

Genus *Heliobolus* Fitzinger, 1843—bushveld lizards

The genus *Heliobolus* contains four species widely distributed in Africa (Uetz 2012). Together with *Nucras*, *Heliobolus* is the sister clade to *Pseuderemias* (Mayer & Pavlicev 2007). The only representative in the *Atlas* region is *Heliobolus lugubris*, which is widespread in central southern Africa. These lizards prefer open, sandy habitats. Females of this species lay clutches of 4–6

eggs in a self-excavated hole (Branch 1998). Hatchlings mimic the 'oogpister' or predacious ground beetle (*Anthia*) and this probably provides some protection from predators (Huey & Pianka 1977a; Schmidt 2004). These lizards may be locally abundant and apparently are not especially threatened by cattle farming, the main human activity in their habitat.

Heliobolus lugubris (A. Smith, 1838)

BUSHVELD LIZARD

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Regional: Least Concern

Taxonomy: No notable issues.

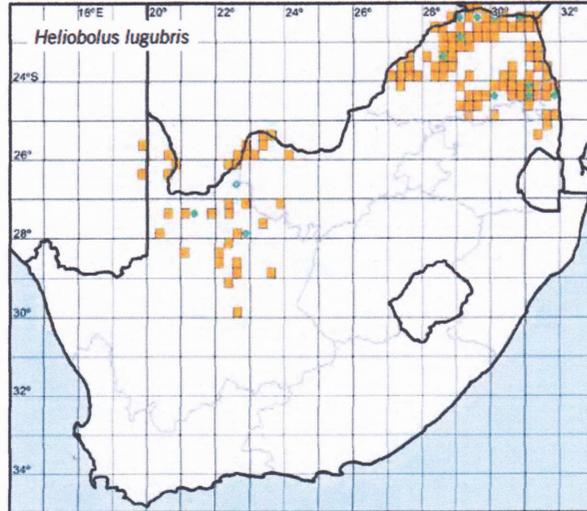
Distribution: Very widely distributed, from southern Angola over the Kalahari sands through Namibia, Botswana, south-western Zimbabwe, southern Mozambique and South Africa (Branch 1998). In the *Atlas* region it occurs in Limpopo, northern Mpumalanga, the western part of North-West Province and the northern parts of Northern Cape.

Habitat: Occupies hot, low-lying savanna, often overlying Kalahari sands.

Biome: Savanna; Nama-Karoo.

Assessment rationale: Widely distributed and not known to be negatively impacted by the livestock grazing that commonly takes place in its habitat. Occurs in a number of large protected areas.

Conservation measures: None recommended.



Heliobolus lugubris, adult—Farm Good Hope, 30 km SW of Prieska, NC
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Heliobolus lugubris, juvenile—Greater KuduLand Safaris, E of Tshipise, LIMP
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