



Distribution of the Mediterranean gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*) in Texas

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Introduction

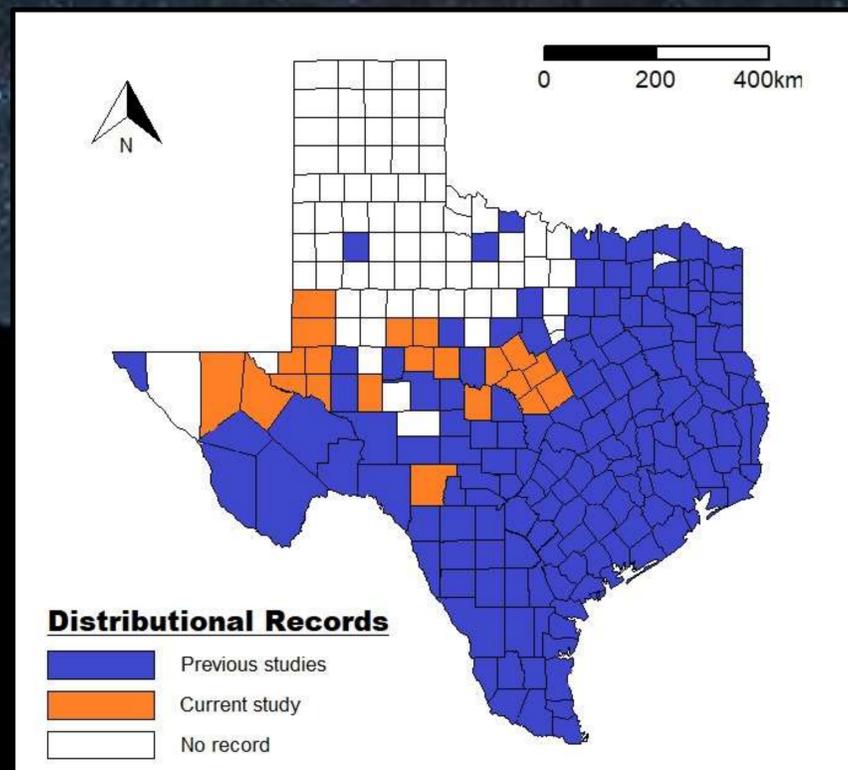
- The Mediterranean Gecko (*Hemidactylus turcicus*) is native to southern Europe, northern Africa, and far-west Asia (Powell et al. 2016)
- *Hemidactylus turcicus* has been introduced to many areas outside its native range
- First documented in Texas in 1955 (Conant 1955)
- Now reported throughout much of Texas but distribution remains poorly known
- An accurate, county-delineated range map has been lacking for 7 years

Methods

- Visit Texas counties from which *H. turcicus* has not been documented
- Conduct nocturnal surveys in urban habitats
- Capture specimens when possible
- Preserve vouchers and deposit at the Amphibian and Reptile Diversity Research Center at the University of Texas at Arlington
- Generate an updated state-wide distribution map for the taxon
- Highlight any novel detections which indicate a larger distribution

Results

- We discovered *H. turcicus* in 21 Texas counties for which distribution records were lacking in the literature (Bassett and Forstner, 2020; Bassett et al., 2020a; Bassett et al., 2020b; DiVito et al., 2020; Bassett et al., 2021; Bassett et al., in review)
- Of the 23 counties we surveyed, in only 2 (Irion and Yoakum) did we fail to detect *H. turcicus*



Discussion

- Our discovery of *H. turcicus* in 21 Texas counties demonstrates substantial range expansion by this taxon within Texas
- More surveys need to be conducted throughout the state as there are conspicuous gaps in the current distribution map
- The interaction between *H. turcicus* and native herpetofauna should be investigated, especially in west Texas where native geckos are present

Acknowledgments

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