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A new species of angular-toed gecko, genus *Cyrtopodion* (Squamata: Gekkonidae), from southern Iran

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Abstract

We describe a new species of the genus *Cyrtopodion* from the coastal area of Bushehr Province in southern Iran based on morphometric and pholidotic data. *Cyrtopodion kiabii* **sp. nov.** belongs to the *agamuroides*-group and the key characters to distinguish this species from all other members of the group are the lower number of ventrals and the extremely slender habitus with long and delicate legs. Resulting from pholidosis, the observed presence of sexual dimorphism, and distribution we suggest a close relationship with *C. gastropholis*, which is also reviewed herein.

Key words: *Cyrtopodion agamuroides*-group, sexual dimorphism, taxonomy

Introduction

The taxonomy of the species-rich genus *Cyrtopodion* Fitzinger, 1843 still is very unstable. Several groups have been defined for the Iranian species (Anderson 1999) and are largely concordant to the described subgenera *Cyrtopodion*, *Mediodactylus* and *Tenuidactylus* (Szczerbak and Golubev 1984, Böhme 1985, Kluge 1985). The most important exception is the placement of *C. agamuroides* and *C. gastropholis* into an own group (named *agamuroides*-group). These two species were even thought to be members of the genus *Agamura* (e.g. Minton 1966, Kluge 1991), which share the slender, long-legged habitus. Correspondingly, subsequent authors did not assign them to any of the subgenera of *Cyrtopodion*, but listed them as incertae sedis (e.g. Sindaco and Jeremcenko 2008). Molecular phylogenetics showed that *Cyrtopodion* is paraphyletic with respect to *Agamura* and *Bunopus*, and consequently, *Mediodactylus* was elevated to full generic status (Červenka *et al.* 2008) as already proposed by other authors (Kluge 1991, Macey *et al.* 2000). Though the remaining taxa of *Cyrtopodion* are monophyletic, the relationships between the genus *Agamura* and the subgenera *Cyrtopodion* and *Tenuidactylus*, as well as the *agamuroides*-group, are not yet resolved satisfactorily. Each of them represents a distinct clade within *Cyrtopodion* sensu lato (Červenka *et al.* 2008), which supports the isolated position of the *agamuroides*-group as realized by Anderson (1999). Two recently described species—*C. golubevi* and *C. persepolense*—were assigned to the *agamuroides*-group and it was assumed that this group is a large complex composed of eight to ten cryptic species not described yet (Nazarov *et al.* 2009).

Here we describe a new *Cyrtopodion* species from a coastal area in southern Iran. This species clearly belongs to the *agamuroides*-group as currently defined (Anderson 1999, Nazarov *et al.* 2009), adding a little more knowledge to the presumably underestimated diversity of the Iranian gecko fauna in general and this group in particular.

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