

Family Lacertidae

Meroles ctenodactylus (Smith, 1838)

Giant Desert Lizard

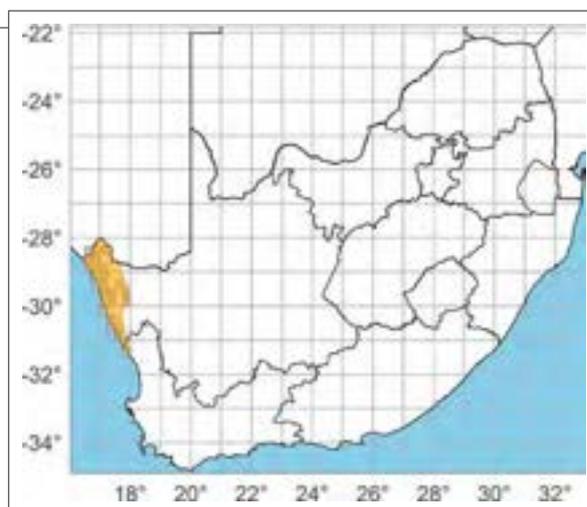
■ LC – Least Concern (Regional)

Assessors: Tolley, K.A., Turner, A.A.

Previous Red List categories:

2020: Least Concern (Global IUCN assessment).

2014: Least Concern (SARCA).

Assessment rationale: Has a moderate-sized distribution, with no known substantial threats.**Taxonomic notes:** No notable issues. *Other important names:* none.**Distribution:** Occurs from Sossusvlei in southern Namibia, southwards along the west coast to the northern portions of the Western Cape province of South Africa (Branch 1998; Branch 2013). In South Africa, its range along the west coast extends inland ± 80 km, roughly following the Succulent Karoo biome. *EOO:* 26 500 km²; *Distribution:* 22 100 km².**Countries of occurrence:** Namibia, South Africa.**Habitat and ecology:** Inhabits sparsely vegetated areas with loose sand (Branch 1998) or well-vegetated dune slacks and dune hummocks (Branch 2013). *Habitat:* Shrubland, Desert, Coastal sand dunes.**Threats:** Some parts of the distribution may be affected by coastal strip mining, but this occurs within a small part of the range.**Population trend:** Because this lizard occurs mainly in arid regions that have not been extensively impacted by habitat transformation, and because it appears abundant where it occurs, the population size is not thought to have declined although the effects of coastal strip mining on this species have not been quantified.**Conservation and research recommendations:** No recommendations.*Meroles ctenodactylus*, Koingnaas, Northern Cape province (© L. Kemp).