

Gonatodes vittatus (Streak Lizard)

Family: Sphaerodactylidae (Dwarf Geckos)

Order: Squamata (Lizards and Snakes)

Class: Reptilia (Reptiles)



Fig. 1. Streak lizard, *Gonatodes vittatus*.

[<http://www.ridgeandvalleyreptiles.com/gonatodes-vittatus.html>, downloaded 3 March 2016]

TRAITS. The average body length is 33-34mm, with the tail of similar length (TT Herps, 2016). Both male and female are approximately the same size, with a cylindrical body with smooth even scales, and their slender toes have claws (not broad toepads) at the end. Males have a vibrant white stripe, edged in black, from the head to the tip of the tail (Fig. 1). Their colour is red-brown to blue-grey. There are sexually dimorphic (each sex with distinct characteristics), and the females are brown with grey, black and brown spots, and their stripe is muffled (Fig. 2) (TT Herps, 2016).

DISTRIBUTION. Widespread in northern Colombia, Venezuela, and on the Caribbean Sea coastal islands of Aruba, Curacao, Margarita, Trinidad, and Tobago (ReptileDatabase, 2016).

HABITAT AND ACTIVITY. They are found in warm humid to semi-arid habitats, in forest-edge areas, open shaded areas, coconut trash, and in gardens (TT Herps, 2016). They are excellent climbers and prefer to be present in trees, rocks cracks, roots and walls. When found in tropical forest, they are mainly near the lower end of a tree trunk, maximum height of 2m (Dwarfgeckos, 2016). They are considered to be synanthropic, because they are ecologically associated with humans, by inhabiting parks and building walls and gardens (mostly human modified

environments). They are a diurnal species but can be functional at night, and may bask in open sunlight (TT Herps, 2016).

FOOD AND FEEDING. They feed on small insects including beetles, spiders, ants, isopods, and larvae. Their feeding behaviour occurs during the day-time.

REPRODUCTION. The female lays a small clutch of a single egg in crevices, or under rocks or bark. The selected nesting area is used repeatedly by one or more females (Dwarfgeckos, 2016). The male *Gonatodes* will engage in tumbling fights over territories or display locations (TT Herps 2016). In their breeding season, the eggs are laid at three week intervals (Dwarfgeckos, 2016). The juveniles have the same appearance as the females (Fig. 3).

BEHAVIOUR. The bright white colour of the male may be a protection against predator, as the predators focus on the tail and attack only at that point, as for this species it is easy to grow a tail (Dwarfgeckos, 2016).

REFERENCES

- Dwarfgeckos (2016). *Gonatodes vittatus*. http://www.dwarfgeckos.com/gonatodes/g_v/gonatodes_vittatus.php, downloaded 9 March, 2016.
- Reptile Database (2016). *Gonatodes vittatus* (LICHENSTEIN, 1856). <http://reptile-database.reptarium.cz/species?genus=Gonatodes&species=vittatus> , downloaded 8 March, 2016.
- TT Herps (2016). *Gonatodes vittatus*. The Herpetofauna of Trinidad & Tobago. <http://trinidad-tobagoherps.org/Gonatodesvittatus.htm> , downloaded 1 March, 2016.
- Wikipedia (2016). *Gonatodes*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gonatodes> , downloaded 27 February, 2016.

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Fig. 2. Female *Gonatodes vittatus*.

[http://www.globalgeckos.co.uk/public_html/index.php?route=product/product&path=98_106&product_id=1303,
downloaded 2 March 2016]



Fig. 3. Juvenile *Gonatodes vittatus*.

[http://www.dwarfgeckos.com/gonatodes/g_v/gonatodes_vittatus.php, downloaded 9 March 2016]

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