

Field Behaviour and Physiology of Amphibolurus ornatusS. Donald Bradshaw

From field studies it is known that the small dragon lizard Amphibolurus ornatus is completely restricted to large granite outcrops where it is confronted with two problems: intense heat and the absence of surface water during the summer months. This animal copes with these problems by a combination of behavioural avoidance of extreme conditions and appropriate physiological tolerances. The thermoregulation which it achieves by behavioural means prevents body temperature from exceeding  $40^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , even though the temperature of the rock surfaces within its habitat may reach  $75^{\circ}\text{C}.$  Loss of water from the respiratory tract and the skin is slow and excretion is curtailed during summer, so the water obtained in a diet of insects is sufficient for maintenance of water balance between the widely spaced summer rains.