

California Wildlife Habitat Relationships System
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Interagency Wildlife Task Group

PENINSULA LEAF-TOED GECKO

Phyllodactylus nocticolus

Family: GEKKONIDAE
R009

Order: SQUAMATA

Class: REPTILIA

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DISTRIBUTION, ABUNDANCE, AND SEASONALITY

This species mainly occurs on rocky hillsides and canyons in desert habitats, marginally in mixed chaparral. Its elevation range extends up to 610 m (2000 ft) (Stebbins 1985). It occurs from Seven-level Hill near Palm Desert, Riverside Co., south through the Anza-Borrego desert to Baja California. It may be locally abundant in rocky areas of the foothills and canyons of the Borrego Desert, San Diego Co. (Dixon 1964, 1969).

SPECIFIC HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Feeding: Leaf-toed geckos feed on beetles, spiders, moths, flies, termites, ants, and occasionally insect larvae. Foraging occurs on the surface of rocks (Dixon 1964).

Cover: During the day, lizards may be found in crevices between boulders or beneath exfoliating slabs of granite. Occasionally, individuals are found near water under the bark of palo verde, prickly pear, and mesquite (Dixon 1964). Geckos are excellent climbers. Adherent toe-pads allow rapid movement on steep faces and undersides of rocks (Stebbins 1954, Dixon 1964).

Reproduction: Eggs are attached to the underside of rocks or bark (Leviton 1971).

Water: Dixon (1964) did not observe these lizards drinking water or swimming.

Pattern: Prefers rocky outcrops and boulders.

SPECIES LIFE HISTORY

Activity Patterns: Nocturnal. Hibernates from late October to mid-March (Dixon 1964).

Seasonal Movements/Migration: No data.

Home Range: No data.

Territory: No data.

Reproduction: Stebbins (1954) found gravid females in Baja California almost ready to lay eggs in May and June. In California, young emerge in June and are found through August (Dixon 1964). Clutch size is 1-2 eggs.

Niche: Nocturnal rock- or crevice-dwelling snakes are probable predators.

Comments: The first sighting of the leaf-toed gecko in California was in 1920 (Stephens 1921). Earlier reported sighting of leaf-toed geckos in California are believed to be from Baja California

(Dixon 1964).

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