Two newly recognized species of *Hemidactylus* (Squamata, Gekkonidae) from the Arabian Peninsula and Sinai, Egypt

Jiří Šmíd¹,², Jiří Moravec¹,², Lukáš Kratochvíl³,⁴, Václav Gvoždík¹,¹, Abdul Karim Nasher⁴,⁵, Salem M. Busais⁶,⁷, Thomas Wilms⁷,⁸, Mohammed Y. Shobrak⁸,⁹, Salvador Carranza⁹

¹ Department of Zoology, National Museum, Cirkovouš 1740, Prague, Czech Republic ² Department of Zoology, Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, Viničná 7, Prague, Czech Republic ³ Department of Ecology, Faculty of Science, Charles University in Prague, Viničná 7, Prague, Czech Republic ⁴ Faculty of Science, University of Saná, Saná, Yemen ⁵ Biology Department, Faculty of Education, University of Aden, Aden, Yemen ⁶ Faculty of Sciences, University of Hail, Hail, Saudi Arabia ⁷ Zoologischer Garten Frankfurt, Bernhard-Grzimek-Allee 1, Frankfurt am Main, Germany ⁸ Biology department, Faculty of Science, Taif University 888, Taif, Saudi Arabia ⁹ Institute of Evolutionary Biology (CSIC-Universitat Pompeu Fabra), Passeig Marítim de la Barceloneta 37–49, Barcelona, Spain

† http://zoobank.org/A1094092-6B76-4A14-AC6E-6D4EF2E49BC8  ‡ http://zoobank.org/860D3E6B-8AC6-48A5-A94E-47F2F0CFFB72  † http://zoobank.org/BCF502BE-88CB-4CE5-B015-1975DB8A8920  | http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66  † http://zoobank.org/DF30E84D-46C5-45EE-9140-E7E2154D9A66

Corresponding author: Jiří Moravec (jiri.moravec@nm.cz)

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Abstract
A recent molecular phylogeny of the Arid clade of the genus *Hemidactylus* revealed that the recently described *H. saba* and two unnamed *Hemidactylus* species from Sinai, Saudi Arabia and Yemen form a well-supported monophyletic group within the Arabian radiation of the genus. The name ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’ is suggested for this clade. According to the results of morphological comparisons and the molecular analyses using two mitochondrial (12S and cytb) and four nuclear (cmos, mc1r, rag1, rag2) genes, the name *Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827 is resurrected from the synonymy of *H. turcicus* for the Sinai and Saudi Arabian species. The third species of this group from Yemen is described formally as a new species *H. ulii* sp. n. The phylogenetic relationships of the members of ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’ are evaluated and the distribution and ecology of individual species are discussed.

Keywords
Reptilia, Gekkonidae, molecular phylogeny, Arabia, Red Sea, *Hemidactylus saba* species group, *Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827, *Hemidactylus ulii* sp. n.

Introduction
The genus *Hemidactylus* Oken, 1817, the second most species-rich genus of Gekkonidae (122 currently valid species; Uetz 2013), has been witnessing a species-description boom within the last decade. Eighteen species have been described within the last two years, most of them from the Arabian Peninsula and surroundings areas where 13 new species and a new subspecies have been discovered (Busais and Joger 2011a; Moravec et al. 2011; Torki et al. 2011; Carranza and Arnold 2012). Despite the large number of taxa added recently to the Arid clade of *Hemidactylus* [sensu Carranza and Arnold (2006)], it has been shown that the real diversity of *Hemidactylus* in Arabia and northeast Africa is still underestimated, with at least seven species remaining to be described (Busais and Joger 2011b; Moravec et al. 2011; Šmíd et al. 2013). A recent study (Šmíd et al. 2013) revealed that two of these newly recognized but still unnamed species, one from Sinai [labelled in accordance to previous works (Moravec et al. 2011; Šmíd et al. 2013) as *Hemidactylus* sp. 1] and one from Yemen (*Hemidactylus* sp. 4), clustered with the recently described Yemeni endemic *H. saba* Busais & Joger, 2011. They form a very well supported clade within the Arabian radiation of the genus (Fig. 1). Although the phylogenetic relationships among these three species were not resolved satisfactorily, it was inferred that they began to diversify approximately 7 million years ago (95% highest posterior density interval 4.3–10), what was followed by a subsequent dispersal of the Sinai species from southern Arabia to the north (Šmíd et al. 2013).

The discovery of a monophyletic species group consisting of one recently described and two newly recognized species calls upon a more thorough study of the nomenclatural status, evolutionary relationships, taxonomy and distribution of its members based on further genetic and morphological data. The present study focuses on this task.
Two newly recognized species of Hemidactylus (Squamata, Gekkonidae) from...

Figure 1. Phylogeny of the Hemidactylus Arid clade (light grey rectangle) modified after Šmíd et al. (2013). Dark grey rectangle highlights the Arabian radiation of this clade, dashed red line delimits the ‘H. saba species group’ dealt with in this study. Black dots indicate ML bootstrap values ≥ 70 and BI posterior probabilities ≥ 0.95.
Material and methods

Material for phylogenetic analyses

In order to resolve the phylogenetic relationships between the two newly recognized *Hemidactylus* species and *H. saba* based on genetic data, a dataset containing only representatives of these three species was assembled. Apart from the data used by Šmíd et al. (2013), additional sequences of the following specimens were produced (Table 1): the holotype and two paratypes of *H. saba* (the only known existing material), 21 individuals from Sinai and Saudi Arabia belonging to *H. sp. 1* (Šmíd et al. 2013), and five individuals of the undescribed species from Yemen (*H. sp. 4;* Šmíd et al. 2013), one of which was included in the study by Busais and Joger (2011a) (labelled as ‘OTU 7’ therein). Total genomic DNA was extracted using DNeasy Blood & Tissue Kit (Qiagen). Subsequently, sequences for up to two mitochondrial (12SrRNA [12S] – ca. 400 bp and cytochrome *b* [cytb] – 307 bp) and four nuclear (*cmos* – 402 bp, *mc1r* – 666 bp, *rag1* – 1023 bp, *rag2* – 408 bp) were produced using primers and PCR conditions described in details elsewhere (Šmíd et al. 2013). Chromatograms of all newly obtained sequences were checked by eye and assembled in Geneious 5.6.5 (Biomatters, http://www.geneious.com/). All genes were aligned individually using MAFFT (Katoh and Toh 2008) with the iterative refinement algorithm with 1000 iterations. Poorly aligned positions in the alignment of 12S were eliminated with Gblocks (Castresana 2000) under low stringency options (Talavera and Castresana 2007), producing a final 12S alignment of 386 bp. Alignments of all coding genes were trimmed so that all started by the first codon position and no stop codons were revealed when translated into amino acids with the appropriate genetic codes.

Phylogenetic analyses and haplotype networks construction

The final dataset consisted of 36 ingroup individuals. Specimen numbers, localities, and GenBank accession numbers of all genes sequenced are presented in Table 1. The alignment of all concatenated genes was 4012 bp long. The software jModelTest 2.1.1 (Guindon and Gascuel 2003; Darriba et al. 2012) was used to assess the best-fitting model of nucleotide substitution for each gene separately under the Akaike information criterion [AIC, Akaike (1973)]. The best-fitting models were selected as follows: 12S – GTR+G; cytb – GTR+I+G; *emos* – HKY+I; *mc1r* – TIM2+I; *rag1* – HKY+I; *rag2* – TrN+I). Phylogenetic analyses were performed using maximum likelihood (ML) and Bayesian inference (BI) methods. In order to detect the potential effect of the nuclear genes on the tree topology and nodal support, independent analyses were run on two datasets: (1) a dataset containing mtDNA genes only (12S, cytb), and (2) a concatenated dataset of all mtDNA and nDNA genes. Sequences of nuclear genes were not phased; heterozygous positions were coded according to the IUPAC ambiguity codes. Gaps were treated as missing data. Three specimens of *H. flaviviridis* and one
Two newly recognized species of *Hemidactylus* (Squamata, Gekkonidae) from... of *H. angulatus*, representatives of two different clades of *Hemidactylus* (Carranza and Arnold 2006), were used to root the trees. Uncorrected genetic distances (\(p\) distances) were calculated in MEGA 5 (Tamura et al. 2011). Almost complete *cytb* sequences (1127 bp) of the new species from Yemen deposited in GenBank (Šmíd et al. 2013) were used to calculate \(p\) distances within this species, whereas an alignment of 307 bp was used to obtain intraspecific \(p\) distances within *H. saba* and the new species from Saudi Arabia and Sinai, and also interspecific \(p\) distances between these three species.

Maximum likelihood analyses of both datasets were performed in RAxML 7.0.3 (Stamatakis 2006) using raxmlGUI (Silvestro and Michalak 2012) graphical extension with parameters estimated independently for each partition, GTR+I+G model of nucleotide evolution and a heuristic search with 100 random addition replicates. Support of the tree nodes was assessed by bootstrap analysis with 1000 pseudoreplications (Felsenstein 1985).

The BI analyses were run in MrBayes 3.2.1 (Ronquist et al. 2012). Appropriate equivalents of the best-fitting models were specified to each partition (gene) and all parameters were unlinked across partitions. Analyses were performed with two runs and four chains for each run for \(10^7\) generations, with sampling interval of 1000 generations. Appropriate sampling was confirmed by examining the stationarity of log likelihood (\(\ln L\)) values and the value of average standard deviations of the split frequencies. Convergence between two simultaneous runs was confirmed by the PSRF (potential scale reduction factor) value. From \(10^4\) sampled trees, 25% were discarded as a burn-in and a majority-rule consensus tree was produced from the remaining ones, with posterior probabilities (pp) of each clade embedded. Nodes with ML bootstrap values \(\geq 70\%\) and pp values \(\geq 0.95\) were considered highly supported (Huelsenbeck and Rannala 2004).

Heterozygous positions in nuclear genes were identified based on the presence of double peaks in chromatograms and using the Heterozygote Plugin in Geneious. For the purpose of haplotype network construction, haplotypes from sequences with more than one heterozygous position were resolved in PHASE 2.1.1 (Stephens et al. 2001). Input data for PHASE were prepared in SeqPHASE (Flot 2010). In order to include as much data as possible, sequences of all *Hemidactylus* species from the Arid clade used in our previous study (Šmíd et al. 2013) were combined with the newly produced sequences and phased together (data not shown). In the case of *rag1*, the original alignment was trimmed to 846 bp, the length at which sequences of all individuals did not contain any N ends that would give misleading results in the allele reconstruction (Joly et al. 2007). PHASE was run under default settings except the probability threshold, which was set to 0.7. Haplotype networks of the four nuclear markers (*cmos, mc1r, rag1, rag2*) were drawn using TCS 1.21 (Clement et al. 2000) with 95% connection limit.

**Material for morphological analyses**

Material for morphological comparison included 225 specimens of 8 *Hemidactylus* species and one subspecies (Appendix) and was obtained from the following collec-
Table 1. List of material used for the phylogenetic analyses. Holotype of *Hemidactylus ulii* sp. n. and *H. saba* are in bold. The column ‘Loc. N o’ refers to the locality number as shown in Fig. 6.

| Species          | Code | Museum number | Country     | Locality            | Loc. N o | Lat     | Long     | l2S     | cyt     | cmos     | mc1r     | rag1     | rag2     |
|------------------|------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| *H. granosus*    | Sher10660 | SMB 10660   | Egypt       | Ayoun Musa          | 1        | 29.875  | 32.649   | JQ957071| JQ957216| JQ957148 | JQ957282 | -        | JQ957409 |
| *H. granosus*    | Hd41  | NMP6V701 63/2 | Egypt       | Sharm el Sheikh; Sinai | 2    | 27.885  | 34.317   | KC818724| HQ833759| JQ957148 | -        | KC818981 | KC647606 |
| *H. granosus*    | Hd96  | NMP6V701 63/1 | Egypt       | Sharm el Sheikh; Sinai | 2    | 27.885  | 34.317   | KC818724| HQ833759| -        | -        | -        | KC647607 |
| *H. granosus*    | Hd87  | NMP6V701 63/3 | Egypt       | Sharm el Sheikh; Sinai | 2    | 27.885  | 34.317   | KC818724| HQ833759| -        | -        | -        | KC647608 |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA63 | ZFMK 94084   | Saudi Arabia| Al Wajh              | 3    | 26.208  | 36.4976  | KC818724| HQ833759| KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA64 | ZFMK 94085   | Saudi Arabia| Al Wajh              | 3    | 26.208  | 36.4976  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA65 | ZFMK 94086   | Saudi Arabia| 15 km S of Al Wajh   | 4    | 26.123  | 36.5689  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA66 | ZFMK 94087   | Saudi Arabia| 15 km S of Al Wajh   | 4    | 26.123  | 36.5689  | KC818724 | -        | -        | -        | -        | -        |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA67 | ZFMK 94088   | Saudi Arabia| 15 km S of Al Wajh   | 4    | 26.123  | 36.5689  | KC818724 | -        | -        | -        | -        | -        |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA68 | TUZC-R8      | Saudi Arabia| 15 km S of Al Wajh   | 4    | 26.123  | 36.5689  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA69 | ZFMK 94089   | Saudi Arabia| 15 km S of Al Wajh   | 4    | 26.123  | 36.5689  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA70 | TUZC-R9      | Saudi Arabia| 72 km N of Umluj     | 5    | 25.614  | 36.9867  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA62 | TUZC-R10     | Saudi Arabia| 180 km W of Hail     | 6    | 26.883  | 40.0874  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA61 | IBES10001    | Saudi Arabia| Al Qatif             | 7    | 26.054  | 45.0003  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA57 | IBES10183    | Saudi Arabia| 30 km NE of Alhawiyah| 8    | 21.624  | 40.7094  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA58 | ZFMK 94090   | Saudi Arabia| 30 km NE of Alhawiyah| 8    | 21.624  | 40.7094  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA59 | TUZC-R11     | Saudi Arabia| 30 km NE of Alhawiyah| 8    | 21.624  | 40.7094  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA60 | IBES10344    | Saudi Arabia| 30 km NE of Alhawiyah| 8    | 21.624  | 40.7094  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA54 | IBES10150    | Saudi Arabia| 20 km S of Asharyah  | 9    | 21.602  | 40.6911  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA55 | ZFMK 94091   | Saudi Arabia| 20 km S of Asharyah  | 9    | 21.602  | 40.6911  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | HSA56 | IBES10363    | Saudi Arabia| 20 km S of Asharyah  | 9    | 21.602  | 40.6911  | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. granosus*    | ZFMK 87236 | ZFMK 87236 | Saudi Arabia| Taif National Wildlife Research Center | 10 | 21.25  | 40.56    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    | KA67576    |
| *H. saba*        | BJ27  | NHM-BS N41914 | Yemen       | Marib                | 17    | 14.9    | 45.5     | KA67576    | -        | -        | -        | -        | KA67576    |
| *H. saba*        | BJ28  | NHM-BS N41913 | Yemen       | Marib                | 17    | 14.9    | 45.5     | KA67576    | -        | -        | -        | -        | KA67576    |
| *H. saba*        | BJ29  | NHM-BS N41912 | Yemen       | Marib                | 17    | 14.9    | 45.5     | KA67576    | -        | -        | -        | -        | KA67576    |
| *H. ulii* sp. n. | JS48  | NMP6V 74834/1 | Yemen       | Wadi Zabid           | 11    | 14.147  | 43.517   | KC818730 | KC818881 | KC818789 | KC819001 | KC819062    |
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| Species            | Code  | Museum number  | Country  | Locality                      | Loc. N° | Lat     | Long     | 12S     | cytB     | cmos     | me1r     | rag1     | rag2     |
|--------------------|-------|----------------|----------|--------------------------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS49  | NMP6V 74834/2  | Yemen    | Wadi Zabid                     | 11      | 14.147  | 43.517   | KC818731 | KC818882 | KC818789 | -        | KF647603 | KF647614 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS45  | not collected  | Yemen    | Al Hababi                      | 12      | 13.333  | 43.722   | KC818728 | KC818878 | -        | -        | -        | KF647612 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS46  | NMP6V 74833/1  | Yemen    | Al Hababi                      | 12      | 13.333  | 43.722   | KC818728 | KC818879 | KC818789 | -        | -        | KF647613 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS47  | NMP6V 74833/2  | Yemen    | Al Hababi                      | 12      | 13.333  | 43.722   | KC818729 | KC818880 | KC818789 | KC818942 | KC819001 | KC819061 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS37  | NMP6V 74832/1  | Yemen    | 3 km S of Nadj an Nashamah     | 13      | 13.358  | 43.957   | KC818727 | KC818876 | KC818943 | -        | KF647611 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS38  | NMP6V 74832/2  | Yemen    | 3 km S of Nadj an Nashamah     | 13      | 13.358  | 43.957   | KC818727 | KC818877 | KC818789 | KF647593 | -        | KF647614 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS32  | NMP6V 74835    | Yemen    | 35 km W of Lahij              | 14      | 13.032  | 44.558   | KC818726 | KC818875 | KC818788 | KC818941 | KC819000 | KC819060 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | BJ09  | NHM-BS N41916  | Yemen    | Radman                         | 15      | 14.1    | 45.283   | KF647572 | -        | KF647592 | -        | KF647592 | -        |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS17  | NMP6V 74831/1  | Yemen    | Al Hadr                        | 16      | 13.877  | 45.8     | KC818725 | KC818874 | KC818787 | KC818940 | KC818999 | KC819059 |
| *H. ulii* sp. n.   | JS18  | NMP6V 74831/2  | Yemen    | Al Hadr                        | 16      | 13.877  | 45.8     | KC818725 | KC818874 | KC818787 | -        | KF647604 | KF647619 |
| *H. angulatus*     | JS123 | NMP6V 74845/2  | Ethiopia | Arba Minch                     | -       | 6.034   | 37.564   | KC818659 | KC818807 | KC818747 | KC818903 | KC818956 | KC819018 |
| *H. flaviviridis*  | JS111 | not collected  | Pakistan | Okara                          | -       | 30.81   | 73.457   | KC818676 | KC818822 | JQ957126 | JQ957253 | KC818965 | KC819026 |
| *H. flaviviridis*  | JS113 | not collected  | India    | Hardidwar                      | -       | 29.964  | 78.201   | KC818676 | KC818823 | JQ957126 | JQ957253 | KC818966 | KC819027 |
| *H. flaviviridis*  | JS119 | not collected  | Oman     | Jalan Bani Bu Hassan           | -       | 22.089  | 59.278   | JQ957119 | JQ957183 | KC818754 | KC818911 | KC818967 | KC819028 |
tions: National Museum Prague, Czech Republic (NMP); Natural History Museum in Braunschweig, Germany (NHM-BS); Senckenberg Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum, Frankfurt, Germany (SMF); Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig, Bonn, Germany (ZFMK); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale “Giacomo Doria”, Genova, Italy (MSNG); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Milano, Milano, Italy (MSNM); Museo Civico di Storia Naturale, Carmagnola, Italy (MCCI); Università di Firenze, Museo Zoologico “La Specola”, Firenze, Italy (MZUF); British Museum of Natural History, London, UK (BMNH); California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, USA (CAS); Taif University Zoological Collection, Taif, Saudi Arabia (TUZC); Institute of Evolutionary Biology Collection, Barcelona, Spain (IBES); Tomas Mazuch private collection, Dříteč, Czech Republic (TMHC); L. Kratochvíl collection (JEM); J. Šmíd collection (JS); Sherif Baha El Din private collection, Cairo, Egypt (SMB). Names of localities and governorates are spelled according to Google Earth (http://www.google.com/earth/). All coordinates are in WGS84 geographic coordinate system. Table of localities in a CSV text format and high-resolution photographs of all individuals analyzed in this study (397 pictures in total) have been deposited in MorphoBank (Project 1006; http://www.morphobank.org).

Morphological characters

The following measurements were taken with Powerfix digital calliper to the nearest 0.1 mm: snout-vent length (SVL), measured from tip of snout to vent; head length (HL), measured from tip of snout to retroarticular process of jaw; head width (HW), taken at the widest part of the head; head depth (HD), maximum depth of head; left eye diameter (E), measured horizontally; axilla-groin distance (AG), measured from posterior end of front limb insertion to anterior end of hind limb insertion; tail length (TL), measured from vent to tip of original tail. In addition to these metric characters, the following meristic characters were examined using a dissecting microscope: number of upper and lower labials (left/right); contact of nasals; number of infralabials in contact with first postmentals; mutual position of first postmentals; number of longitudinal rows of enlarged dorsal tubercles; number of lamellae under the first and fourth toe including unpaired proximal ones; and number of preanal pores in males. Terminology and diagnostic characters follow Moravec and Böhme (1997) and Moravec et al. (2011).

Results

Phylogenetic analyses of both datasets resulted in trees presented in Fig. 2. Tree topology remains congruent with that showed in Šmíd et al. (2013). The three species form a well-supported monophyletic group (mtDNA: ML bootstrap 85/ Bayesian pp 1; mtDNA + nDNA: 100/1) to which we will refer to as the ‘Hemidactylus saba species group’
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[support of individual species: *H. saba* (100/1; 100/1), *Hemidactylus* sp. 1 from Sinai and Saudi Arabia (100/1; 100/1), *Hemidactylus* sp. 4 from Yemen (83/1; 100/1)]. The performed analyses did not resolve the topology within this species group despite the inclusion of more individuals and additional genetic data in comparison with previous works (Moravec et al. 2011; Šmíd et al. 2013). Therefore, with the current knowledge, this group remains polytomic. There is no genetic variability within *H. saba* (all three specimens analyzed originate from the same locality) in both of the studied mtDNA genes and a very little variability in nDNA (*mc1r* and *rag1* only) (Fig. 3). The species from Sinai and Saudi Arabia also shows very little variation in mtDNA (intraspecific *p*}

**Figure 2.** Maximum likelihood trees of mtDNA and mtDNA + nDNA datasets of the ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’. ML bootstrap values/Bayesian posterior probabilities are indicated by the nodes. *Hemidactylus flaviviridis* and *H. angulatus* were used as outgroups. At the sides, schematic networks showing intra- and interspecific uncorrected *p* distances (in %) in the sequences of 12S and cyt b. * intraspecific distances within *H. ulii* sp. n. are based on an alignment of 1127 bp, all other values for cyt b are calculated for an alignment of 307 bp.
distance max. 1.3% in both 12S and cytb), but it varies in sequences of all the nDNA genes studied (Fig. 3). On the other hand, the unnamed Hemidactylus from Yemen exhibits relatively deep intraspecific differentiation into three well supported lineages. Uncorrected genetic distances between these lineages are up to 6.3% in cytb and up to 4.2% in 12S (Fig. 2). Moreover, the nDNA genes show a high level of genetic differentiation (Fig. 3). Intra- and interspecific genetic distances in both mtDNA genes analyzed between all three species are shown in Fig. 2. The results of the nuclear networks indicate that all alleles for all four independent loci are specific for each species.

The results of the molecular analyses, together with a unique combination of morphological features (see below) confirm the earlier conclusion that the newly recognized Hemidactylus sp. 1 and Hemidactylus sp. 4 represent two separate species, whose taxonomy and nomenclature need to be resolved.
Systematics

Redescription of *Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827

http://species-id.net/wiki/Hemidactylus_granosus

Figs 4, 5

*Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827: p. 17; Tab. 5, Fig. 1. Lectotype SMF 8723 designated by Mertens (1967); collected by E. Rüppell 1827.

*Hemidactylus turcicus* (Linnaeus, 1758) – Boettger (1893: 29; part.); Anderson (1898: 80; part.); Salvador (1981: 84; part.); Baha El Din (2006: 66; part.).

*Hemidactylus turcicus turcicus* (Linnaeus, 1758) – Loveridge (1947: 143; part.); Mertens and Wermuth (1960: 79; part.); Baha El Din (2005: 19; part.); Mertens (1967: 55).

*Hemidactylus verrucosus* (Cuvier, 1829 [corr. *H. verrucosus* Gray, 1831]) – Rüppell (1845: 300; part.).

*Hemidactylus* sp. 1 – Moravec et al. (2011: 24); Carranza and Arnold (2012: 17); Šmíd et al. (2013: 3).

Terra typica (Heyden 1827): “Egypten, Arabien, und Abyssinien”.

Terra typica restricta [by lectotype designation by Mertens (1967)]: “Arabia petrea” = Sinai, Egypt.

Material examined. SMF 8723 (lectotype, adult male), Petr. Arabica [Arabia petrea], collected by E. Rüppell in 1827 (MorphoBank M305565–M305594); NMP6V 70163/1 (adult female, MorphoBank M305520–M305528), NMP6V 70163/2 (adult male, MorphoBank M305529–M305542), NMP6V 70163/3–4 (adult females, MorphoBank M305543–M305554, M305555–M305564), Egypt, South Sinai governorate, Sharm el-Sheikh (27.885°N, 34.317°E), ca. 30 m a.s.l., collected by R. Kovář and R. Vita in 1996; ZFMK 94084, ZFMK 94085 (adult females, MorphoBank M305744–M305760, M305761–M305775), Saudi Arabia, Tabuk province, Al Wajh (26.2076°N, 36.4976°E), 5 m a.s.l., 31. V. 2012; ZFMK 94086 (adult female, MorphoBank M305778–M305791), ZFMK 94088, ZFMK 94089 (adult males, M305793–M305799, M305807, M305822–M305827, M305828–M305841), Saudi Arabia, Tabuk province, 15 km S of Al Wajh (26.1226°N, 36.5689°E), 25 m a.s.l., 31. V. 2012; TUZC-R10 (adult female, MorphoBank M305728–M305743), Saudi Arabia, Hail province, 180 km N of Hail (26.8831°N, 40.0874°E), 1020 m a.s.l., 30. V. 2012; IBES10183, TUZC-R11 (adult males, MorphoBank M305656–M305671, M305688–M305701), ZFMK 94090, IBES10344 (adult females, MorphoBank M305672–M305687, M305702–M305717), Saudi Arabia, Makkah province, 30 km NE of Alhawiyah (21.6244°N, 40.7094°E), 1295 m a.s.l., 28. V. 2012; IBES10150, IBES10363 (adult males, MorphoBank M305615–M305628, M305643–M305655), ZFMK 94091 (adult female, MorphoBank M305629–M305642), Saudi Arabia, Makkah province, 20 km S of
Ashayrah (21.6022°N, 40.6911°E), 1316 m a.s.l., 28. V. 2012. All Saudi specimens were collected by M. Shobrak, S. Carranza and T. Wilms.

**Referred material.** SMB 10660, Egypt, Suez governorate, Ayoun Musa (29.875°N, 32.649°E), ca. 12 m a.s.l., collected by S. Baha El Din, date unknown; TUZC-R9, Saudi Arabia, Tabuk province, 72 km N of Umluj (25.614°N, 36.9867°E), 19 m a.s.l., 31. V. 2012; IBES10001, Saudi Arabia, Riyadh province, Al Ghat (26.0545°N, 45.0003°E), 776 m a.s.l., 29. V. 2012; ZFMK 94087, TUZC-R8, Saudi Arabia, Tabuk province, 15 km S of Al Wajh (26.1226°N, 36.5689°E), 25 m a.s.l., 31. V. 2012; ZFMK 87236, Saudi Arabia, Makkah province, Taif National Wildlife Research Center (21.25°N, 40.96°E), 25. VI. 2007 by T. Wilms. These specimens were used for the molecular analyses only.

**Status and nomenclature.** Heyden (1827) described *Hemidactylus granosus* as a new species occurring in Egypt, Arabia and Abyssinia (Ethiopia and Eritrea). Although not explicitly mentioned by the author, the description was apparently based on four specimens
Two newly recognized species of Hemidactylus (Squamata, Gekkonidae) from... collected by Rüppell currently deposited in the Senckenberg Naturmuseum Frankfurt (collection numbers SMF 8723–8726). Heyden did not diagnose the new species against *H. turcicus* (Linnaeus, 1758) and in respect to our today’s knowledge on the morphological variation in *Hemidactylus* the description of *H. granosus* is very general. Traditionally, *H. turcicus* has been considered a common species widely distributed across the Mediterranean and the Middle East. As the general diagnostic characters of *H. granosus* given by Heyden (1827) were also applicable to *H. turcicus* at that time, the name *Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827 was considered its junior synonym (e.g. Boulenger 1885, Loveridge 1947, Mertens and Wermuth 1960, Mertens 1967, Salvador 1981, Baha El Din 2006).

Recent examination (by JŠ) of four specimens collected by Rüppell (SMF 8723–8726) has shown that one of them [SMF 8723 designated by Mertens (1967) as lectotype of *H. granosus*; for description see below] corresponds morphologically to *Hemidactylus* sp. 1 from Sinai. The other three specimens from this series morphologically correspond to *H. robustus* Heyden, 1827 (SMF 8725, 8726) and *H. cf. granosus* (SMF 8724), an animal superficially resembling *H. granosus* but differing from the members of the ‘*H. saba* species group’ in several important characters (see below). These findings lead to the conclusion that *Hemidactylus granosus* Heyden, 1827 is a valid taxon and needs to be resurrected from the synonymy of *H. turcicus*. In the light of current knowledge, the range of *H. turcicus* does not include a large part of Egypt, being restricted mostly to northern Egypt including Sinai and its Red Sea coast. The species is also missing in Arabia (sensu lato) and Ethiopia (Carranza and Arnold 2006; Moravec et al. 2011; Rato et al. 2011; Šmíd et al. 2013).

**Diagnosis.** *Hemidactylus granosus* is a member of the ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’ within the Arabian radiation of the Arid clade as evidenced by the mtDNA and nDNA analyses. The species has the following combination of molecular and morphological characters: (1) Uncorrected genetic distance from *H. saba*: 9.9–10.2% in 12S, 14.5–15.5% in cytb; from *Hemidactylus* sp. 4: 10.2–12.3% in 12S, 11.2–13.5% in cytb; (2) small size, SVL 39.0–53.2 mm in males, 40.6–53.3 mm in females; (3) rather elongated head, head length 24–28% of SVL, head width 68–86% of head length, head depth 33–47% of head length; (4) tail length 107–130% of SVL; (5) uppermost nasals separated by a small shield in 89% of specimens; (6) large anterior postmentals in wide mutual contact, and always in contact with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> lower labial; (7) 9–11 upper labials; (8) 7–9 lower labials; (9) 14–15 longitudinal rows of enlarged, subtriangular, distinctly keeled dorsal tubercles; (10) 7–8 lamellae under the 1<sup>st</sup> toe and 10–13 under the 4<sup>th</sup> toe; (11) ca. 6–8 tail segments bearing 6 pointed tubercles; (12) 4–7 preanal pores in males forming a continuous row on the left and right side; (13) subcaudals enlarged; (14) in life, dorsum pale buff with dark brown spots tending to form transverse bands or X-shaped markings, dark horizontal stripe in prefrontal and temporal region, tail with ca. 10–13 dark brown transverse bands, venter white.

**Description of the lectotype.** SMF 8723, adult male [erroneously determined as female by Mertens (1967)]. Head and body moderately depressed (Fig. 4). Upper labials (10/10), lower labials (8/7). Nostril between rostral, three subequal nasals and in punctual contact with first upper labial. Uppermost nasals separated by a small inserted scale. Mental triangular, as long as wide. Anterior postmentals long, in a broad contact
with each other, both in contact with the 1st and 2nd lower labial reaching in about one fourth of the width of the 2nd labial. Second postmentals almost round, touching only the 2nd lower labial (Fig. 5). Two enlarged scales behind each second postmental, the lateral ones in contact with the 3rd lower labial. Eye moderate (E/HL=0.26). Head long, distinctly separated from body by a slender neck. Crescent-shaped ear opening. Interorbital region, crown of head and temporal area above the level of ear opening covered by round smooth tubercles. Dorsal region of the specimen is slightly scarred so it is not possible to count the enlarged tubercles on both sides precisely, but there are seven longitudinal rows of large, keeled and caudally pointed tubercles on the left side from which we infer there were originally 14 rows on both sides together. Lower arms, thighs and lower legs with prominent tubercles without keels. Tail original with 6 segments bearing 6 pointed tubercles, broken into three pieces, subcaudals enlarged from just after the hemipenial bulges. Lamellae under the 1st toe 7/7, lamellae under the 4th toe 11/11. Four preanal pores in a continuous row. No femoral pores or enlarged femoral scales. Colour (in alcohol) faded due to long fixation.

Measurements (in mm): SVL 51.5, HL 12.9, HW 9.8, HD 6.0, E 3.3, AG 23.7.
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Paralectotype SMF 8724 differs from other individuals of H. granosus in having relatively high head (HD 50% of HL), lower number of lower labials (6), uppermost nasals in wide contact, first postmentals in contact with 1st lower labials, and 2 preanal pores.

**Comparison.** Hemidactylus granosus can be distinguished from other member of the ‘Hemidactylus saba species group’ and from other congeners distributed in Sinai and the Red Sea coast by the following set of characters (see also Table 2).

From H. saba by having distinctly keeled dorsal tubercles (smooth in H. saba), and lower number of lamellae under the 1st toe (7–8 vs. 8–9).

From Hemidactylus sp. 4 (described below) by its larger size (max. SVL 53.2 mm vs. 40.4 mm in males, 53.3 mm vs. 40.7 mm in females), in having more frequently separated uppermost nasals (100% vs. 60% of specimens), lower number of preanal pores in males (4–7 vs. 8), and higher number of lamellae under the 1st (7–8 vs. 5–6) and 4th (10–13 vs. 8–9) toe.

From H. flaviviridis by its smaller size (max. SVL 53.2 mm in males and 53.3 mm in females vs. up to 90 mm [Anderson (1999); sexes not distinguished]), by the presence of enlarged dorsal tubercles, and the absence of femoral pores in males.

From H. mindiae by the lower number of supralabials (9–11 vs. 10–12), by having anterior postmentals in wide contact (punctual in H. mindiae) and keeled dorsal tubercles (smooth in H. mindiae).

From H. robustus by the larger size of males (max. SVL 53.2 mm vs. 43.7 mm), longer tail (tail length 53.0–64.8 mm vs. 40.9–48.7 mm), and lower number of preanal pores in males (4–7 vs. 5–8).

From H. turcicus by its higher number of upper labials (9–11 vs. 7–10), in having anterior postmentals more frequently in contact with 2nd lower labial (100% vs. 12.1%), in having anterior postmentals in wide mutual contact behind the mental scale (contact punctual in 67% specimens of H. turcicus), and by the lower number of preanal pores in males (4–7 vs. 6–10).

**Variation.** Specimens with intact tail vary in number of tail segments bearing 6 pointed tubercles (7–8). The original portion of the tail of the female NMP6V 70163/4 is very wide at the base, separated from cloacal region by a basal constriction. One specimen (IBES10212) is the only animal with 15 longitudinal rows of enlarged tubercles. Another one (IBES10284) has uppermost nasals in wide contact. Most striking is the variation in the number of preanal pores in males. Whereas the lectotype and the only male from Sinai (NMP6V 70163/2) have both 4 pores, all males from Saudi Arabia have 6–7 pores. There seems to be clinal variability in this character, males from NW of the known range (Fig. 6) possess only 4 preanal pores, all animals from the eastern Red Sea coast in Saudi Arabia have 6 pores and a single individual from the southern limit of the range has 7 pores.

Coloration (in life) pale buff dorsally (Fig. 7). Conspicuous dark brown horizontal stripe in loreal and temporal area, terminated at the level of ear from where it continues in a series of dark patches on the neck. Four barely visible X-shaped markings on dorsum formed mainly by dark brown enlarged tubercles (first on nape, second across scapulae, third in lumbal region, and fourth just in front of the anterior insertion of hind limbs). Isolated dark brown stripe runs across body in the place of posterior insertion of hind
Table 2. Morphological comparison among members of the ‘Hemidactylus saba species group’ and with other Hemidactylus species from Sinai and SW Yemen. The values are given as follows: sample size, mean \pm standard deviation above, min. – max. value below.

| Species / Character | H. saba species group | H. robustus | H. turcicus | H. mindiae | H. jumailiae | H. y. yerburi | H. y. montanus |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| Upper labials      | 18 9.4 ± 0.5          | 3 9.3 ± 0.8 | 10 9.3 ± 0.8 | 27 9.4 ± 0.7 | H. ulii sp. n. | 33 8.2 ± 0.5 | 5 10.8 ± 0.8 | 18 9.8 ± 0.7 | 51 10.3 ± 0.7 | 57 10.2 ± 0.7 |
|                    | 9–11                  | 8–10        | 8–10        | 8–11       | 7–10         | 10–12         | 8–12         | 9–12         | 8–12         |
| Lower labials      | 18 7.4 ± 0.4          | 3 7.7 ± 0.6 | 10 8.0 ± 0.6 | 27 7.7 ± 0.6 | 33 6.7 ± 0.5 | 5 8.1 ± 0.4  | 18 8.2 ± 0.6 | 3 51 7.9 ± 0.5 | 57 7.8 ± 0.6 |
|                    | 7–9                   | 7–8         | 7–9         | 6–9        | 6–8          | 7–9          | 7–10         | 6–9          | 6–10         |
| Nasals in contact (%) | 18 11               | 3 33.3      | 10 40       | 27 22.2    | 33 21.2      | 5 0          | 18 5.5       | 51 7.8       | 57 5.3       |
| 1st postmental in contact with 2nd lower labial (%) | 18 100 | 3 33.3 | 10 100 | 27 70.3 | 33 12.1 | 5 80 | 27 13.3 | 51 98 | 57 89.5 |
| Rows of dorsal tubercles | 18 14.1 ± 0.2 | 3 14 ± 0.0 | 10 14.1 ± 1.0 | 27 14.8 ± 1.2 | 33 13.8 ± 0.7 | 5 12.4 ± 0.9 | 15 14 ± 1.4 | 46 15.3 ± 1.1 | 53 15.2 ± 1.2 |
|                    | 14–15                 | 14–14       | 12–16       | 13–18      | 12–16        | 12–14        | 12–16       | 12–18        | 12–18        |
| Pores              | 8 5.6 ± 1.1           | 1 6         | 2 8 ± 0.0   | 9 6.1 ± 0.8 | 13 7.2 ± 1.4 | 1 4          | 9 7.2 ± 1.1  | 23 13.7 ± 2.2 | 27 11.2 ± 1.1 |
|                    | 4–7                   | 8–8         | 5–8         | 6–10       | 6–9          | 10–18        | 9–13         |              |              |
| Lamellae under 1st toe | 18 7.4 ± 0.5 | 3 8.2 ± 0.3 | 10 5.4 ± 0.5 | 27 6.1 ± 0.5 | 32 6.5 ± 0.5 | 5 6.2 ± 0.3 | 18 6.9 ± 0.7 | 51 6.7 ± 0.4 | 57 6.3 ± 0.4 |
|                    | 7–8                   | 8–9         | 5–6         | 5–8        | 6–7          | 6–8          | 6–8          | 5–7          |              |
| Lamellae under 4th toe | 18 11.5 ± 0.7 | 3 11.2 ± 0.3 | 10 8.6 ± 0.5 | 27 10.1 ± 0.7 | 32 9.7 ± 0.6 | 5 10 ± 0.0 | 18 10.9 ± 0.8 | 51 10.4 ± 0.6 | 57 10.2 ± 0.5 |
|                    | 10–13                 | 11–12       | 8–9         | 8–12       | 8–11         | 10–10        | 9–12         | 9–12         | 9–11         |
| SVL (males)        | 8 46.8 ± 5.9          | 1 58.3      | 2 38.6 ± 2.6 | 8 41.8 ± 2.3 | 13 46.0 ± 5.8 | 1 49.3      | 8 48.4 ± 4.1 | 23 58.5 ± 7.1 | 25 56.5 ± 5.7 |
|                    | 39.0–53.2             | 36.8–40.4   | 37.0–43.7   | 37.3–54.1  | 40.0–54.2    | 43.6–74.9    | 45.2–65.3    |              |              |
| SVL (females)      | 10 49.0 ± 3.5         | 2 53.5 ± 7.9 | 2 40.1 ± 0.9 | 16 43.6 ± 4.7 | 18 49.2 ± 5.1 | 4 46.2 ± 11.4 | 8 48.6 ± 3.3 | 23 55.7 ± 5.3 | 30 52.6 ± 5.1 |
|                    | 40.6–53.3             | 47.9–59.1   | 39.4–40.7   | 32.7–50.1  | 39.4–56.2    | 35.6–56.6    | 43.1–54.0    | 43.6–62.1    | 42.4–64.1    |
Two newly recognized species of Hemidactylus (Squamata, Gekkonidae) from... limbs. Regenerated tails are uniformly buff from above. Dorsum, sides of chin, underside of front and hind limbs and underside of tail with faint stipple visible under magnification. Belly white. Tips of fingers and toes black behind insertion of terminal phalanges. Coloration is consistent among all specimens and varies only in distinctness of the markings.

There is a very low variation in mtDNA between specimens from Sinai and Saudi Arabia (max. 1.3% in both 12S and cytb). All animals from Sinai share the same haplotypes in 12S and also cytb gene. All four nuclear loci studied show some degree of intraspecific variation (Fig. 3).

**Distribution and ecology.** Eduard Rüppell collected the original series in 1827 when he began his marine biological studies of the Red Sea and travelled from Egypt to Eritrea. There is no specific information that he went to Arabia as well (Rüppell 1826–1828; Klausewitz 2002; Wagner 2008); therefore the original distribution of *H. granosus* described as “Egypt, Arabia, and Abyssinia [Ethiopia and Eritrea]” by Heyden (1827) was probably too general and incorrect. Because there were no other specimens assignable with certainty to *H. granosus* apart from the four individuals collected in Sinai (SMF 8723–8726, for their current status see ‘Status and nomenclature’ section) (Boettger 1893), one of which became the lectotype after Mertens’ (1967) designation, Sinai could...
be considered the only reliable locality for *H. granosus*. Here, *H. granosus* is also confirmed from two coastal localities in south and west Sinai and from coastal and inland regions in western and central Saudi Arabia (Fig. 6). Nevertheless, a wider distribution of the species along the Red Sea coast can be expected. According to Baha El Din (2005), *Hemidactylus* geckos inhabiting the interior lowland of Sinai and the Eastern Desert in Egypt stand out in having notably coarse scalation. Interestingly, the areas with occurrence of animals with coarse scalation correspond with the presence of individuals with low numbers of preanal pores (Baha El Din 2005), which is typical for the Sinai populations of *H. granosus*.

In 1996, when the NMP specimens were collected, the locality in Sharm el-Sheikh was formed by a crop field supplied with drain water from nearby habitations. Geckos were found during the day under unused empty barrels and also inside buildings. Other species syntopic with *H. granosus* in Sharm el-Sheikh were: *Hemidactylus turcicus*, *Chalcides ocellatus* (Forskål, 1775), *Stenodactylus sthenodactylus* (Lichtenstein, 1823), and *Ptyodactylus hasselquistii* (Donndorff, 1798) (R. Vita in litt, 2013). However, when visited again in 2010, the locality had changed dramatically (R. Vita in litt, 2013). The whole area was under heavy development and the irrigation channels had disappeared. The current conditions at the place are unknown to us. In 2011 JM surveyed a neighbouring urban area east of this locality. It was covered by a mosaic of tourist resorts and abandoned ruderal plots. In dry anthropogenic habitats (e.g. rubbish dumps, road ditches, old walls and buildings, abandoned construction sites, natural but heavily disturbed open areas, etc.) dominated two very abundant gecko species. *Ptyodactylus*
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*Hasseltia saba* species group.*Hemidactylus hasselquistii* occupied primarily various vertical surfaces whereas *Cyrtopodion scabrum* (Heyden, 1827) prevailed on the ground. *Tropiocolotes nattereri* Steindachner, 1901 was found in dry and relatively well-preserved natural places. *Hemidactylus turcicus* was occasionally encountered in more humid artificial habitats in parks and hotel gardens. Specimens from Saudi Arabia were mostly collected during the day inside concrete tunnels under roads. In some of these tunnels they were sympatric with *Ptyodactylus hasselquistii*. One specimen was also collected on the walls of the Taif National Wildlife Research Centre, where it was also sympatric with *Ptyodactylus hasselquistii*.

**Hemidactylus ulii** sp. n.

http://zoobank.org/8E15D1BC-5D4D-4A55-AFEB-2E20FAD40112
http://species-id.net/wiki/Hemidactylus_ulii
Figs 5, 7, 8

*Hemidactylus turcicus* – Rösler and Wranik (1998: 120; part.).
*Hemidactylus* sp. ‘OTU7’ – Busais and Joger (2011a: 27); Busais and Joger (2011b: 268); Carranza and Arnold (2012: 95).
*Hemidactylus* sp. 4 – Moravec et al. (2011: 25); Šmíd et al. (2013: 3).

**Holotype.** NMP6V 74833/2, adult male (MorphoBank M305892–M305902), Yemen, Ta’izz governorate, Al Hababi (13.333°N, 43.722°E), 463 m a.s.l.; collected by L. Kratochvíl, 28. X. 2007.

**Paratypes.** NMP6V 74833/1 (adult male, MorphoBank M305884–M305891), same collecting data as holotype; NMP6V 74831/1–2 (one adult and one subadult female, MorphoBank M305854–M305863, M305864–M305870), Yemen, Abyan governorate, Al Had, (13.877°N, 45.8°E), 1151 m a.s.l., collected by L. Kratochvíl on 22. X. 2005; NMP6V 74832/1–2 (two subadult females, MorphoBank M305871–M305875, M305876–M305883), Yemen, Ta’izz governorate, ca. 3 km S of Najd an Nashamah by road (13.358°N, 43.957°E), 1182 m a.s.l., collected by L. Kratochvíl on 26. X. 2007; NMP6V 74834/1–2 (one adult and one subadult female, MorphoBank M305903–M305911), Yemen, Dhamar governorate, Wadi Zabid (14.147°N, 43.517°E), 292 m a.s.l., collected by L. Kratochvíl on 29. X. 2007; NHM-BS N41916 (juvenile, MorphoBank M305842–M305852), Yemen, Al Bayda governorate, Radman (14.1°N, 45.283°E), collected by W. Mustafa on 13. XI. 2007.

**Referred material.** NMP6V 74835 (juvenile), Yemen, Lahij governorate, wadi 35 km W of Lahij (13.032°N, 44.558°E), 297 m a.s.l., collected by L. Kratochvíl on 25. X. 2007; JEM476 (juvenile), same collecting data as holotype; All juvenile specimens were used for comparison of meristic characters and included in the molecular analyses.

**Diagnosis.** A small species of the ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’ within the Arabian radiation of the Arid clade of *Hemidactylus*, as evidenced by the mtDNA and nDNA analyses. The new species is characterized by the following combination of molecular and morphological characters: (1) Uncorrected genetic distances from *H. saba*:
9.9–10.7% in 12S, 13.5–14.9% in cytb; from *H. granosus*: 10.2–12.3% in 12S, 11.2–13.5% in cytb; (2) small size with a maximum recorded SVL 40.7 mm (36.8–40.4 mm in males, 39.4–40.7 mm in females); (3) moderately robust head, head length 28–30% of SVL, head width 70–75% of head length, head depth 37–46% of head length; (4) tail length 116% of SVL (only 1 specimen with intact tail); (5) uppermost nasals separated by a small shield (60% specimens) or in wide contact (40%); (6) large anterior postmentals in wide mutual contact in 90% of individuals, and in contact with the 1st and 2nd lower labial (scarcely and unilaterally with the 1st lower labial only); (7) 8–10 upper labials; (8) 7–9 lower labials; (9) dorsum with 12-16 longitudinal rows of enlarged, slightly keeled, conical tubercles; (10) 5–6 lamellae under the 1st toe and 8–9 lamellae under the 4th toe; (11) ca. 6–8 tail segments bearing 6 tubercles; (12) 8 preanal pores in one continuous row in males; (13) subcaudals enlarged; (14) in alcohol dorsum brownish grey with a pattern of more or less conspicuous dark transverse bands starting on the nape, tail with 9 dark brown transverse bands.

Figure 8. Holotype of *Hemidactylus ulii* sp. n. (NMP6V 74833/2, male) from Al Hababi, Yemen. General habitus, lateral and ventral view of the head, precloacal region with preanal pores, right hind leg. Scale refers to the uppermost picture only.
Comparison. *Hemidactylus ulii* sp. n. can be distinguished from the other members of the ‘*Hemidactylus saba* species group’ and from all other congeners distributed in the region by the following combination of characters (see also Table 2):

From *H. granosus* by its smaller size (max. SVL 40.4 mm vs. 53.2 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 53.3 mm in females), by having less frequently separated uppermost nasals (60% vs. 89% of specimens), higher number of preanal pores in males (8 vs. 4–7), and lower number of lamellae under the 1st (5–6 vs. 7–8) and 4th (8–9 vs. 10–13) toe.

From *H. saba* by its smaller size (max. SVL 40.4 mm vs. 58.3 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 59.1 mm in females), higher number of preanal pores in males (8 vs. 6), and lower number of lamellae under the 1st (5–6 vs. 8–9) and 4th (8–9 vs. 11–12) toe.

From *H. flaviviridis* by its smaller size (maximum SVL 40.4 mm in males, 40.7 mm in females vs. up to 90 mm [Anderson (1999); sexes not distinguished]), the presence of enlarged dorsal tubercles, and the absence of femoral pores in males.

From *H. jumailiae* by its smaller size (max. SVL 40.4 mm vs. 54.2 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 54.0 mm in females), lower frequency of separated uppermost nasals (60% vs. 95%), in having conical and at least slightly keeled dorsal tubercles (vs. non-protruding and smooth tubercles), and lower number of lamellae under the 1st (5–6 vs. 6–8) and 4th (8–9 vs. 9–12) toe.

From *H. robustus* by its smaller size (max. SVL 40.4 mm vs. 43.7 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 50.1 mm in females), and lower number of lamellae under the 4th toe (8–9 vs. 8–12).

From *H. sinaitus* by the presence of enlarged tile-like subcaudals and in having separated uppermost nasals (60% vs. 9% of specimens).

From *H. yerburii montanus* by its smaller size (maximum SVL 40.4 mm vs. 65.3 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 64.1 mm in females), lower number of preanal pores in males (8 vs. 9–13), and lower number of lamellae under the 4th toe (8–9 vs. 9–11).

From *H. yerburii yerburii* by its smaller size (maximum SVL 40.4 mm vs. 74.9 mm in males, 40.7 mm vs. 62.1 mm in females), lower number of supralabials (8–10 vs. 9–12), lower frequency of having separated uppermost nasals (60% vs. 92%), lower number of preanal pores in males (8 vs. 10–18), and lower number of lamellae under the 1st (5–6 vs. 6–8) and 4th (8–9 vs. 9–12) toe.

Description of holotype. NMP6V 74833/2, adult male. Body slightly depressed to cylindrical (Fig. 8). Upper labials 8/8, lower labials 7/7. Nostril between rostral, three nasals and in punctual contact with the first upper labial. Uppermost nasals separated by a small inserted shield. Mental almost triangular. Anterior postmentals large and very long, in wide mutual contact behind mental, in contact with the 1st lower labial (left) and the 1st and 2nd lower labials (right) (Fig. 5). Posterior postmentals smaller, in contact with the 1st and 2nd (left) and the 2nd (right) lower labial. Eye moderate (E/HL=0.24). Supraciliar granules with prominent projections, which form a comb-like structure above the eyes. Parietal and temporal region covered with round pointed regularly distributed tubercles. Ear opening oval. Dorsum with 14 longitudinal rows of enlarged, prominent, caudally pointed tubercles bearing distinct longitudinal keels. Thighs and lower legs with scattered enlarged tubercles. Tail partially regenerated from about half of its original
length (estimate), original part relatively thick without basal constriction. Conical and keeled tail tubercles on tail segments forming regular whorls. Each whorl separated from the next one by four small scales. Subcaudals enlarged, tile-like. Regenerated part of the tail with small uniform scales without tubercles. Lamellae under the 1st toe 6/6, lamellae under the 4th toe 8/8. Eight preanal pores, no femoral pores or enlarged femoral scales.

Measurements (in mm): SVL 40.4, HL 11.5, HW 8.6, HD 5.2, E 2.8, AG 16.2.

Coloration of holotype in preservative. Overall dorsal coloration brownish grey. An indistinct dark horizontal stripe in loreal and temporal area. Seven dark brown transverse bands across the nape and body, the one in scapular region being the most conspicuous. Dark brown bands also on the original part of the tail. Belly whitish.

Variation. The paratypes (Fig. 9) differ from the holotype in the following features: number of upper labials 8–10; number of lower labials 7–9; four paratypes (NMP6V 74831/1, NMP6V 74832/1–2, NMP6V 74833/1) have uppermost nasals in wide contact; anterior postmentals in contact with 2nd lower labials on both sides (except of NMP6V 74832/1 where the arrangement is the same as in the holotype); longitudinal rows of enlarged tubercles 12–16; lamellae under the 1st toe 5–6, lamellae under the 4th toe 8–9. The intact tail of the paratype NMP6V 74833/1 has 7 segments bearing at least six enlarged spine-like tubercles and 9 dark brown transverse bands widening towards the tail tip.

Measurements of paratypes (in mm): NMP6V 74831/1: SVL 40.7, HL 11.5, HW 8.2, HD 4.9, E 3.0, AG 19.0; NMP6V 74831/2: SVL 32.0, HL 9.3, HW 6.6, HD 3.7, E 2.1, AG 12.7; NMP6V 74832/1: SVL 32.7, HL 9.7, HW 7.0, HD 3.4, E 2.3, AG 14.3; NMP6V 74832/2: SVL 32.9, HL 9.3, HW 6.7, HD 3.6, E 2.4, AG 13.5;
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NMP6V 74833/1: SVL 36.8, HL 10.7, HW 8.0, HD 4.5, E 2.4, AG 14.1, TL 42.5; NMP6V 74834/1: SVL 39.4, HL 11.1, HW 8.1, HD 4.4, E 2.7, AG 16.7; NMP6V 74834/2: SVL 32.0, HL 9.5, HW 6.7, HD 3.9, E 2.5, AG 13.8; NHM-BS N41916: juvenile, not measured.

As already mentioned (Results), the level of genetic variability within H. ulii sp. n. is very high. The species is divided into three well supported sublineages which reflect the geographic origin of the samples. Although there is a certain geographic separation corresponding with these sublineages, the exact limits are not distinct and also morphological variation among paratypes is not congruent with geography.

**Etymology.** The species epithet “ulii” is a patronym for Prof. Ulrich Joger, a German herpetologist known as Uli among friends, in recognition of his important contribution to the knowledge of the herpetofauna of the Western Palearctic.

**Distribution and ecology.** Hemidactylus ulii sp. n. is known from inland mid-altitude areas (292–1182 m) of southwestern Yemen (Fig. 6). Most specimens were collected in open dry wadis with scattered rocks and boulders, in stony deserts and also in the vicinity of villages in gardens and irrigated cropland fields.

The following reptile species were found to occur in sympatry with H. ulii: Bunopus spatularus Anderson, 1901; Hemidactylus y. yerburii Anderson, 1895; Pristurus crucifer (Valenciennes, 1861); P. flavipunctatus Rüppell, 1835; P. rupestris Blanford, 1874; Ptyodactylus sp.; Tropiocolotes scorteccii Cherchi and Spano, 1963; Acanthodactylus sp.; Chamaeleo arabicus Matschie, 1893; Pseudotrapelus sinaitus (Heyden, 1827); Trapelus flavimaculatus Rüppell, 1835; and Pelomedusa subrufa (Bonnaterre, 1789).

**Discussion**

Previous phylogenetic studies of the Arid clade of Hemidactylus disclosed an extraordinarily rich diversity within this genus in the Arabian Peninsula (Moravec et al. 2011; Carranza and Arnold 2012; Šmíd et al. 2013). The latter work, besides of showing the phylogenetic relationships among individual species of the Arid clade, highlighted the high level of genetic differentiation and existence of several yet undescribed taxa within this genus. The ‘Hemidactylus saba species group’ as defined herein represents one of the monophyletic groups within the Arabian radiation. All three species forming this group – H. granosus, H. saba, and H. ulii sp. n. – are well defined and distinguishable both genetically and morphologically from each other, as well as from other Hemidactylus species that occur in the same area. Geographically, H. saba and H. ulii sp. n. are confined to the foothills and submontane areas of southwestern Yemen, where they occupy mid-altitude elevations (292–1182 m in H. ulii sp. n., 1180 m in H. saba). In comparison, H. granosus has a much wider distribution, spanning from northeastern Egypt to central Saudi Arabia. It was found from the sea-level up to almost 1600 m in the Asir Mountains, which stretch along the eastern Red Sea coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Its occurrence in eastern Egypt is also likely based on observations of Baha El Din (2005, 2006), who reported morphologically variable populations of H. turcicus (sensu lato) in these regions attribut-
able to *H. granosus* (see Distribution and ecology). The distribution of *H. granosus* in the coastal Sinai and Saudi Arabia near important marine junctions together with the genetic uniformity of this species indicates extensive gene flow between these populations. It may be the result of recent colonization event(s), their inadvertent human-mediated transport or perpetual contact of populations in a continuous range. The continuous range of *H. granosus* along the Hijaz and Asir Mountains in western Arabia confirms that these mountain ranges can serve as a corridor providing connection between the eastern Mediterranean and southern Arabia (Scott 1942; Gvoždík et al. 2010).

The highlands of southwestern Saudi Arabia and Yemen are known to host a high number of endemic taxa (Balletto et al. 1985; Arnold 1986; Gasperetti 1988; Harrison and Bates 1991; Gasperetti et al. 1993). The genus *Hemidactylus* also shows a high rate of speciation and endemicity in the area. Currently, there are eight species and one subspecies known from the Yemen highlands, which makes *Hemidactylus* one of the most specious reptile genera in the area (Fritz and Schütte 1987; Busais and Joger 2011b; Šmíd et al. 2013; Uetz 2013). As new genetic and morphological data are becoming available from Arabia even more new species are to be expected (Moravec et al. 2011; Šmíd et al. 2013), thus fulfilling the prognosis of Baha El Din (2005) and the models of Ficetola et al. (2013) which suggested that the Red Sea region is likely to contribute significantly to the diversity of *Hemidactylus*.

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Appendix

Specimens examined

**H. flaviviridis** (8 individuals) - NMP6V 74858 (Oman, Jalan Bani Bu Hasan); NMP6V 74859/1–5 (Pakistan, Multan); NMP6V 74856 (Pakistan, Rakhni); NMP6V 74857 (Pakistan, Sukkur)

**H. jumailiae** (18 individuals) - NMP6V 74818/1 (Yemen, near Al Bayda [At Dageeg]); NMP6V 74819 (Yemen, Sana’a); NHM-BS N41788, NHM-BS N41890 (paratype), NHM-BS N41891, NHM-BS N41893 (holotype), NHM-BS N41894 (paratype), NHM-BS N41897 (paratype) (Yemen, Ibb); NHM-BS N41898 (paratype, the same number as one of *H. y. montanus* paratypes, Busais and Joger 2011b), NHM-BS N41899 (Yemen, Thamar); BMNH1982.1143–44 (Yemen, Al Nabi Shuaib, 30 Km W. of Sana’a); BMNH1982.1145 (Yemen, Sana’a); BMNH1982.1146 (Yemen, Wadi Ahger, 45 Km. W. of Sana’a); BMNH1952.1.3.52 (Yemen, Sana’a); MSNG-YEM02, MSNG-YEM03 (Yemen, El Menghil); MCCI-R814 (Yemen, Hababah)

**H. mindiae** (5 individuals) - NMP6V 71323/1–2 (Jordan, Jabal Ghazali); NMP6V 72739/1–3 (Jordan, Wadi Ramm Nughra Radet Salem)

**H. robustus** (27 individuals) - SMF 8720 (lectotype), SMF 8721 (“Abyssinia” [Ethiopia and Eritrea]); SMF 8725–8726 – redetermined from *H. granosus* (Egypt, Sinai); JS210, TMHC2012.07.092, TMHC2012.07.100 (Ethiopia, Jiijiga), CAS130512 – redetermined from *H. macropholis* as it is in the CAS catalogue (Kenya, vicinity of Mandera); NMP6V 74820 (Iran, Bandar Lengeh); NMP6V 74821/1–2 (Yemen, Wadi Zabid); NMP6V 74829 (Yemen, Bir Ali); JS144 (Kenya, Garissa); NMP6V 74867/1–3 (Oman, Muscat); NMP6V 74868 (Oman, Salalah); NMP6V 74869/1–7 (Oman, Mughsayl); NMP6V 74870/1–2 (Oman, Shisr); MCCI–R815 (Yemen, Zabid)

**H. saba** (3 individuals) - NHM-BS N41912 (holotype, MorphoBank M305478–M305492), NHM-BS N41913 (paratype, MorphoBank M305493–M305504), NHM-BS N41914 (paratype, MorphoBank M305505–M305519) (Yemen, Marib)

**H. sinaitus** (23 individuals) - BMNH82.8.16.27 (holotype, probably from Suakin, Sudan); BMNH97.10.28.83–85 (Sudan, Durrur, N of Suakin); BMNH97.10.28.87 (Sudan, Wadi Haifa); BMNH1974.3931 (Ethiopia, Mule River?, Danakil); BMNH1937.12.5.293–294 (Somalia, Borama district); BMNH95.5.23.7 (Yemen, Sheikh Osman, near Aden); BMNH1945.12.12.14 (Yemen, Bir Fadhil, Aden); NMP6V 74809/1–4 (Sudan, Wad Ben Naga); NMP6V 74810 (Sudan, 15 km SE Atbara); MZUF28645–646 (Yemen, Moka); MZUF10914, MSNM521 (Eritrea, Isola [island] Sheik-Said); MSNM523–524 (Eritrea, Ailet); CAS174021–022 (Sudan, Assalaya)

**H. turcicus** (33 individuals) - NMP6V 34747 (Syria, Baniyas); NMP6V 34748/1–3 (Syria, Palmyra); NMP6V 34749 (Syria, Salkhad); NMP6V 70648/1–4 (Turkey, Kas); NMP6V 70668 (Greece, Kastellorizo, St. Georgies); NMP6V 71056
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H. yerburii yerburii (51 individuals) - NMP6V 74827/1–4 (Yemen, Jabel Habeshi); NMP6V 74825/1–2 (Yemen, Al Turbah); NMP6V 74826 (Yemen, N of Lahij, Wadi Tuban); NMP6V 74823/1–3 (Yemen, 14 km NW of Al Turbah); NMP6V 74824/1–2 (Yemen, 3 km S of Najd an Nashamah); NMP6V 74828/1–3 (Yemen, Al Hababi); NMP6V 74822/1–5 (Yemen, near Zinjubar); MSNG-YEM01 (Yemen, Ta‘izz); MSNG-YEM05, MSNG-YEM06 (Yemen, Vahren); NHM-BS N41856–59, NHM-BS N41861–64, NHM-BS N41866, NHM-BS N41868–69, NHM-BS N41888 (Yemen, Tour Albaha); NHM-BS N41860 (Yemen, Lahij); NHM-BS N41871–72 (Yemen, Radfan); NHM-BS N41873 (Yemen, Shihhr); NHM-BS N41875 (Yemen, Ariab); NHM-BS N41876–77, NHM-BS N41879–86 (Yemen, Lowder); NHM-BS N41887 (Yemen, Aden)

H. yerburii montanus (57 individuals) - NMP6V 74802 (Yemen, Jabal Bura); NHM-BS N41751–52 (paratypes), NHM-BS N41758 (paratype), NHM-BS N41762–63, NHM-BS N41765–66, NHM-BS N41768–69, NHM-BS N41770 (paratype), NHM-BS N41772–74, NHM-BS N41779, NHM-BS N41783 (paratype), NHM-BS N41785 (paratype), NHM-BS N41791 (paratype), NHM-BS N41793 (paratype), NHM-BS N41797–800 (paratypes), NHM-BS N41802–06 (paratypes), NHM-BS N41807 (paratype), NHM-BS N41809 (paratype), NHM-BS N41811–15 (paratypes), NHM-BS N41818 (paratype), NHM-BS N41821 (paratype), NHM-BS N41823 (paratype), NHM-BS N41836 (holotype), NHM-BS N41839, NHM-BS N41840 (paratype), NHM-BS N41842 (paratype), NHM-BS N41843, NHM-BS N41844 (paratype), NHM-BS N41846, NHM-BS N41848, NHM-BS N41851–52, NHM-BS N41867 (paratype) (Yemen, Ibb); NHM-BS N41771 (paratype) (Yemen, Yareem); NHM-BS N41789–90 (Yemen, Thamar); NHM-BS N41833–34 (paratypes) (Yemen, Wadah); NHM-BS N41835–55 (paratypes) (Yemen, Sana’a).