

Land snails in faecal pellets of the Golden Skink

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The Golden Skink, *Eumeces schneideri pavimentatus* (Geoffroy-St. Hilaire, 1827) (Reptilia, Scincidae) is commonly encountered in the part of Israel which is characterized by a Mediterranean climate (Werner, 1966: 24). In the Rehovot-Kibbutz Netzer Sereni area it is found often under stones, pieces of wood and all kinds of rubbish; it may reach a length of up to 50 cm.

On 20 March 1979 an adult female was caught under a piece of iron ca. 1 km N. of Rehovot. At home it was kept for two days in an empty box. When it was allowed to escape, a faecal pellet was found with remains of a beetle, a grasshopper, three snails and a large amount of sand grains. The shells of the snails were completely crushed but could still be identified as *Monacha haifaensis* (Pallary, 1939) (two) and *Theba pisana* (Müller, 1774) (one).

On 7 April 1979 an adult male was caught under a large stone in a field near the entrance gate of the elementary school of Kibbutz Netzer Sereni. It was also kept for a few days in an empty box in order to obtain faecal pellets. After three days indeed a pellet was found with the remains of three different beetles, among which *Carabus impressus* Klug, and three land snails, all belonging to *Monacha haifaensis* (Pallary, 1939).

As far as I know this constitutes the first written record of Golden Skinks feeding on snails in Israel. However, Mr. Shmuel Moran (personal communication) has observed actual predation on estivating *Theba pisana* (Müller, 1774) by *Eumeces schneideri pavimentatus* in the dunes near Palmahim. It seems likely that the Golden Skink in Israel regularly preys on land snails.

Thanks are due to Mr. Shmuel Moran (Plant Protection Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Yaffo) for his information.

REFERENCE

WERNER, Y.L., 1966. The reptiles of Israel: 1-49. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem (in Hebrew).

SAMENVATTING

Door middel van onderzoek van uitwerpselen van *Eumeces schneideri pavimentatus* kon vastgesteld worden dat deze skink zich in Israël op zijn minst met twee soorten landslakken voedt: *Monacha haifaensis* en *Theba pisana*.