

Acanthodactylus dumerilii
(MILNE-EDWARDS, 1829)

LC

Common names: Dumeril's Fringe-fingered Lizard (E), Acanthodactyle de Duméril (F), Lagartija de Duméril (S).



Fig. 452: Male *Acanthodactylus dumerilii* from the Erg Chebbi.

M. SCHWEIGER

Range: Sandy areas from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, Senegal and Mali.

Distribution in Morocco: Wide but discontinuous distribution in sandy desert regions south of the Atlas Mountains, with two possibly distinct populations (see **Remarks**): (1) from Figuig in the east to the region of Errachidia, Erfoud and Merzouga, in Mhamid area, and along the Drâa Valley as far as 62 km WSW. Aouinet Torkoz (= Aouinet Lahna), 80 km off the Atlantic coast; (2) in the Atlantic Sahara inland from the Tindouf area (Algeria) to the surroundings of Aousserd and the Mauritanian border, avoiding the coastal Atlantic Sahara. The record in BONS & GENIEZ (1996) at "Togba, 80 km south of Villa Cisneros" (= Dakhla) and attributed to BONS & GIROT (1975) seems to be erroneous.

Altitude: 200–900 m.

Identification: A medium-sized lizard (reaching 5 cm SVL and around 14 cm total length). The snout is pointed. Fourth supra-ocular divided. Dorsal scales diversely small or large and slightly to strongly keeled, 38–55 in transverse rows at midbody, 12 or 14 longitudinal rows of ventral plates according to the populations (see under **Remarks**). Sandy-cream colouration with many light and dark spots in the dorsal area forming a complex dark reticulation. Juveniles and some females have a more striped pattern. To differentiate it from *Acanthodactylus longipes* requires experience (see the *Acanthodactylus longipes* species account).

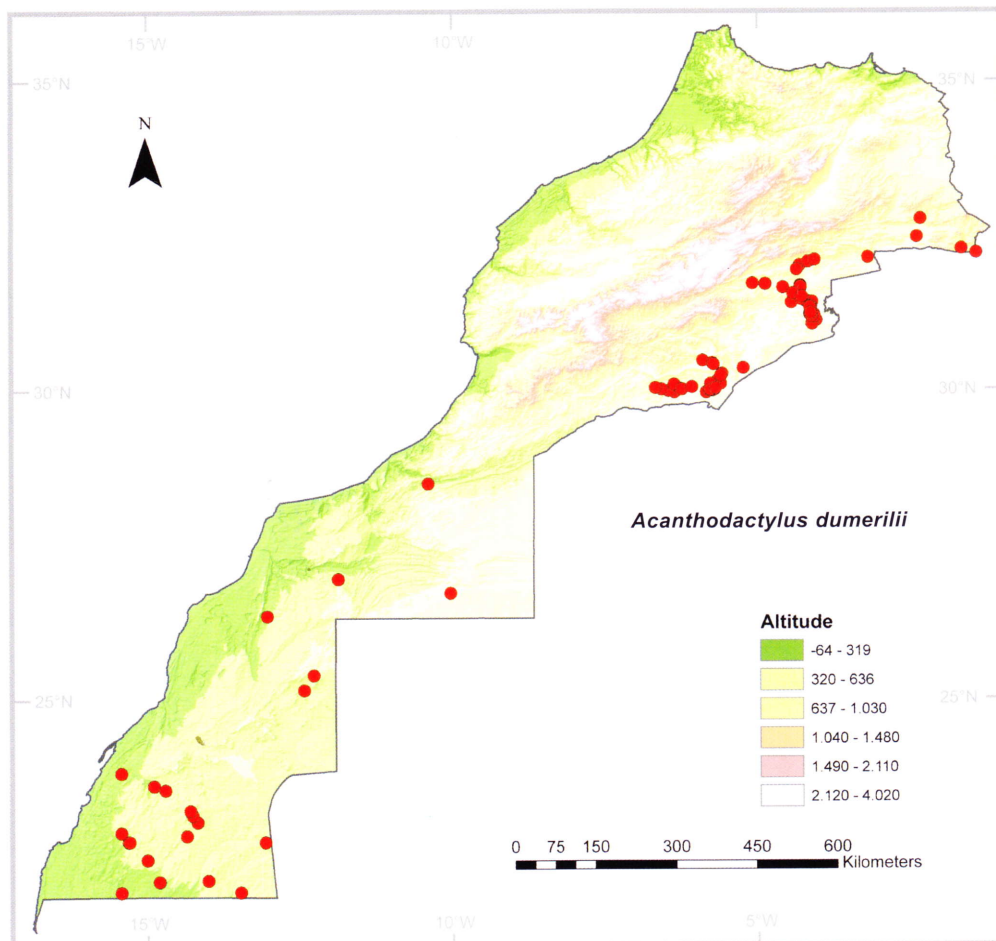




Fig. 453: Portrait of a female *Acanthodactylus dumerilii* from Merzouga.
R. LEÓN VIGARA



Fig. 454: *Acanthodactylus dumerilii*, female (left) and male from Figuig.
G. MARTÍNEZ DEL MÁRMOL

Habitat: Occurs in habitats with sand and sparse bushes, being especially prevalent at the edges of vast ergs (Erg Chebbi, Mhamid dunes). In the larger dunes, it is replaced by *A. longipes* but both species can be syntopic in medium-sized dunes or the periphery of large dunes.

Biology: Diurnal species. Spends most time basking and around bushes, moving quickly to capture prey and escaping predators. Uses small holes in the sand as refugia. It is sympatric with *A. longipes* in Erg Chebbi and the Mhamid area, and with *A. boskianus* in dry wadi or dry daya and with *A. maculatus* in the eastern parts of its Moroccan range. Sympatry with *A. aureus* has not yet been observed, but it is possible in the lower Drâa Valley, in the Smara area and potentially between Dakhla and Aousserd.

Remarks: Phylogenetic analyses show that *A. dumerilii* and *A. senegalensis* are not reciprocally monophyletic and branch within a large clade also encompassing *A. audouini* (TAMAR *et al.* 2016, LOPES *et al.* unpubl.). Specimens morphologically identified as *A. dumerilii* from Western Sahara and Mauritania belong to a genetic lineage that also includes specimens of *A. senegalensis* from southern Mauritania and Senegal (TAMAR *et al.* 2016). In fact, *A. senegalensis* seems to be a form adapted to red continental dunes but also golden dunes along the coastline for example in northwestern Senegal and southwestern Mauritania. However, in coastal white dunes in Senegal and Mauritania, occurs the phenotype “*dumerilii*.” In the Moroccan Atlantic Sahara, only the phenotype “*dumerilii*” is known. Comparatively, with Mhamid and Merzouga populations, they have fewer dorsal scales and only 12 longitudinal rows of ventral plates (14 in Morocco, except in the Atlantic Sahara).



Fig. 455: *Acanthodactylus dumerilii*, adult male. Tinejdad.

G. MARTÍNEZ DEL MÁRMOL



Figs. 456–457: Specimens previously identified as *Acanthodactylus senegalensis*, but actually representing *A. dumerilii*. Adrar Soutouf. J.-F. TRAPE