



Arboreal Behavior in the Lusitanian Wall Lizard, *Podarcis guadarramae* (Boscá 1916)

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The Lusitanian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis guadarramae*) is a rupicolous species endemic to the Iberian Peninsula. Usually found in rocky areas and on walls, these lizards also are terrestrial in sandy areas in Maritime Pine (*Pinus pinaster*) forests (Geniez et al. 2014). In the coastal study area in Baiona, Pontevedra, Spain (UTM 29TNG06, ETRS89; 13 m asl), the species inhabits the rocky shore dominated by granite stones, but also occurs on human constructions (Ayres, pers. obs.).

During a visit to the study area on 11 January 2020, we observed several Lusitanian Wall Lizards basking on Common Olive Trees (*Olea europaea*) in a gardened area. This human-altered area appears to function as an edge between rocky habitat occupied by *P. guadarramae* and bushy habitat occupied by the Northwestern Iberian Wall Lizard (*P. bocagei*). One male and one juvenile were basking 1.5 m above the ground (Fig. 1). When disturbed, the lizards hid in the regrowth at the base of the tree but reappeared to bask after a few minutes. The use of these trees as basking sites and



Fig. 2. After seeking shelter in the dense regrowth at the base of a Common Olive Tree (*Olea europaea*), a Lusitanian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis guadarramae*) emerged after a few minutes to bask on the trunk. Photograph by Cesar Ayres.



Fig. 1. An adult and a juvenile Lusitanian Wall Lizard (*Podarcis guadarramae*) on a Common Olive Tree (*Olea europaea*). Photograph by Cesar Ayres.

refugia, as has been reported for *P. bocagei* in the same area (Ayres 2020), could be a strategy to reduce the risk of predation from feral cats, gulls, or other predators.

Arboreal behavior has been reported for other species of the *P. hispanica* complex in northern Africa (Kaliontzopoulou et al. 2009), Portugal (Malkmus 2004), and southern Spain (González de la Vega 1988). In northern Africa, lizards used Cork Oaks (*Quercus suber*) to forage, bask, and seek refuge, presumably due to the lack of rocks in the area. In Portugal, Cork Oaks also were used as hibernacula. In southern Spain, lizards used Common Olive Trees, Spanish Chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*), and various species of palms as refuges. Northwestern Iberian Wall Lizards also are known to engage

in arboreal behavior on Common Oaks (*Quercus robur*), introduced Southern Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*), and Black Alders (*Alnus glutinosa*) (Galán 2011) in northwestern Spain.

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