

TEIRA DUGESII (Madeira Lizard). DIET. *Teira dugesii* is an extremely common lacertid lizard endemic to the Madeiran and Selvagens archipelagos, with introduced populations on the Azores and mainland Portugal around Lisbon harbor (Arnold and Owen 2002. A Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Britain and Europe. Second Edition. Collins Publishers. London, UK 288

pp.). Although many aspects of the natural history of these lizards remain poorly known, their diet has been studied in some detail and consists of wide range of invertebrates, birds, and substantial plant material such as fruit, seeds, leaves, and flowers (Elvers 1977. Bot. Notiser 130:231–234; Sadek 1981. Zool. J. Linn. Soc. 73:313–341; Neves et al. 2017. Waterbirds 40:82–86). However, with the exception of reports of nectar feeding, previous authors did not identify the species of plants consumed. Herein I report an observation of *T. dugesii* consuming berries from an ornamental *Fuchsia* on Madeira Island.

On 29 May 2022, at ca. 1400 h, I observed an adult *T. dugesii* (ca. 45 mm SVL) eating berries from a *Fuchsia* cultivar in the gardens of the Quinta Jardins do Lago Hotel, Funchal, Madeira (32.65597°N, 16.91827°W; WGS 84; 146 m elev.). I watched the lizard as it picked and ate three of the plants purplish-black berries (Fig. 1) in a row. The plant was growing against a wall upon which the lizard was active. The lizard was ca. 75 cm above the ground when eating the berries. After removing each berry by grasping it in its mouth and giving 1–3 sharp tugs, the lizard immediately carried it to a shelter in the wall concealed by leaves of the same plant to eat the berry whole before returning for another. Since the swallowing was done behind cover it is difficult to accurately state the time taken for consumption, but the lizard returned to collect the next berry within ca. 30 s of collecting the previous one. No other parts of the plant were observed to be eaten.

While frugivory has been reported in *T. dugesii*, to my knowledge this is the first observation of *T. dugesii* eating fruit

from a *Fuchsia* species. Plant material, including fruits and seeds, make up 40% of this species diet by volume (Sadek 1981, *op. cit.*), and high densities (Arnold and Ovenden 2002, *op. cit.*; Arbuckle and Nichols, unpubl.), suggest they may act as important seed dispersers as seen with numerous other island lizard species (Olesen and Valido 2003. Trends Ecol. Evol. 18:177–181).

I thank the staff at the Quinta Jardins do Lago hotel for their incredible hospitality and permission to study the lizards in their gardens. This study was approved by the Swansea University Ethics Committee (approval number SU-Ethics-Staff-180822/512).

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FIG. 1. The *Fuchsia* cultivar from which *T. dugesii* was eating purple berries in Funchal, Madeira.