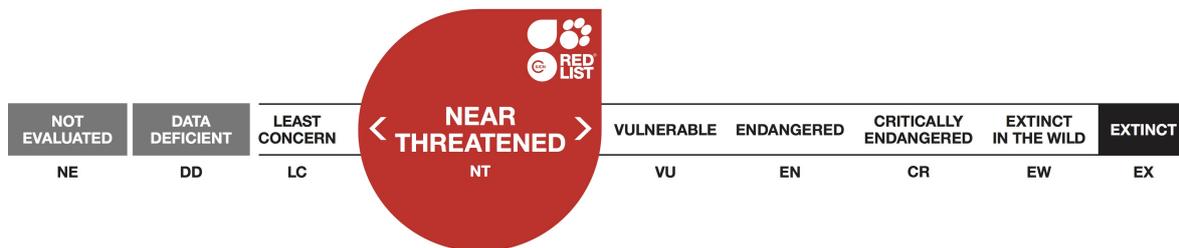


Vhembelacerta rupicola, Soutpansberg Rock Lizard

Assessment by: Turner, A.A.



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Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Reptilia	Squamata	Lacertidae

Taxon Name: *Vhembelacerta rupicola* (FitzSimons, 1933)

Synonym(s):

- *Australolacerta rupicola* (FitzSimons, 1933)
- *Lacerta rupicola* FitzSimons, 1933

Common Name(s):

- English: Soutpansberg Rock Lizard

Taxonomic Source(s):

Edwards, S., Branch, W.R., Vanhooydonck, B., Herrel, A., Measey, G.J. and Tolley, K.A. 2013. Taxonomic adjustments in the systematics of southern African lacertid lizards (Sauria: Lacertidae). *Zootaxa* 3669(2): 101-114.

Taxonomic Notes:

An analysis of mitochondrial and nuclear DNA sequence data indicated that *Australolacerta rupicola* should be placed in a separate genus, *Vhembelacerta* (Edwards *et al.* 2012).

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Near Threatened [ver 3.1](#)

Year Published: 2017

Date Assessed: May 16, 2013

Justification:

Both the extent of occurrence (EOO = 2,570 km²) and area of occupancy (AOO = 1,216 km²) are below the Vulnerable thresholds and a decline in the quantity and quality of suitable habitat due to future land-use changes is predicted [B1b(ii,iii)+2b(ii,iii)]. However, it is not known to what extent the existing populations are fragmented or how many locations exist. The species is therefore considered Near Threatened.

Previously Published Red List Assessments

1996 – Lower Risk/near threatened (LR/nt)

1996 – Lower Risk/near threatened (LR/nt)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.1996.RLTS.T41227A10420100.en>

1994 – Rare (R)

Geographic Range

Range Description:

Endemic to Limpopo, South Africa. Occurs widely throughout the Soutpansberg mountain range (Jacobsen 1988, Branch 1998).

Country Occurrence:

Native: South Africa (Limpopo Province)

Population

No information on population size or trend is currently available.

Current Population Trend: Unknown

Habitat and Ecology (see Appendix for additional information)

Occurs on rocky outcrops, scree slopes and bedrock (Jacobsen 1988) in wooded savanna and forest fringes on mountain slopes. Found mainly at the edge of Soutpansberg Mountain Bushveld or mistbelt forest with rocky outcrops on southern and southeastern slopes at altitudes of 800–1,600 m (Kirchhof and Richter 2009). Forages in leaf litter and seeks refuge in rock cracks at night (Kirchhof *et al.* 2010).

Systems: Terrestrial

Use and Trade

Not known to be utilized in any way.

Threats (see Appendix for additional information)

Large-scale timber plantations are the main threat. However, this lizard is able to survive in areas that are too arid for plantations and this reduces the severity of the threat. The increasing demand for indigenous trees as a fuel source may reduce the amount and quality of habitat.

Conservation Actions (see Appendix for additional information)

Perform a detailed survey of the Soutpansberg mountain range, to accurately determine the extent of occurrence. Not known to occur in any formally protected areas, but does occur at Lajuma Private Nature Reserve where it receives some protection. Therefore, establish secure protected areas that include the range of the species.

Credits

Assessor(s): Turner, A.A.

Reviewer(s): Bates, M.F.

Bibliography

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External Resources

For [Images and External Links to Additional Information](#), please see the [Red List website](#).

Appendix

Habitats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
2. Savanna -> 2.1. Savanna - Dry	-	Suitable	-
1. Forest -> 1.9. Forest - Subtropical/Tropical Moist Montane	-	Suitable	-

Threats

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
2. Agriculture & aquaculture -> 2.2. Wood & pulp plantations -> 2.2.2. Agro-industry plantations	Ongoing	Unknown	-	-
	Stresses:	1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.1. Ecosystem conversion 1. Ecosystem stresses -> 1.2. Ecosystem degradation		

Conservation Actions in Place

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Conservation Actions in Place
In-Place Land/Water Protection and Management
Occur in at least one PA: No
In-Place Education
Included in international legislation: No

Conservation Actions Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Conservation Actions Needed
1. Land/water protection -> 1.1. Site/area protection
2. Land/water management -> 2.1. Site/area management

Research Needed

(<http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes>)

Research Needed
1. Research -> 1.2. Population size, distribution & trends

Additional Data Fields

Distribution
Estimated area of occupancy (AOO) (km ²): 1216
Continuing decline in area of occupancy (AOO): Yes
Estimated extent of occurrence (EOO) (km ²): 2570
Continuing decline in extent of occurrence (EOO): No
Lower elevation limit (m): 800
Upper elevation limit (m): 1600
Population
Continuing decline of mature individuals: Unknown
Population severely fragmented: Unknown
Habitats and Ecology
Continuing decline in area, extent and/or quality of habitat: Yes
Generation Length (years): 2-3

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