

other previously recorded. FitzSimons (1943 *Mem. Transv. Mus.* 1: 1-528) gave clutch size as 7 - 12 eggs. Van Wyk (1983. *Navors. nas. Mus., Bloemfontein* 11: 237-275) 8 - 14 eggs, and De Waal (1978. *Mem. nas. Mus., Bloemfontein* 11: 1-160.) 8 - 10 eggs. Despite the large clutch size, the mean volume of eggs still corresponds to the lower end of the range given by FitzSimons (*op. cit.*) of 15-18 x 10-12 mm ( $V = 0.81-1.37 \text{ cm}^3$ ).

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#### CORDYLIDAE

##### PLATYSAURUS INTERMEDIUS WILHELMI

###### Common flat lizard

###### REPRODUCTION

Twelve female *Platysaurus intermedius wilhelmi* were collected from under a slab of exfoliated granite on 27 December 1988, on the farm Manchester, near Nelspruit, eastern Transvaal (2531Ac). Four adult females retained as reference specimens (NMB R5808-5811) each contained two eggs. Egg volumes were calculated using Douglas (1990. *S. Afr. J. Wildl. Res.* 20: 111-117). Egg data ( $n = 8$ ): length, mean, 17.2 mm, SD 1.17 mm, range 15.2-18.2 mm; width, mean, 7.5 mm, SD 0.55 mm, range 7.0-8.4 mm; volume ( $V$ ) mean,  $0.53 \text{ cm}^3$ , range  $0.41-0.70 \text{ cm}^3$ , ex fixation. Owing to fixation, eggs were not weighed.

Broadley (1974, *Herpetologica* 30(4): 379-380) discussed reproduction in the genus *Platysaurus*, and corrected earlier erroneous statements (e.g. FitzSimons, 1943. *Mem. Transv. Mus.* 1: 1-528) that the genus was viviparous. He showed that *Platysaurus* spp. invariably lays two soft-shelled eggs, usually in November to December, with *P. i. rhodesianus* eggs measuring 22.5 x 10.0 mm ( $V = 1.23 \text{ cm}^3$ ). These eggs are considerably larger than those recorded here. Broadley (*op. cit.*) also noted that no embryos were visible in eggs removed from the oviducts, and that *P. i. rhodesianus* use communal egg depositories. No males were observed in the immediate area of the Nelspruit collection site, and this may indicate that females had come together prior to laying their eggs in communal depositories.

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#### LACERTIDAE

##### NUCRAS TESSELLATA LIVIDA

###### Striped sandveld lizard

###### AVIAN PREDATION

On 21 October 1992 an adult (70+177 mm) male *Nucras tessellata livida* was found impaled on a large thorn of an *Acacia karroo* tree in the Commando Drift Nature Reserve (3226Aa) near Cradock. Although the thorn penetrated the lizard at midbody, it was still alive when collected by the reserve manager, Quintus Hahndiek. We suspect that this lizard was captured by a Fiscal shrike (*Lanius collaris*), a common bird in the reserve. The specimen has been accessioned in the Cape Nature Conservation records (CDNEC 10888), and will later be deposited into the Port Elizabeth Museum collection. Fiscal shrikes are renowned for their habit of impaling prey on thorns or barbs of wire fences. Their prey consists of various insects, lizards (including chameleons), snakes, frogs and birds (both adult and young) (McLachlan and Liversidge, 1981,

*Roberts birds of South Africa*, Trustees J. Voelker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town, 659 pp.). Branch (1990, *J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 37: 44, Fig. 1, and p. 52) recorded a hatchling angulate tortoise (*Chersina angulata*) impaled on the thorn of a lemon tree, for which the fiscal shrike was thought to be the most likely predator.

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#### SCINCIDAE

##### MABUYA HOMALOCEPHALA SMITHII

###### Smith's red-sided skink

###### REPRODUCTION

On 15 February 1992 several clutches of reptilian eggs were found under stones on a rocky ridge overlooking the Krom river on the farm Kaia de Baaia, Humansdorp district, (34°07'S, 24°47'E; 3424Bb). They were removed and incubated in moist vermiculite at the Port Elizabeth Snake Park. On hatching, two of the clutches (of two and three eggs) were found to belong to the above taxon. Egg measurements: length, mean 14.8 mm, SD. 0.49 mm, range 14.1-15.2 mm; width, mean 10.20 mm, SD. 0.52 mm, range 9.8-11.2 mm; mass, mean 0.87 g, SD. 0.10 g, range 0.8-1.0 g. All eggs hatched between 6 and 13 March 1992. Hatchlings measured: snout/vent length, mean 25.5 mm, SD. 0.54 mm, range 25-26 mm; tail length, mean 36.0 mm, SD. 1.09 mm, range 35-37 mm; weight, mean 0.4 g, no SD. or range. One hatchling was preserved in the herpetological collection of the Port Elizabeth Museum (PEM R7056), whilst the remainder were released in the area of capture.

Reproductive data on *Mabuya homalocephala* are scanty. Visser (1975. *Zool. Afr.* 10(2): 215-217) reported on two *M. h. homalocephala* clutches from the western Cape, each of 6 eggs. The eggs and hatchlings were very similar in size to those of *M. h. smithii* recorded here. Branch (1988. *Field guide to the snakes and other reptiles of southern Africa*, Struik Publ. Cape Town) reported that up to six eggs are laid in a small chamber under a boulder during November and December.

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#### MABUYA VARIA

##### White-sided skink

###### REPRODUCTION

From 2-4 January 1988, six gravid female *Mabuya varia* were collected by GVH at three different localities in the Manyeleti Game Reserve (2431Cb and Da), eastern Transvaal, and subsequently deposited in the herpetological collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria (Table 1). Females measured 52-60 mm snout-vent length (SVL), weighed 3.5-6.7 g and contained 4-9 embryos. At least two embryos per female were examined in detail (x25 magnification) and staged according to the embryonic series (for *Lacerta vivipara*) of Dufaure and Hubert (1961, *Arch. Anat. Microsc. Morphol. Exp.* 50: 309-328). Embryos from different females were at different stages of development - from no visible embryo in TM 67122 to developmental stage 40 (advanced development) in TM 67118 (Table 1).

In September 1989, two gravid females were collected at Vernon