DIET OF *Acanthodactylus schreiberi* THROUGH FAECAL SAMPLES

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The diet of a population of *Acanthodactylus schreiberi* in a sand dune ecosystem in Cyprus is analyzed based on 142 faecal pellets samples collected during 2009. Seasons (spring, summer, autumn) and classes (39 males, 59 females and 44 subadults) were compared and main morphometric characteristics (SVL, mass, mouth opening) were considered. Prey items were categorized into Operational Taxonomic Units (OTUs), and size categories based on prey length to the nearest 1mm (1-19mm and >20mm). Four diet descriptors were used, abundance, richness, diversity and evenness. Studied population's diet is highly dependent on Formicidae and Coleoptera, followed by Hemiptera and Hymenoptera while comparatively large amounts of plant matter were present mainly on adult individuals. Although large lizards tend to consume larger prey, they do not neglect small prey sizes. Variation in prey types across seasons and classes was limited and not translated into different diet descriptors. Only adults show slightly higher population diversity and males consumed some very large prey sporadically, likely due to stronger bite force. Based on our results the trophic niche of *A. schreiberi* is narrow and conservative regarding the environmental fluctuations. This pattern, involving active search of clumped prey, similar food spectrum between sexes and systematic consumption of plant matter, is common in other members of the genus and in insular species but contrasts with other Mediterranean lacertids.