribution*: 258 000 km².

Countries of occurrence: Eswatini, Lesotho, South Africa.

Habitat and ecology: Generally associated with Montane and Temperate Grassland in the north, and Fynbos habitat in the south. As is typical for most sandveld lizards, it shelters in burrows or under rocks. The elevational range is from near sea level to



Nucras lalandii, Wakkerstroom, KwaZulu-Natal province (© D.W. Pietersen).



Nucras lalandii, Ntsikeni Wildlife Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal province (© D.W. Pietersen).

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Nucras lalandii, Nieu-Bethesda, Eastern Cape province (© L. Kemp).

2 300 m a.s.l. (Jacobsen 1989; Branch 1998). *Habitat*: Savanna, Shrubland, Grassland.

Threats: There are minor threats from habitat loss in montane regions due to afforestation, particularly in Mpumalanga, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces (CSIR 2008) and frequent burning of Montane Grasslands. These factors degrade the habitat quality and increase fragmentation of sub-populations.

Population trend: Although there is some habitat modification in parts of the range, the majority of the distribution is not highly impacted. The widespread distribution and abundance mitigate against the negative effects of local population declines.

Conservation and research recommendations: A molecular phylogeny with comprehensive geographic sampling and a morphological analysis is needed to assess the presence of cryptic taxa within *N. lalandii*.