

New record of the Western leopard gecko, *Eublepharis angramainyu* Anderson & Leviton, 1966 (Sauria: Eublepharidae) from southeastern Iran

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Abstract.—One adult male specimen of the Western leopard gecko (*Eublepharis angramainyu*) was collected in southeastern Iran during fieldwork conducted from June 2009 to September 2010. The new locality of the species is situated about 600 km east of the type locality. This record indicates a wider distribution of *Eublepharis angramainyu* on the Iranian plateau than previously thought. Information on morphological characters and habitat is presented.

Key words. Western leopard gecko, *Eublepharis angramainyu*, Iran, distribution, color pattern

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Introduction

The Leopard gecko, *Eublepharis angramainyu* was originally described from an old road between Masjed-Suleiman and Batwand, Khuzestan Province, Iran by Anderson & Leviton (1966). *E. angramainyu* occurs in western foothills of the Zagros Mountains and in the upper Tigris-Euphrates basin in Iran, Iraq, and northeast Syria. Recently, a new specimen of this species was recorded from southeastern Anatolia and Kara Dagh-Arsanlı of Sanliurfa Province, Turkey (Uzum et al. 2008). Grismer (1989) placed *Eublepharis ensafi* Baloutch and Thireau, 1986, in the synonymy of *Eublepharis angramainyu* (Anderson 1999). During field work on the herpetofauna of the southeastern Iranian Plateau from June 2009 to September 2010 one specimen of *Eublepharis angramainyu* was collected from Kerman Province. The new locality of this species is situated about 600 km east of the type locality.

Material and methods

One male specimen of *Eublepharis angramainyu* was collected from Khabr National Park (28°42' N, 56°18' E) in Kerman Province. The specimen was deposited in the Zoological Museum, Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman (ZMSBUK). The specimen was fixed with 96% ethanol, and after 10 days was transferred to 80% ethanol for storage. Morphometric measurements were taken by

calipers to the nearest 0.1 mm, and meristic characters were recorded by stereomicroscope in the Zoological Lab of the University of Kerman.

Results

Pholidosis

Supranasal scales separated by single internasal scales; 40-41 eyelid fringe scales; 11 supralabials; 11-12 infralabials; chin shield in contact with first lower labials; 10-12 smaller scales surround each dorsal tubercle; hexagonal ventral scales in 25 longitudinal rows; 7 discernible precloacal pores; 24 smooth subdigital lamellae; three transverse rows of ventral scales in each caudal whorl; dorsal scales of regenerated tail circular and slightly convex.

Color pattern

Dorsum dark lemon-yellow with a continuous light vertebral stripe, bordered on each side by a broken black stripe from occiput to base of tail; dorsum with dark longitudinal stripes arranged in six rows, some complete and others broken; head with a pattern of dark and light reticulations; limbs light lemon-yellow with numerous dark spots; tail whitish with numerous irregular dark transverse marks; and venter light tan (Fig. 1).

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Figure 1. *Eublepharis angramainyu*.

Measurements

SVL (snout-vent length): 140 mm; HL (head length): 34.79 mm; HH (height of head: from top of head to the lower base of jaw): 19.34 mm; HW (width of head: from widest part): 28.41 mm; INTNOST (internostril distance): 5.52 mm; EYENOST (distance between anterior edge of eye to nostril): 11.31 mm; NOSTIP (distance between anterior edge of the nostril to the tip of snout); TED (transverse eye diameter): 10.11 mm; Thigh length: 28.38 mm; Crus length: 28.04 mm; Arm length: 22.05 mm; Forearm length: 22.05 mm.

Habitat

The specimen was found in rocky desert and arid grasslands, two hours after sunset, when air temperature was 29 °C. The specimen was observed at 1868 m above sea level (asl). The vegetation at the site is dominated by *Artemisia* sp., *Amygdalus scoparia*, *Cousinia stocksii*, and *Ebenus stellata* (Fig. 2).

Discussion

The range of *Eublepharis angramainyu* is the western foothills of the Zagros Mountains and northern Mesopotamian Plain in Iran and Iraq (Szczerbak and Golubev 1996; Anderson 1999) connecting Afrotropical and Palearctic elements of the herpetofauna in the eastern Mediterranean (Disi and Böhme 1996). This record indicates a wider distribution of *Eublepharis angramainyu* in Iran than previously thought (Fig. 3).

In pholidosis and coloration, the Khabr specimen agrees in general with the descriptions of *Eublepharis angramainyu* given by Anderson and Leviton (1966), Leviton et al. (1992), Göçmen (2002), Szczerbak and Golubev (1995), and Anderson (1999), except for the eyelid fringe scale count (40-41 instead of 41-48) and ventral scales at midbody (25 instead of 27-38). In comparison with *E. angramainyu*, *E. macularius* has 46-57 eyelid fringe scales and subdigital lamellae each with several distinct small tubercles. The range of *E. macularius* is in eastern Afghanistan, Pakistan, Khandesh District of India, and possibly eastern Iran.



Figure 2. Habitat of *Eublepharis angramainyu*.

Western specimens seen in the wild were found in rocky deserts and arid grasslands. They occur in the small caverns in the gypsum deposits (Karamiani et al. 2010). The habitats are similar despite the wide distances between localities except for elevational range (1868 m instead of 300-1427 m).

The new locality of the species is situated about 600 km east of the type locality, therefore this specimen may represent a cryptic species and require a population study.

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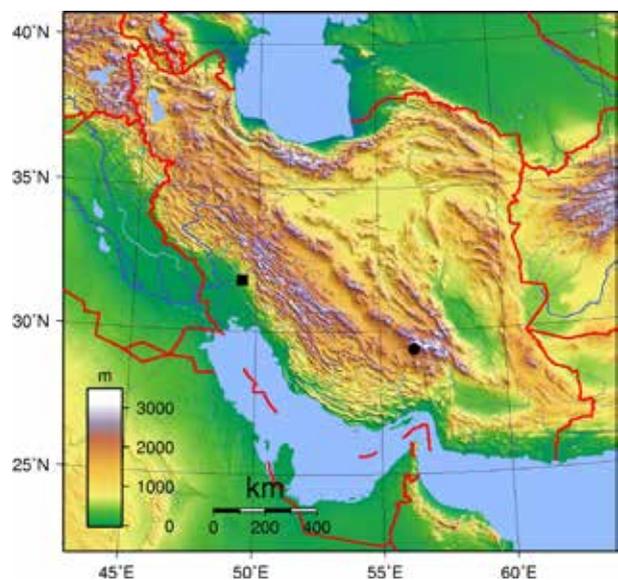


Figure 3. *Eublepharis angramainyu* type locality, square (Anderson and Leviton 1966), new locality, circle.

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