

# Range extension of Misonne's swollen-nose gecko, *Rhinogecko misonnei* de Witte, 1973 (Sauria: Geckonidae) in Iran

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*Rhinogecko misonnei* (de Witte, 1973) is a species of geckonid lizard distributed in Iran and Pakistan. This species was called *Agamura misonnei* by Szczerbak and Golubev in 1993. Witte (1973) was the first to introduce this species from Dasht-e-Lut in eastern Iran (30°13' N, 58°47' E). The last report of this species that of Moradi et al. (2009) in the western Dasht-e-Lut in eastern Iran (30°29' N, 57°44' E). Here, we report a new record that shows a wider distribution of *Rhinogecko misonnei* in southeastern Iran. An adult specimen of this species (ZMSBUK703) was collected during field work from Rigan county, southeastern Kerman Province.

During field work on the herpetofauna of desert areas in Rigan county (28°33'59" N, 58°47'48" E), Kerman province, southeastern Iranian plateau in May 2015, an adult female specimen of *Rhinogecko misonnei* de Witte, 1973 was collected by hand with the aid of an electric torch at night (12 AM). This specimen was preserved in 70% ethanol at the Shahid Bahonar University laboratory. The specimen was identified according to Anderson (1999). This specimen is compared with specimens from the Dasht-e-Lut using six morphometric and eight meristic characters.

Morphometric characters: SVL: snout to vent length (from tip of snout to anterior edge of cloaca); TL: tail length (from posterior edge of cloaca to tip of tail); HW: head width; HH: head height; ED: eye diameter; Eal: ear length (at widest point of the ear opening)

Meristic characters: SL: number of supra labials scales; IL: number of infralabial scales; TVe: number of transverse ventral scales (across midbody); LVe: number of longitudinal ventral scales (between mental and cloaca); LsT: number of enlarged scales on lower surface of thigh; SaH: number of scales across the head (interorbital, the scales on the ridge above the eye were not counted); SdT: number of scales around dorsal tubercles. Morphometric measurements were taken by mechanical Vernier Calipers to the nearest 0.01 mm.

Comparison of our specimen of *Rhinogecko misonnei* from the desert of Rigan County with specimens from the Dasht-e-Lut shows that specimens of both areas have the same range of metric and meristic characters. It has 25 shields across (TVe) and 89 longitudinal abdominal shields (LVe), the three nasal scales are strongly bulbous and extended into tubes; a row of 10 enlarged scales on lower surface of thigh (LsT). Tail longer than the body (TL>SVL). All measurements and ranges are shown in Table 1. Distance of the new locality for *Rhinogecko misonnei* to type locality is 186 km and

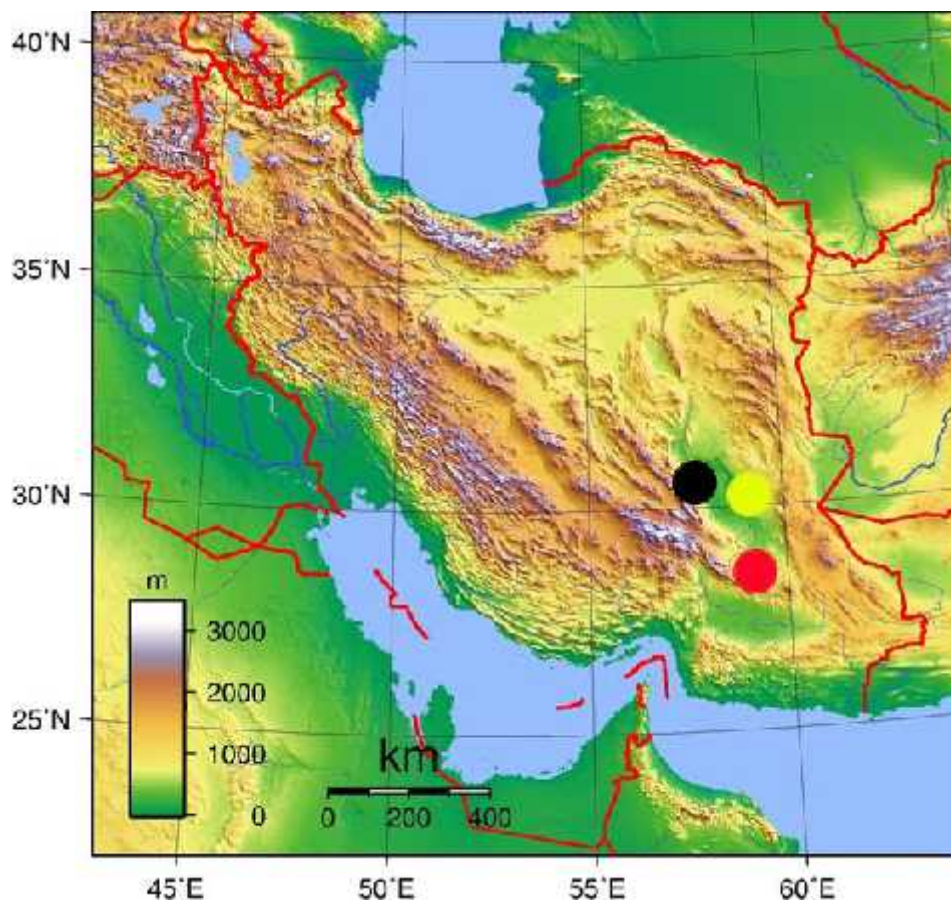
to last locality in the west of Dasht-e-Lut is 238 km. the new distribution of *Rhinogecko misonnei* are presented in Fig. 1.

**Color pattern and habitat:** Dorsal surface of the head and body are gray with white tubercles between small scales and five wide transverse dark bars on body and nine on tail, the limbs have small dark bands that are lighter than the others (Fig. 2). The habitat is a gravel desert with low vegetation (Fig. 3).

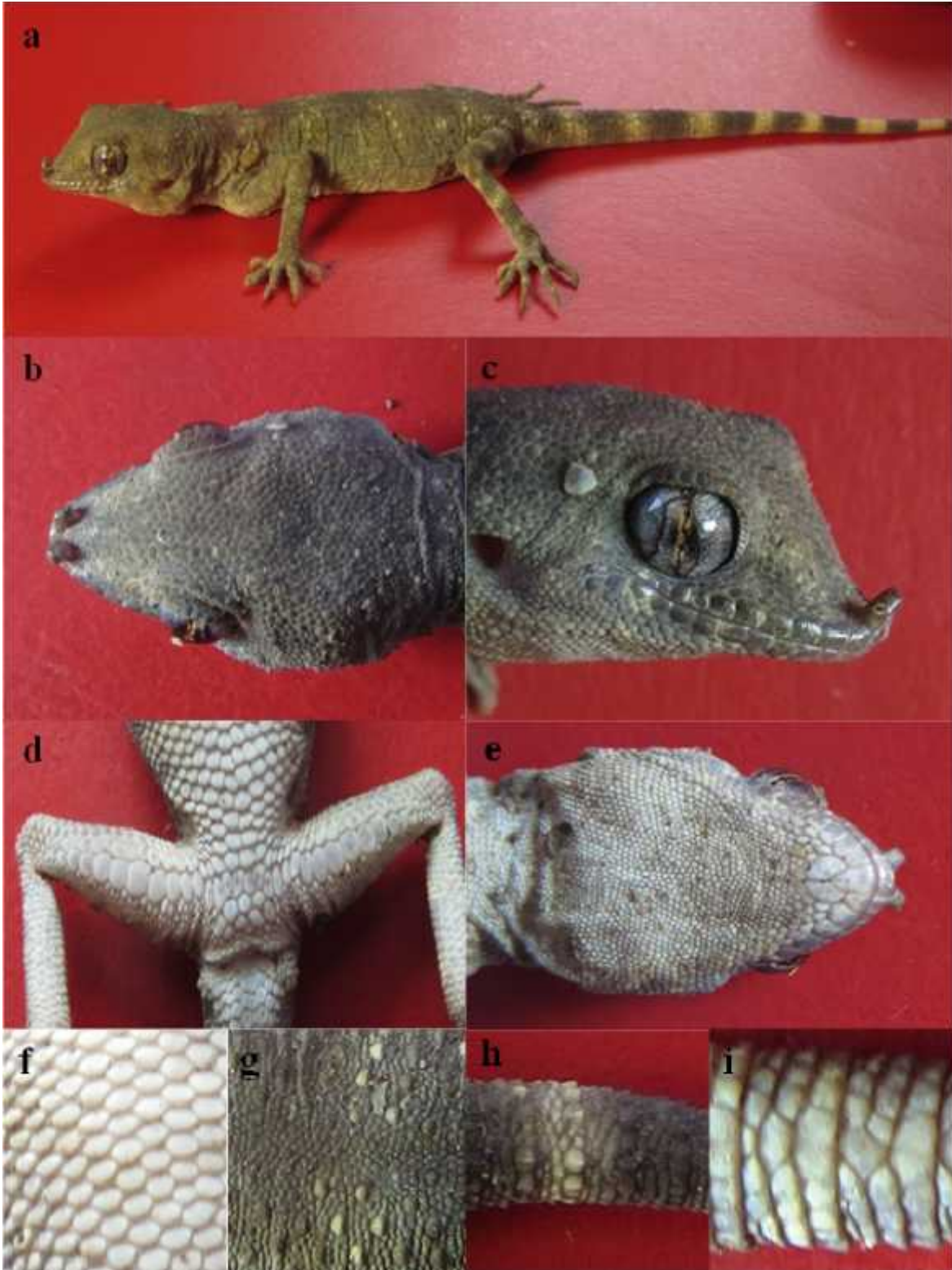
De Witte (1973) described *Rhinogecko misonnei* from the eastern Dasht-e-Lut. This species is known from Iran and Pakistan (Anderson 1999). The last report of *Rhinogecko misonnei* was 100 km west of the type locality (Moradi et al. 2009). This record from the Rigan County shows a new locality for this species. This locality is situated 186 km south of the type locality and 238 km from the last report in the western Dasht-e-Lut. It indicates a somewhat more extensive distribution of *R. misonnei* in southeastern Iran. The collected specimen from Rigan County agrees with the descriptions of *R. misonnei* given by Anderson (1974, 1999), Szczerbak and Golubev (1993), Rastegar-Pouyani et al. (2006) and Moradi et al. (2009) except for number of longitudinal ventral scales (135 instead of 125) that show wider range of LVe.

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**FIGURE 1.** Distribution of *Rhinogecko misonnei* in Iran. Yellow circle: type locality (Witte, 1973). Black circle: previous record. Red circle: record from present study.



**FIGURE 2.** *Rhinogecko misonnei* : (a) complete view; (b) Dorsal view of head; (c) Lateral view of head; (d) Enlarged scales on lower surface of thigh; (e) ventral view of head; (f) ventral scales; (g) dorsal scales; (h) dorsal view of tail scales; (i) ventral view of tail scales.



**FIGURE 3.** The habitat of *Rhino Gecko misonnei*.

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