

**HEMIDACTYLUS PORBANDARENSIS, A NEW GECKONID LIZARD FROM
GUJARAT, INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

Hemidactylus porbandarensis, a new species of lizard belonging to the family Geckonidae inhabiting the saline areas near Porbandar port, Gujarat, India is described. It is nocturnal in habit. During the day it hides under the huge boulders, scattered all over the port area of Porbandar.

INTRODUCTION

While surveying the coastal area of Gujarat in September 1975, I came across this new Geckonid lizard of genus *Hemidactylus* Oken (1817). The lizards were found to be inhabiting the marshy coastal areas with dense xerophytic vegetation. The above material was collected by tilting huge boulders lying scattered on the bank of saline water pools in the port area of Porbandar.

***Hemidactylus porbandarensis* n. sp.**

Material : 5 ex., Surroundings of port, Porbandar, Gujarat, collected on 21.IX.1975 by R. C. Sharma.

DESCRIPTION

Light gray above, with dark-brown irregularly arranged spots on the complete dorsum including the tail and limbs. Maximum concentration of such spots is on the neck region ; a dark streak along each side of head

passing through the eyes ; yellowish-white below.

Body slender, slightly depressed. Head narrow (17 mm. long and 9 mm. wide), twice as long as broad, snout obtusely pointed, longer than the distance between the eye and the ear-opening, which is small, subcircular, with a diameter $\frac{1}{3}$ that of eye, upper labials 9-11 ; lower labials 7-8 ; mental large, triangular, twice as long as the adjacent labials ; two pairs of post-mentals, the inner one is at least two times larger than the outer (Fig. IB), gular region with small flat, rounded scales ; rostral broader than high, nostril between the rostral and seven small scales ; top of head covered with small juxtaposed scales, intermixed with large rounded flat ones ; back with small irregular scales and with 16-17 longitudinal series of more or less round or oval strongly keeled tubercles ; belly with large flat round intricate scales. Digits free, dilated ; lamellae under first toe 5-6 ; lamellae under fourth toe

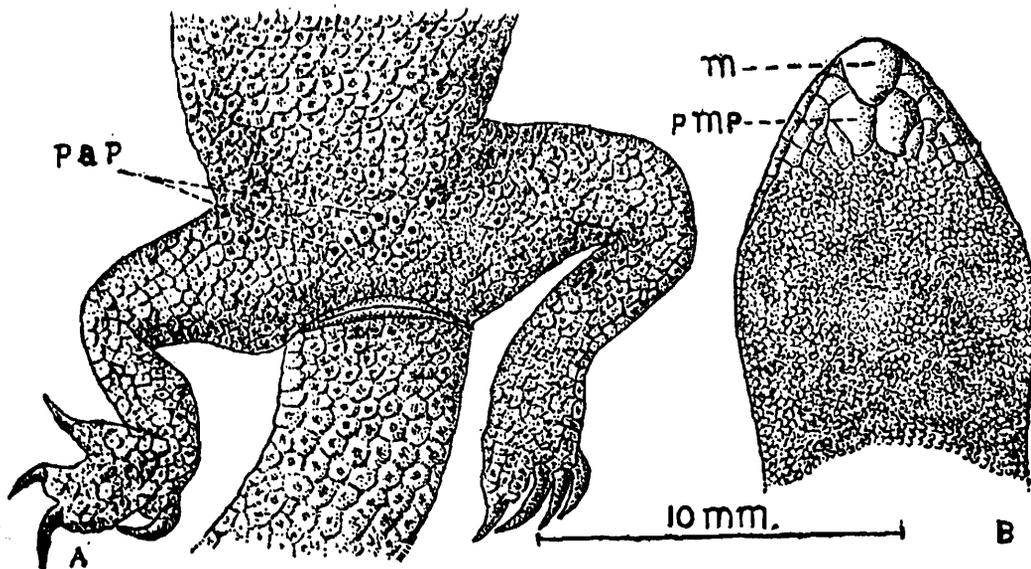


Fig. 1. A. Inguinal region of *Hemidactylus porbandarensis* n. sp showing preanal pores.
B. Ventral aspect of head showing the postmental shields.

9-10 ; the adpressed hind limb hardly reaching the axilla. Tail moderately depressed, verticillate, oval in section, its upper side covered with round smooth or feebly keeled scales and a series of 6 strongly keeled pointed tubercles ; below with imbricate, smooth scales with a median series of transversely enlarged plates. The tail could be examined in the holotype only, for in all the four paratypes tails are entirely missing. Holotype has an angular series of 6 preanal pores (Fig. 1A).

Measurements : Snout to vent length 31-45 mm. (holotype 40 mm.). Tail length in holotype 30 mm. (broken at the tip).

Type-specimens : *Holotype* : ♂ adult, vide "Material" above D.R.S., Z.S.I., Reg. No. V/2152, deposited in National Zoological Collections, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta. *Paratypes* : 4 ♀♀, from the same lot of holotype, D.R.S., Z.S.I., Reg. No. V/2125, also in Z.S.I., Jodhpur. All preserved in alcohol.

Type-locality : Port area, Porbandar, Junagadh District, Gujarat.

Distribution : Known only from the type locality.

Comparison : *Hemidactylus porbandarensis* n. sp. comes closer to *Hemidactylus gracilis* Blanford from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra but differs from the latter as follows : (i) 9-11 upper labials (vs. 9 or 10), (ii) 7-8 lower labials (vs. always 7), (iii) inner pair of post-mentals is at least two times larger than the outer pair (vs. the inner pair is not much larger than the outer pair), (iv) Back with 16 or 17 longitudinal series of strongly keeled more or less round or oval scales (vs. back with 10 or 12 longitudinal series of more or less oval strongly keeled tubercles), (v) 5 or 6 lamellae under the first toe, all are divided except the anterior and posterior most (vs. 5 lamellae only, only the anterior ones divided), (vi) 9 or 10 lamellae under the fourth toe, all are divided except the anterior and posterior mosts (vs. 8 or 9 lamellae, only the anterior ones divided).