



NATURAL HISTORY RESEARCH REPORTS

Chuckwallas in an Urban Preserve

Field studies of amphibians and reptiles rarely span more than two or three years necessitating that inferences concerning population biology of many forms be derived from brief snap-shots of their life history. In 2011, SULLIVAN AND SULLIVAN (2012. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 7:437–441) re-surveyed a small population of the Common Chuckwalla (*Sauromalus ater*) in the Lookout Mountain Preserve in the Phoenix Metropolitan region that had been studied intensively during the 1990s. Extending prior work with this low-density population, the authors assessed cur-

rent population size by direct count and in relation to variation in abundance in previous years. Recaptures separated by 12–16 years confirmed prior short-term studies indicating that *S. ater* exhibits growth rates of 1–2 mm per year as adults. Moreover, two females, initially captured in 1995, still resided within 20 m of their original capture sites in 2011. Overall, this urbanized population persists in spite of its small size, increases in recreational activity, trail establishment, and heat island effects associated with the Phoenix Metropolitan region.



An isolated population of Common Chuckwallas (*Sauromalus ater*) persists in spite of its small size, increases in recreational activity, trail establishment, and heat island effects associated with the Phoenix Metropolitan region. Photograph by L. Lee Grismer.

Madagascan Leaf-nosed Snakes

The Madagascan Leaf-nosed Snake (*Langaha madagascariensis*) was described in 1790, yet few publications have documented ecology or behavior, and none addressed animals in the wild. This vinesnake is unique in displaying high levels of sexual dimorphism and its possession of an elongated nasal appendage, the function of which is not yet understood. **TINGLE** (2012. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 7:442–448) observed free-living snakes in the quickly disappearing littoral forest of southern Madagascar. These vinesnakes proved largely to be sit-and-wait predators, although they actively pursued prey on some occasions. Snakes consumed both arboreal and terrestrial lizards. One male observed for several days and nights returned each night to the same branch and hung from it pointing straight downward until the morning.



Little is known about the behavior and natural history of Madagascan Leaf-nosed Snakes (*Langaha madagascariensis*). Photograph by Kenneth L. Krysko.