



# Notes on Kashmir Rock Agamas, *Laudakia tuberculata* (Gray 1827), from the Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary in Northern India

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The range of the Kashmir Rock Agama (*Laudakia tuberculata*) extends from eastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan through Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh (India) to southwestern Nepal and Tibet (Baig et al. 2012; Uetz et al. 2018) with an elevational range of 150–3,600 m (Bahuguna 2008). Habitat requirements include fissures in rocks, often near streams, but these lizards readily exploit edificarian situations where cracks in walls, spaces under eaves and between slate slabs on roofs are analogues of rock crevices in natural conditions (Waltner 1991; Baig et al. 2012). Nevertheless, despite its relative abundance and sometimes close association with humans, we lack even preliminary information about many aspects of the species' natural history (Waltner 1991).

At 1233 h on 11 October 2016, we observed twelve *L. tuberculata* on rocky substrate (Fig. 1) at the Adi-Badrinath,

Kalesar Wildlife Sanctuary in northern Haryana State, India (30°27'14.46"N, 77°27'6.98"E). Habitat at the site is tropical moist dry deciduous forest (Champion and Seth 1968) and the ambient temperature at the time of our observations was about 32 °C. These individuals were foraging on flowers of the Madagascar Periwinkle (*Catheranthus roseus*), and naturalized species in India. We considered the consumption of *C. roseus* flowers noteworthy, as the flowers are usually considered mildly poisonous and unpalatable because they contain numerous alkaloids, although these plants are consumed by some herbivores when alternatives are unavailable (e.g., Dugé de Bernonville et al. 2017). This observation represents the first record of *L. tuberculata* in the lower Shivalik Hill Range of Haryana State and the first record of this omnivorous species consuming flowers of *C. roseus*.



**Fig. 1.** A Kashmir Rock Agama (*Laudakia tuberculata*) basking on a rock. The purple flowers of the Madagascar Periwinkle (*Catheranthus roseus*) can be seen to the right of the image. Also note the flower stem in the mouth of the lizard. Photograph by Ritesh Vishwakarma.

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