

Short Communication

First report of Blanford's semaphore gecko, *Pristurus rupestris* (Blanford 1874) (Sauria: Gekkonidae) in Fars Province, Iran

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Pristurus Ruppel, 1835 is a gekkonine genus having many adaptations in common with the New World sphaerodactylid gecko, *viz.*, diurnal habits, sexual dichromatism, round pupil, eyelid formed by circumorbital ring of tissue, simple undilated digits as in *Gonatodes*, small adult size, lack of preanal pores, lack of cloacal sacs and bones, and loss of splenial (Kluge, 1967; 1983). Its distribution is on islands and coastal regions of eastern Africa, Arabia, and Southeast Asia bordering the Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, and the Persian Gulf (Anderson, 1999). This genus comprises about 22 species, 14 inhabiting the Western Palearctic (Sindaco and Jeremcenco, 2008). Blanford's semaphore gecko, *Pristurus rupestris* was reported for the first time by Blanford in 1874 in Muscat, Oman (Leviton et al., 1992; Anderson, 1999). This species is distributed in the Arabian Peninsula (north to southwest Jordan), the Persian Gulf coast of Iran, Eritrea, Djibouti, and north of Somalia (including the border with Ethiopia) (Sindaco and Jeremcenco, 2008). Anderson (1999) reported this species in nine localities including Bandar-e- Lengeh, Bushehr, Chah Mossulum, Tangistan, Jask, Minab, the Genu protected region, Chah Bahar, Khark Island, and Qeshm Island. Reports of Rastegar Pouyani et al. (2006) expanded the distribution of this species to Sistan and Baluchistan province. In summer and winter of 2007 and spring 2008, 4 specimens of this species were collected: two in Demaghah-I-Gora in southwest Fars Province, southwest Iran (27° 28'N, 53° 2'E; 421 m) (Fig. 1), about 1 km northwest of Varavi town, 25 km from the city of Lamerd, and two specimens in the northeast of it on the wall of a house on a mountainside). These specimens were captured on the limestone rock surfaces of mountains, the stone walls of palm groves (Fig. 2), and on the cement wall of a house adjacent to the mountain. Hence the distribution of this species expands into Fars Province. This locality is about 200 km from the nearest previously published record.

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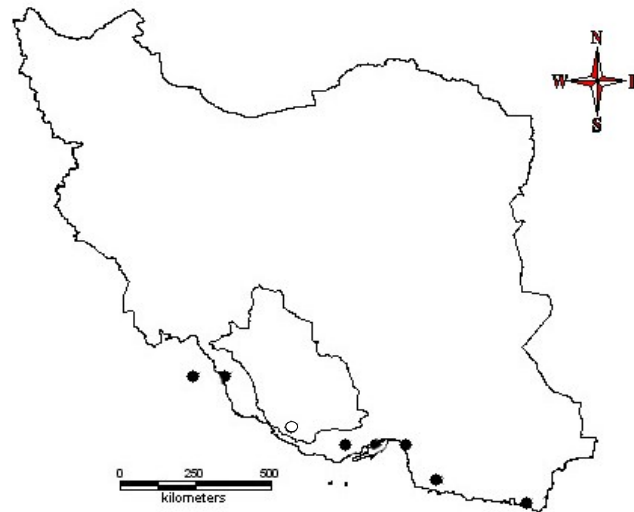


FIG. 1.-. Previous (●) and present (○) distribution of *Pristurus rupestris* in south of Iran.

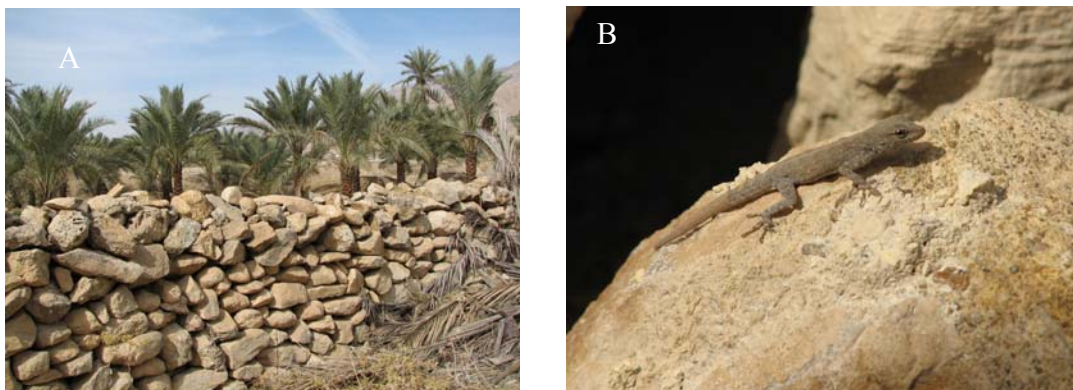


FIG. 2- A. Stone wall of a palm-grove, the natural habitat of *Pristurus rupestris* in 'Demaghah-I-Gora', northwest Varavi town, Lamerd region, in south of Fars Province. B, a specimen of *Pristurus rupestris* on the surface of a stone wall of same palm-grove.

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