

# NA TUURHISTORISCHE EN ANDERE NOTITIES NATURAL HISTORY AND OTHER NOTES

ISSN 2518-5705

---

Privé uitgave: H.K. Mienis, Kibboets Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500, Israël  
Privately published: H.K. Mienis, Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500, Israel

Downloadable from: [http://israel-nature-site.com/?page\\_id=1872%E2%80%8F](http://israel-nature-site.com/?page_id=1872%E2%80%8F)

---

## INHOUD-CONTENTS

Voorwoord – Preface .....	2
Mienis, H.K.: Predation on land snails by Skinks in Israel, 3. Cases of feeding on snails by the Bridled mabuya <i>Heremites vittata</i> .....	3
Mienis, H.K.: Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 10. Additional records concerning <i>Caenoplaena coerulea</i> , <i>Rynchodemus sylvaticus</i> and an unidentified <i>Microplana</i> or <i>Rynchodemus</i> species .....	6
Mienis, H.K.: The Bank of Israel has issued a unique 5 new shekel coin in honor of the work carried out by the medical teams in their struggle during the COVID-19 pandemic .....	10
Mienis, H.K. & Mienis, D.: Two similar coins of Antiochus IV on one of the Mediterranean beaches south of the mouth of Nahal Soreq, Israel .....	11
Mienis, H.K.: The first sightings of European glass lizards <i>Pseudopus apodus</i> in kibbutz Netzer Sereni, Israel .....	14

## Voorwoord

Dit 35<sup>ste</sup> nummer van 'Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes' bevat deze keer vijf korte notities gebaseerd op vondsten, waarnemingen of studies gedaan in Israël.

Deze nieuwsbrief is voorlopig gepland als een kwartaal uitgave. Van elk nummer zullen 50 gelijktijdig gedrukte exemplaren verschijnen die voornamelijk bestemd zijn voor bibliotheken van instituten en museums. Elk nummer is ook gratis electronisch verkrijgbaar via de website van mijn collega en vriend Oz Rittner:

[http://israel-nature-site.com/?page\\_id=1872%20%8F](http://israel-nature-site.com/?page_id=1872%20%8F)

Hoewel deze uitgave geheel voldoet aan de eisen die de 'Internationale Commissie voor Zoologische Naamgeving' gesteld heeft voor een wetenschappelijk tijdschrift, zullen in dit tijdschrift geen artikelen gepubliceerd worden die van invloed zijn op de naamgeving van een of andere wetenschappelijke eenheid.

Artikelen mogen overgenomen worden mits de schrijver daarover geïnformeerd is en de bron genoemd wordt.

Deze publikatie wordt geindexeerd in de 'Zoological Record' en heeft een officieel 'International Serial Standard Number' ontvangen: ISSN 2518-5705.

## Preface

This 35<sup>th</sup> issue of 'Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes' contains this time five short notes based on finds, observations or studies made in Israel.

This newsletter is planned for the meantime as a quarterly. Of each number 50 simultaneously printed copies will appear which are primarily intended for libraries of institutes and museums. Each issue is downloadable free of charge by means of the website of my colleague and friend Oz Rittner:

[http://israel-nature-site.com/?page\\_id=1872%20%8F](http://israel-nature-site.com/?page_id=1872%20%8F)

Although this publication meets the standards of a permanent scientific journal as stipulated by the 'International Commission for Zoological Nomenclature' no articles will be published in this journal which will influence the nomenclature of a certain taxonomic unit.

Articles may be reprinted on the understanding that the author is informed about it and the source mentioned.

This publication is being indexed in the 'Zoological Record' and has received an official 'International Serial Standard Number': ISSN 2518-5705.

**Predation on land snails by Skinks in Israel, 3.  
Cases of feeding on snails by the Bridled mabuya *Heremites vittata***

**Henk K. Mienis**

Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500 Israel

[mienis@netzer.org.il](mailto:mienis@netzer.org.il)

**Predatie op landslakken door Skinken in Israel, 3.  
Gevallen van het eten van slakken door de Gestreepte skink *Heremites vittata***

Onderzoek van uitwerpselen van de Gestreepte skink\* *Heremites vittata* heeft vier gevallen van predatie op drie soorten landslakken aan het licht gebracht in Israël. Ondanks deze karige waarnemingen worden landslakken waarschijnlijk gedurende de regenachtigeperiode geregeld door deze skink gegeten.

### **Introduction**

One of the most common skinks living in Israel is without doubt the Bridled mabuya or Bridled skink *Heremites vittata* (Fig. 1). The scientific name of this skink has been changed during the last 50 years at least four times. When I arrived in Israel at the end of 1969 it was called *Mabuya vittata* (Barash & Hoofien, 1961). Some 20 years ago it was briefly transferred to the genus *Eutropis* (Mausfeld *et al.*, 2002), while most recently it was listed as *Trachylepis vittata* (Bar & Haimovitch, 2011; Werner, 2016). However, according to the Reptile Data-base the correct scientific name should be *Heremites vittata*. This change has recently also been adopted by Bar *et al.*, 2021 and Werner, 2021, although on the latter's distribution map is still written *Trachylepis vittata*. The old generic name: *Mabuya*, is still preserved in its common name Bridled mabuya.



Fig. 1: The Bridled mabuya or Bridled skink *Heremites vittata*  
Photograph Oz Rittner

Adults may reach a length of just over 20 cm. The color of this stocky skink is quite variable. In figure 1 a striped specimen is seen, but also unstriped specimens with a

dark brown back are quite commonly encountered. Since it is active during the daytime we come often across it during walks in the surroundings of kibbutz Netzer Sereni.

The Bridled mabuya feeds almost exclusively on a large variety of invertebrate species (Bar & Haimovitch, 2011; Werner, 2016) and even occasionally on small lizards and skinks (Werner, 2016).

### **Material and Methods**

Specimens of the Bridled mabuya, occasionally caught in Israel by the author were kept separately in empty terraria or large glass vials until one or more faecal pellets were obtained. All the skinks were released later on more or less in the area where they had been caught.

The faecal pellets were checked for the presence of shell fragments. These were identified to specific level and the number of specimens was established by counting the presence of top fragments. If no top was present among the fragments, then the remains were considered to belong to a single specimen.

### **Results**

The results of our research concerning predation on terrestrial snails are enumerated in Table 1.

Table 1: Records of predation on terrestrial snails by the Brindled mabyua *Heremites vittata* in Israel. The number of specimens is mentioned between square brackets.

Species	Locality	Date	Literature	Observation form
<i>Eopolita protensa jebusitica</i> [1]	Netzer Sereni	04.02.1981	here	Faecal pellet
<i>Xeropicta vestalis joppensis</i> [1]	Hill south-west Kefar Bin Nun	16.03.1981	here	Faecal pellet
<i>Xeropicta vestalis joppensis</i> [1]	Hill south-west Kefar Bin Nun	16.03.1981	here	Faecal pellet
<i>Granopupa granum</i> [1]	Near Khirbet Deir Abiyad, north-west Shaar HaGay	17.03.1983	here	Faecal pellet

According to these data the Bridled mabuya carried out predation on three different species of terrestrial land snails (Table 2). All the specimens of *Eopolita* and *Xeropicta* were juveniles, while the *Granopupa* was an adult specimen. All the cases of predation took place towards the end of the rainy winter period when the snails were still active.

Table 2: Systematic list of land snails which have been recorded so far as food items of the Bridled mabuya *Heremites vittata* in Israel [number of observations]

#### Family Chondrinidae

*Granopupa granum* (Draparnaud, 1801) [1x]

#### Family Oxychilidae

*Eopolita protensa jebusitica* (Roth, 1855) [1x]

#### Family Geomitridae

*Xeropicta vestalis joppensis* (Schmidt, 1855) [2x]

The Bridled mabuya is most probably a regular predator of tiny land snails in Israel at least during the rainy period, this in spite of the scanty number of observations so far.

Like in the case of predation on terrestrial snails by the Eyed skink *Chalcides ocellatus* (Mienis & Mienis-Israeli, 2022) and the Golden or Schneider's skink (Mienis, 2022) it is doubtful that a similar survey dealing with predation on snails by the Bridled mabuya can be carried out in the near future in Israel.

### Acknowledgement

I like to thank my colleague Oz Rittner (the Steinhardt Museum of Natural History, Tel Aviv University) for the use of his photograph.

### \* Opmerking

Ik heb tevergeefs naar een algemeen aanvaardbare Nederlandse naam voor *Heremites vittata* gezocht. In een verslag betreffende een herpetologische natuurreis in Israël (Anonymous, 2016) wordt in de tekst de Engelse naam Bridled mabuya gebruikt maar in het overzicht van alle waargenomen soorten wordt als Nederlandse naam Gestreepte skink gebruikt. Deze naam is ook hier geaccepteerd ofschoon deze naam ook gebruikt wordt voor zowel een skink uit Noord-Amerika (*Plestidon fasciatus*) als een uit Afrika (*Trachylepis striata*).

### References

- Anonymous, 2016. Herpetologische natuurreis Israël 11 april t/m 21 april 2016. [herpetogroeprotterdam.jimdofree.com/home/herpetologische-natuurreizen/israël-2016/](http://herpetogroeprotterdam.jimdofree.com/home/herpetologische-natuurreizen/israël-2016/) ba
- Bar, A. & Haimovitch, G., 2011. A field guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Israel. 245 pp. Private publication, Herzliya.
- Bar, A., Haimovitch, G. & Meir, S., 2021. Field guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Israel. 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition. Frankfurt Contributions to Natural History, 87: 511 pp. Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main.
- Barash, Al. & Hoofien, J.H., 1961. [Reptiles of Israel.] 181 pp. Hakibbutz Hameuchad Publishing House Ltd. [in Hebrew]
- Mausfeld, P., Schmitz, A., Böhme, W., Misof, B., Vrcibradic, D. & Rocha, C.F.D. da, 2002. Phylogenetic affinities of *Mabuya atlantica* Schmidt, 1945, endemic to the Atlantic Ocean archipelago of Fernando de Noronha (Brazil): Necessity of partitioning the genus *Mabuya* Fitzinger, 1826 (Scincidae: Lygosominae). Zoologischer Anzeiger, 241: 281-293.
- Mienis, H.K., 2022. Predation on land snails by Skinks in Israel, 2. Cases of feeding on snails by the Golden or Schneider's skink *Eumeces schneideri pavimentatus*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 34: 3-5.
- Mienis, H.K. & Mienis-Israeli, O., 2022. Predation on land snails by Skinks in Israel, 1. Cases of feeding on snails by the Eyed skink *Chalcides ocellatus*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 33: 8-11.
- Werner, Y.L., 2016. Reptile life in the Land of Israel with comments on adjacent regions. Frankfurt Contributions to Natural History, 71: 494 pp. Chimaira Buchhandels GmbH, Frankfurt am Main.
- Werner, Y.L., 2021. [Reptile life in the Land of Israel with comments on adjacent regions.] 338 pp + 81-271 colored photographs. Bialik Institute, Jerusalem. [in Hebrew]

**Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 10.  
Additional records concerning *Caenoplana coerulea*, *Rynchodemus sylvaticus*  
and an unidentified *Microplana* or *Rynchodemus* species**

**Henk K. Mienis**  
Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500 Israel  
[mienis@netzer.org.il](mailto:mienis@netzer.org.il)

**Terrestrische platwormen in Israël, 10.  
Aanvullende gegevens betreffende *Caenoplana coerulea*, *Rynchodemus sylvaticus*  
en een ongedetermineerde *Microplana* of *Rynchodemus* soort**

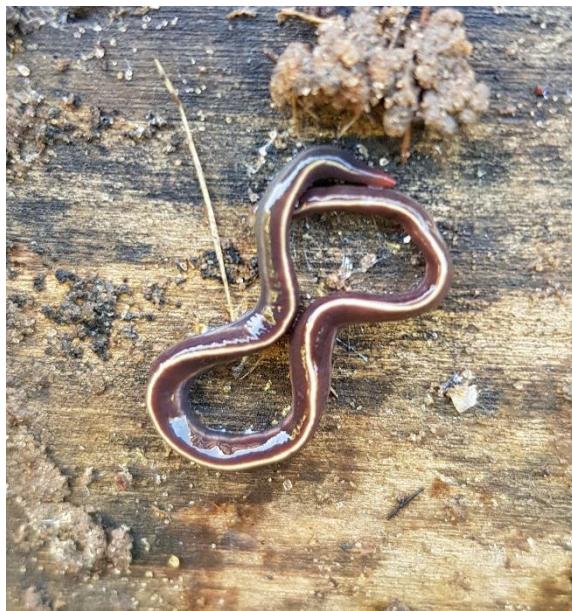
Informatie betreffende nieuwe vondsten van drie soorten terrestrische platwormen in kibboets Netzer Sereni, Israël, is hier opgesomd in chronologische volgorde

Data on the presence of terrestrial flatworms in Israel have been published by the author in a number of short articles (Mienis, 1976; 2015; 2016a-c; 2017; 2019a-c & 2022) and illustrated on a placemat (Mienis *et al.*, 2022). In this 10<sup>th</sup> issue in the serial "Terrestrial flatworms in Israel" additional data are given from observations made on land planarians mainly present in the garden of my daughter Dana Mienis in Kibbutz Netzer Sereni.

Used abbreviation: H.K.M. = Henk K. Mienis.

Between brackets: number of specimens.

*Caenoplana coerulea* Moseley, 1877 – the Blue land planarian



Netzer Sereni, Dana's garden, under pot with succulents, leg. H.K.M., 30 June, 2020 (1 segment of a large specimen); idem, under pot with *Chrysantenum*, leg. H.K.M., 30 June 2020 (2 small ones); idem, under empty pot with water, leg. H.H.M., 27 July 2020 (4 small ones); idem, under pot with ferns, leg. H.K.M., 10 August 2020 (4); idem, leg. H.K.M., 17 August 2020 (8); idem, under pot with *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*, leg. H.K.M., 17 August 2020 (2); idem under pot with *Portulaca*, leg. H.K.M., 17 August

2020 (1 with a length of about 8 cm); idem, leg. H.K.M., 18 October 2021 (6 juveniles); idem, leg. H.K.M., 24 November 2021 (1 juvenile); idem, leg. H.K.M., 1 December 2021 (1 juvenile and a very large one of about 12 cm length); idem, leg. H.K.M., 2 December 2021 (3 adults); idem, leg. H.K.M., 3 December 2021 (8); idem, leg. H.K.M., 4 December 2021 (5); idem, leg. H.K.M., 6 December 2021 (7); idem, leg. H.K.M., 8 December 2021 (4); idem, leg. H.K.M., 12 December 2021 (4); idem, leg. H.K.M., 27 December 2021 (1); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 28 December 2021 (1); idem, under very large bowl, leg. H.K.M., 1 January 2022 (1, with a length of more than 10 cm while at rest); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 4 January 2022 (2); idem, leg. H.K.M., 5 January 2022 (2); idem, under pot, leg. H.K.M., 12 January 2022 (1); idem, under tile and potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 13 January 2022 (3); idem, under flower pot, leg. H.K.M., 31 January 2022 (1); idem, under potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 8 February 2022 (1 with a length of more than 12 cm); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 7 March 2022 (1). All together 76 specimens.

*Rynchodemus sylvaticus* (Leidy, 1851) – Two-lined land planarian



Netzer Sereni, Dana's garden, under pot with *Portulaca*, leg. H.K.M., 30 November 2021 (2); idem, leg. H.K.M., 1 December 2021 (1); idem, under piece of bark laying on the ground, leg. H.K.M., 5 January 2022 (1 dark specimen); idem, attached to a wet piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 12 January 2022 (1); idem, under potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 27 February 2022 (1); idem, attached to piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 1 March 2022 (2); idem, under piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 7 March 2022 (2, both dark specimens); idem, attached to piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 10 March 2022 (1); idem, under wood, leg. H.K.M., 21 March 2022 (1); idem, under wood, leg. H.K.M., 22 March 2022 (1). All together 13 specimens.

Netzer Sereni, garden of Yaron Kressel, under piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 10 March 2022 (2); idem, leg. H.K.M., 14 March 2022 (2); idem, leg. H.K.M., 20 March 2022 (2); idem, leg. H.K.M., 27 March 2022 (1); idem, leg. H.K.M., 30 March 2022 (1). All together 8 specimens.

The gardens of Dana Mienis and Yaron Kressel are situated one opposite the other.

*Microplana* or *Rynchodemus* species – "One-lined" land planarian



The first records of this so far unidentified species were published by Mienis (2022). Dr. Leigh Winsor (James Cook University, Townsville) has opted that it is most likely *Microplana henrici* (Bendl, 1908) [in a mail to Sytske de Waart (Naturalis, Leiden)]. However, in *Microplana henrici* the two eyes are much larger and the anterior tip is rather blunt. That species shows also less variability in color.

Netzer Sereni, Dana's garden, under pot with *Portulaca*, leg. H.K.M., 12 December 2021 (3); under tile, leg. H.K.M., 26 December 2021 (1); idem, leg. H.K.M., 29 December 2021 (1); idem, leg. H.K.M., 1 January 2022 (1); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 5 January 2022 (2); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 13 January 2022 (1); idem, under potted plants, leg. H.K.M., 24 January 2022 (3); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 25 January 2022 (1); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 26 January 2022 (1); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 31 January 2022 (3); idem, under potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 13 February 2022 (1); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 16 February 2022 (3); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 18 February 2022 (1); idem, under potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 22 February 2022 (1); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 23 February 2022 (1); idem, under potted plants, leg. H.K.M., 24 February 2022 (4); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 27 February 2022 (3); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 28 February 2022 (2); idem, under potted plant, leg. H.K.M., 2 March 2022 (3, one with a length of more than 3 cm); idem, under a tile, leg. H.K.M., 4 March 2022 (1); idem, under piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 6 March 2022 (1); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 9 March 2022 (2); idem, under piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 15 March, 2022 (1); idem, under potted plants, leg. H.K.M., 16 March 2022 (3); idem, under a tile, leg. H.K.M., 17 March 2022 (1); idem, under tiles and attached to wood, leg. H.K.M., 19 March 2022 (3); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 20 March 2022 (1); idem, under tile, leg. H.K.M., 21 March 2022 (1); idem, under tiles, leg. H.K.M., 22 March 2022 (3); idem, under a tile and plastic flower pot, leg. H.K.M., 23 March 2022 (2); idem, under tiles and piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 27 March 2022 (3); idem, under piece of wood, leg. H.K.M., 28 March 2022 (2); idem, attached to wood, leg. H.K.M., 30 March (1); idem, under pieces of wood, leg. H.K.M., 12 April 2022 (4); idem, attached to wood, leg. H.K.M., 14 April 2022 (2); idem, under wood and potted plants, leg. H.K.M., 15 April 2022 (4).

All together 71 specimens.

## References

- Mienis, H.K., 1976. The land planarian *Bipalium kewense* in Israel. Israel Journal of Zoology, 25: 71.
- Mienis, H.K., 2015. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 1: Finds of *Bipalium kewense*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 8: 6-8.
- Mienis, H.K., 2016a. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 2: Finds of *Caenoplaea coerulea*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 9: 3-5.
- Mienis, H.K., 2016b. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 3: Finds of *Rhynchodemus cf. sylvaticus* (Tricladida, Continenticola, Geoplanoidea, Geoplanidae). Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 10: 3-5.
- Mienis, H.K., 2016c. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 4: Finds of *Microplana cf. terrestris* (Tricladida, Continenticola, Geoplanoidea, Geoplanidae). Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 12: 7-9.
- Mienis, H.K., 2017. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 5: Finds of *Parakontikia ventrolineata* (Tricladida, Continenticola, Geoplanoidea, Geoplanidae). Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 13: 5-6.
- Mienis, H.K., 2019a. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 6: An overlooked old find of *Bipalium kewense* and *Rhynchodemus cf. sylvaticus*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 22: 10.
- Mienis, H.K., 2019b. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 7. Additional records of *Caenoplaea coerulea* and *Microplana cf. terrestris*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 24: 9-10.
- Mienis, H.K., 2019c. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 8. The first find of the exotic land planarian *Bipalium adventitium*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 24: 14-16.
- Mienis, H.K., 2022. Terrestrial flatworms in Israel, 9. On the presence of an unidentified species of *Microplana* or *Rynchodemus*. Natuurhistorische en Andere Notities – Natural History and Other Notes, 33: 13-15.
- Mienis, H.K., Mienis, D., Katsir, H. & Rittner, O., 2022. [Some invertebrates from Netzer Sereni.] 2 pp. [Two-sided placemat, in Hebrew]

**The Bank of Israel has issued a unique 5 new shekel coin in honor of the work carried out by the medical teams in their struggle during the COVID-19 pandemic**

**Henk K. Mienis**

Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500 Israel

[mienis@netzer.org.il](mailto:mienis@netzer.org.il)

**De Bank van Israël heeft een unieke 5 nieuw shekel munt uitgegeven ter ere van het werk uitgevoerd door de medische teams in hun strijd gedurende de COVID-19 pandemic**

Een nieuwe 5 NIS munt is in omloop gebracht door de Bank van Israël ter ere van de strijd geleverd door de medische teams gedurende de COVID-19 pandemic. Het schijnt tot nog toe de enige munt te zijn die wereldwijd verschenen is in connectie met de Corona-pandemic. Het heeft alle mogelijkheid om een gewild verzamelstuk te worden.

The Bank of Israel has launched a special 5 NIS coin on 20 December 2021 in honor of all the work the various medical teams showed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new circulation coin is based on the current 5 NIS coin (upper figures) which on the obverse showed besides the emblem of the State of Israel the capital of an ancient column from the Israeli Period 10<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> BCE (design: Dov Liff).



On the new coin, designed by Eitan Almog, the capital of the ancient column is replaced by a medical servant wearing a facemask and holding the hands of a patient (lower figures). It carries also the words: with gratitude in Hebrew, Arabic and English. The reverse remained almost the same. Only the English words: New Sheqalim, on the old coin has been changed into New Shekels.

Although millions of the "COVID -19" coin have been released already in circulation hardly any of them are encountered in small change. Since it seems the only coin related to the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide it may become a collector's item.

I like to thank my colleague Oz Rittner for the photographs of the coins.

**Two similar coins of Antiochus IV on one of the Mediterranean beaches  
south of the mouth of Nahal Soreq, Israel**

**Henk K. Mienis & Dana Mienis**

Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500 Israel

[mienis@netzer.org.il](mailto:mienis@netzer.org.il) & [danamienis@hotmail.com](mailto:danamienis@hotmail.com)

**Twee gelijkvormige munten van Antiochus IV op een van de Middellandse Zee stranden  
ten zuiden van de uitmonding van de Soreq rivier, Israël**

Tijdens een bezoek aan een van de Middellandse Zee stranden ten zuiden van de mond van de rivier de Soreq vond een van ons twee exemplaren van een klein bronzen muntje die gekenmerkt waren door een getande rand. Dergelijke muntjes zijn karakteristiek voor de Hellenistische periode in de Levant. Hoewel de muntjes erg versleten waren konden ze toch gedetermineerd worden als komende uit de korte periode waarin de wat vreemde Seleucid koning Antiochus IV aan de macht was van 175-164 voor Christus. De muntjes waren gemunt in Antiochia-Ptolemais, het tegenwoordige Akko.

The authors of this short note are irregularly making short hikes with their respectively young granddaughter and daughter to various interesting places in the neighbourhood of kibbutz Netzer Sereni. About a month ago we visited a nearby Mediterranean beach south of the Soreq River (old Wadi Rubin). Prior to our visit a rather strong wind had been blown for a couple of days. A line of floating objects reached the base of the dunes. Among them were numerous specimens of the Violet sea snail *Janthina janthina*, of which some were still attached to their own-made rafts consisting of mucus bubbles and many small pieces of wood densely covered with Goose barnacles *Lepas anatifera*.

At some places the waves had even undermined the base of the dunes causing new landslides on the relatively small beaches. At one point the junior author noticed a small coin and next to it was another one. Although they were rather worn the obverse showed a human face while the reverse showed a standing veiled female figure holding a long sceptre in her right hand. Yet the most striking part of these bronze coins was formed by the serrated edges of them (Fig. 1).

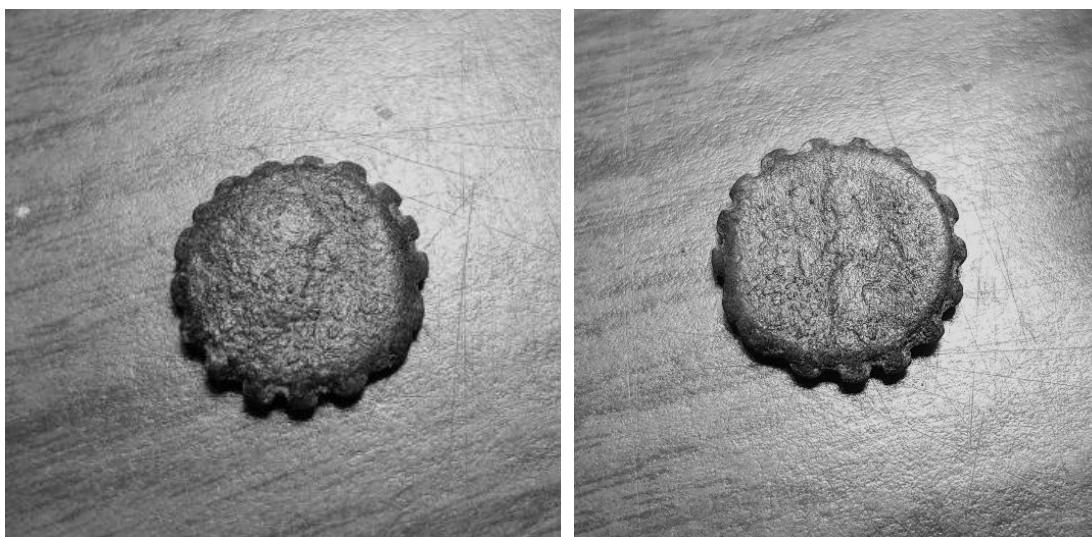


Fig. 1: One of the small coins found on the beach south of the Soreq River  
(Photographs Dana Mienis)

Such coins are almost entirely confined to the Seleucid period at the end of the Hellenistic period. They were especially given to the soldiers of the Seleucid army.

A search for similar coins in the literature revealed that we were dealing with ones minted by Antiochus IV Epiphanes\* (he considered himself divine!), which reigned shortly in the Levant from 175 till 164 BCE.

An internet photograph of a better preserved specimen which was found in 2016 during cleaning operations near the Tower of David in Jerusalem is here reproduced (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2: A similar specimen of the same coin recovered near the Tower of David in Jerusalem  
(Photographs Israel Antiquities Authority)

It is a quite common coin which remained probably still in use during the Hasmonean period (Farhi, 2016). From about the same area: Yavne-Yam and its surroundings, it had already been mentioned briefly by Kindler (1991) in a popular article. It is unfortunate that the publication of the final report concerning the coins from the Yavne-Yam excavations has probably once more been postponed due to the fact that the director of the excavations Prof. Moshe Fischer died on 22 August 2021.

Finds of this small coin with the serrated rim have been reported and figured from numerous localities throughout Israel for example Dor (Meshorer, 1995), Horvat 'Eleq (Barkay, 2000), the City of David in Jerusalem (Ariel, 1990), the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (Gitler, 2003; Ariel, 2006; Bijovsky & Berman, 2012), Herodium (Ahipaz, 2015), En-Gedi (Bijovsky, 2007), Khirbet Qeijafa in the Ha'Ela Valley (Farhi, 2016) and Tell es-Safi/Gath (Ariel, 2020), to mention only a few.

In the cottonfields of kibbutz Netzer Sereni, between the Nesher Cement Plant in Ramla and Moshav Ahisamakh, we have found such coins at least seven times in so-called stream gullies after heavy rain showers.

The most important feature of the find of these two coins was formed by the fact that the obverse side of both coins was minted off center in an exact similar way and that they were found one next to the other. Yet they were not exactly the same in all features

because their diameter measured respectively 13.72 and 13.62 mm, their thickness 2.65 and 2.79 mm and their weight 2.4 and 2.5 gram.

\* Antiochus IV Epiphanes was well-known because of its anti-Jewish ordinations and his constant struggles with the Jewish inhabitants of Judea and Samaria, and especially the rebellion of the Jewish Maccabees. According to Jewish tradition the Hanukka events took place towards the end of his reign and the "prutot", the small coins, mentioned in the various stories, are considered the small serrated coins here discussed.

## References

- Ahipaz, N., 2015. The Coins from Herodium – The Tomb Area. In R. Porat, R. Chachy & Y. Kalman (Eds.): Herodium Final Reports of the 1972-2010 Excavations directed by Ehud Netzer Volume I Herod's Tomb Precinct, 409-425. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem & Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Ariel, D.T., 1990. Coins, flans, and flan moulds. In D.T. Ariel (Ed.): Excavations at the City of David 1978-1985 directed by Yigal Shiloh Volume II Imported stamped Amphora Handles, Coins, worked Bone and Ivory, and Glass. *Qedem*, 30: 99-118.
- Ariel, D.T., 2006. Coins. In H. Geva (Ed.): Jewish Quarter Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem conducted by Nahman Avigad, 1969-1982 Volume III: Area E and Other Studies Final Report, 192-217. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem & Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Ariel, D.T., 2020. Coins from Tell es-Safi/Gath (1996-2010). In A.M. Maeir & J. Uziel (Eds.): Tell es Safi/Gath II Excavations and Studies. Ägypten und Altes Testament, 105: 541-546. Zaphon, Münster.
- Barkay, R., 2000. The coins of Horvat 'Eleq. In Y. Hirschfeld (Ed.): Ramat HaNadiv Excavations, 377-419. The Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem.
- Bijovsky, G., 2007. The Coins. In Y. Hirschfeld (Ed.): En-Gedi Excavations II Final Report (1996-2002), 157-233. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem & Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Bijovsky, G. & Berman, A., 2012. Coins from the Cardo and the Nea Church. In O. Gutman (Ed.): Jewish Quarter Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem conducted by Nahman Avigad, 1969-1982 Volume V: The Cardo (Area X) and the Nea Church (Areas D and T) Final Report, 346-377. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem & Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Farhi, Y., 2016. Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 5 Excavation Report 2007-2013. The numismatic finds: coins and related objects. 184 pp. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem.
- Gitler, H., 2003. The Coins. In H. Geva (Ed.): Jewish Quarter Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem conducted by Nahman Avigad, 1969-1982. Volume II: The Finds of Areas A, W and X-2 Final Report, 453-492. Israel Exploration Society, Jerusalem & Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
- Kindler, A., 1991. [The coins.] In M. Fischer (Ed.): [Yavne-Yam and Surroundings], 69-74. Kibbutz Palmahim & Ariel, Jerusalem. [in Hebrew]
- Meshorer, Y., 1995. Coins from Areas A and C. In E. Stern (Ed.): Excavations at Dor, Final Report Volume I B Areas A and C: the Finds. *Qedem Reports*, 2: 461-472.

**The first sightings of European glass lizards *Pseudopus apodus*  
in kibbutz Netzer Sereni, Israel**

**Henk K. Mienis**

Kibbutz Netzer Sereni, IL-7039500 Israel

[mienis@netzer.org.il](mailto:mienis@netzer.org.il)

**De eerste waarnemingen van de Scheltopusik *Pseudopus apodus* in kibbutz Netzer Sereni, Israël**  
 De Scheltopusik of Pantserhazelworm *Pseudopus apodus*, Fam. Anguidae, komt algemeen voor in dat deel van Israël dat gekenmerkt wordt door een Mediterraan klimaat. Hoewel kibboets Netzer Sereni gelegen is in deze zone stammen de eerste twee waarnemingen van deze reusachtige Hazelworm, die meer dan een meter lang kan worden, uit respectievelijk mei 2020 en juni 2022. Mogelijk gaat het zelfs om hetzelfde exemplaar.

Already more than 50 years I am living as a Dutchman in kibbutz Netzer Sereni. Almost since my arrival in Israel I have noted down my observations concerning the presence of reptiles in and around the kibbutz. One of my sons, Omer, carried out an intensive reptile survey in that area in 1989/90, instead of a regular Highschool examination in the field of biology (Mienis, 1990), and we continued noting down additional interesting records. In those 50 years we never came across a European glass lizard *Pseudopus apodus* ("Kamtan" in Hebrew), Fam. Anguidae, although it is considered a common reptile species in that area of Israel characterized by a Mediterranean climate (Bar & Haimovitch, 1989; Werner, 2016; Bar, Haimovitch & Meiri, 2021).

I rule out the possibility that during those 50 years we have simply overlooked that large species, which may reach a length of 120 cm. Another fact is that it is a well-known predator of terrestrial snails (Bar, 1980), a feature which has my full interest both in Israel and my native the Netherlands already for more than 60 years. It is therefore our opinion that this species until recently was simply not present in kibbutz Netzer Sereni.

The find of a large European glass lizard in the garden of one of the older kibbutz members in May 2020 was therefore a real surprise. An even more surprise formed the find of another large specimen in one of the gardens of the new A-Quarter in the middle of June 2022 (Figs. 1-2).

Some of the principal characters: the ear, in front of the thumb of Omer Mienis, who handled the specimen, and especially the deep groove from the ear backwards at both sides along its length are clearly visible.

The two localities in Netzer Sereni are separated by a few hundred meters, we do not rule out therefore the possibility that we are dealing with the same specimen. After a thorough investigation and some photographs the second "Kamtan", like the first one was released at the same spot where it had been caught.

#### **Acknowledgements**

I like to thank my sons Omer and Shai Mienis (Kibbutz Netzer Sereni) for respectively information concerning the second sighting and the photographs.



Fig. 1: An adult European glass lizard *Pseudopus apodus* ("Kamtan") caught  
in Kibbutz Netzer Sereni  
Photograph: Shai Mienis



Fig. 2: Front view of the European glass lizard *Pseudopus apodus* ("Kamtan") caught  
in Kibbutz Netzer Sereni  
Photograph: Shai Mienis

## References

- Bar, A. & Haimovitch, G., 1989. A field guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Israel. 245 pp. Private publication, Herzliya.
- Bar, A., Haimovitch, G. & Meiri, S., 2021. Field guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Israel. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Frankfurt Contributions to Natural History, 87: 511 pp. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main.
- Bar, Z., 1980. Anguimorph lizards predating on mollusks. *Levantina*, 29: 335-340.
- Menis, O., 1990. [Survey of the reptiles of Kibbutz Netzer Sereni and their zoogeography.] 86 pp. Regional Highschool Givat Brenner. [in Hebrew]
- Werner, Y.L., 2016. Reptile life in the Land of Israel with comments on adjacent regions. Frankfurt Contributions to Natural History, 71: 1-494. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main.