



First Observation of a Tuberculated Agama, *Laudakia tuberculata* (Gray 1827) Feeding on a Low-spreading Shrub (*Ficus squamosa*)

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The Tuberculated Agama (*Laudakia tuberculata*) is a saxicolous lizard and the only Nepalese lizard species that is primarily herbivorous (Eremchenko and Kästle 2002; Bashir et al. 2009). It has a wide distribution in the upper Terai to the mountain zone of Nepal at elevations of 310–3,400 m (Eremchenko and Kästle 2002; Kästle et al. 2013).

Tuberculated Agamas are known to feed on a variety of plant matter, including germinating seeds, tender leaves, buds, and flowers of squash, bottle gourd, pumpkin, tomato, *Zinnia*, and *Dahlia* (Lal 1991). Captive lizards from Nepal consumed Ground Elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*), Chickweed (*Stellaria media*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), leaves of Blue-eyed Mary (*Omphalodes verna*), Ivy-leaved Toadflax (*Cymbalaria muralis*), fruits of Black Currant (*Ribes nigrum*), and Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) (Eremchenko and Kästle 2002). In nature, Bashir et al. (2009) reported them feeding on Kale (*Brassica oleracea* var. *acephala*), Cabbage (*B. oleracea* var. *capitata*), Tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum*), Prickly Lettuce

(*Lactuca serriola*), Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), White Mulberry (*Morus alba*), and Common Fig (*Ficus carica*). Additionally, *L. tuberculata* has been documented feeding on the flowers of Madagascar Periwinkle (*Catharanthus roseus*) (Vishwakarma et al. 2019) and Panicked Foldwing (*Dicliptera* aff. *paniculata*) (Nawani et al. 2020).

At 1145 h on 30 October 2021, along the Karnali River at Chisapani, Lamkichuha Municipality-3, Kailali District in Far-West Province, Nepal (28.642583°N, 81.282694°E; elev. 195 m asl), I observed an adult male *L. tuberculata* feeding on *Ficus squamosa* (Fig. 1). Sensing my presence, and before I could photograph the lizard feeding on the plant, it fled approximately 2 m into the safety of nearby boulders. I also observed another adult and a subadult basking on rocks in the vicinity. *Ficus squamosa* is a low-spreading gregarious shrub that grows along streams in forests and is often consumed by livestock. Kunwar and Bussmann (2006) noted its distribu-



Fig. 1. A Tuberculated Agama (*Laudakia tuberculata*) after it fled in response to the author’s presence. It had been feeding on *Ficus squamosa* (right) when it was disturbed. Photographs by Tapil Prakash Rai.

tion in central and eastern Nepal at elevations of 500–600 m asl. This record of *L. tuberculata* feeding on *F. squamosa* in western Nepal also represents the lowest elevational records for this species in Nepal. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first report of *L. tuberculata* feeding on *F. squamosa*.

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