

A case of predation on *Acanthodactylus* Wiegmann, 1834 (Squamata, Lacertidae) by *Androctonus amoreuxi* (Scorpiones, Buthidae) in western Algeria

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Abstract: An adult female of the buthid scorpion *Androctonus amoreuxi* (Audouin, 1826) was observed feeding on a juvenile lizard, *Acanthodactylus* Wiegmann, 1834 (Squamata, Lacertidae) in western Algeria. Predation of *Acanthodactylus* by a scorpion has not been previously reported.

Key words: Scorpiones, Buthidae, *Androctonus amoreuxi*, Squamata, Lacertidae, *Acanthodactylus*, predation, Algeria.

Un caso de depredación de *Acanthodactylus* Wiegmann, 1834 (Squamata, Lacertidae) a cargo de *Androctonus amoreuxi* (Scorpiones, Buthidae) en Argelia occidental

Resumen: Se observó una hembra del búpido *Androctonus amoreuxi* (Audouin, 1826) alimentándose de un juvenil del género *Acanthodactylus* Wiegmann, 1834 (Squamata, Lacertidae) en Argelia occidental. No se ha publicado previamente la depredación de *Acanthodactylus* por escorpiones.

Palabras clave: Scorpiones, Buthidae, *Androctonus amoreuxi*, Squamata, Lacertidae, *Acanthodactylus*, depredación, Argelia.

The diet of scorpions is very often reduced to insects and arachnids (McCormick & Polis, 1995; Teruel, 2015; Lira *et al.*, 2016). Big scorpions can feed on other invertebrates, small lizards, snakes (Vachon, 1952; McCormick & Polis, 1995; Dupré, 2015) and even small mice (Kock, 1969; Dupré, 2015; Sadine, 2018).

In a recent nocturnal sampling trip in west of Algeria, we found an adult female of the buthid scorpion *Androctonus amoreuxi* (Audouin, 1826), feeding on a juvenile lizard *Acanthodactylus* Wiegmann, 1834 (Squamata, Lacertidae) (fig. 1).

Because *A. amoreuxi* is considered as the biggest scorpion in Algeria (Sadine *et al.*, 2020) it prefers the prey with big size such as *Acanthodactylus*. This case of predation of *Acanthodactylus* by scorpion has not been previously reported. Two other cases of Lacertidae predation by scorpion are recorded; concern the predation of *Podarcis hispanica* and *Psammodromus hispanicus* by common scorpion *Buthus occitanus* (Castilla, 1995; Garcia-Cardenette, 2003).

However, *Acanthodactylus* species can be considered as an excellent predator of arachnids non scorpion in Egypt (El-Hennawy, 1990). Mellado *et al.* (1975) noted the presence of scorpion's fragments in faeces of *Psammodromus algirus* L. 1758 (Squamata, Lacertidae) from the South of Spain.



Fig. 1. *Androctonus amoreuxi* feeding on a juvenile lizard *Acanthodactylus* sp.

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