**Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.**

BEZY, ROBERT L. 1982. *Xantusia vigilis*

*Xantusia vigilis* Baird, 1859:254. Type-locality, "Fort Tejon [Kern County, Cal."

*Xantusia vigilis* Baird

---

**Xantusia vigilis Baird Desert night lizard**

*Xantusia vigilis* Baird, 1859:254. Type-locality, "Fort Tejon [Kern County, Cal."

**SYNTYPES.** U.S. Nat. Mus. 3065 (3 specimens), sex unknown, collected by John Xantus (not examined by author).

**CONTENT.** Seven subspecies are recognized: *arizonae*, *extorris*, *gilberti*, *sierrae*, *utahensis*, *vigilis*, and *wigginsi*.

**DEFINITION.** A small xantusiid (maximum snout-vent length 55 mm in males, 60 mm in females) with 12 longitudinal rows of rectangular ventral scales, 30-50 granular dorsal scales around mid-body, one row of well-developed supraoculars above each eye, one frонтonasal, two frontals, and two parietals. Dorsal coloration is usually light gray to brown, sometimes unicolor, but often with small dark spots and/or dark-edged dorsolateral light stripes.

**DESCRIPTIONS.** Details of scalation, external measurements, color and color pattern have been described by Baird (1859), Bezy (1967a, 1967b), Cope (1900), Klauber (1931), Savage (1952), Smith (1946), Stebbins (1954, 1966), Tanner (1957), Van Denburgh (1895a, 1922), and Webb (1965).

**ILLUSTRATIONS.** Black-and-white photographs have been published by Bezy (1967a, 1967b), Bezy et al. (1980), Cowles and Bogert (1944), Gernot and Price (1978), Grinnell and Grinnell (1907), Klauber (1931), Miller and Stebbins (1964), Smith (1946), Van Denburgh (1922), Webb (1965), and Zweifel and Lowe (1966); a color photograph by Behler and King (1979); and drawings by Brattstrom (1965), Cowles and Bogert (1944), Cowles and Burleson (1945), Klauber (1931), Savage (1952), Stebbins (1954, 1966), Tanner (1957), Van Denburgh (1895a), and Webb (1965).

**DISTRIBUTION.** The species occurs at scattered localities in the southwestern United States and northern Mexico: *X. s. vigilis* is widely distributed in the Mohave and Sonoran Deserts of western Utah, northwestern Arizona, southern Nevada, southern California and northern Baja California, with isolated populations in the desert ranges of western Arizona, the northern coast of Sonora, and the Inner Coast Ranges of central California; *X. s. arizonae* occurs along the southern edge of the Colorado Plateau and in the Grand Canyon of Arizona; *X. s. extorris,* in the southern Chihuahuan Desert of Durango and Zacatecas; *X. s. gilberti,* in the Sierra Victoria of Baja California Sur; *X. s. sierrae,* along the southwestern foothills of the Sierra Nevada in California; *X. s. utahensis,* in the Great Basin Desert of southeastern Utah; and *X. s. wigginsi,* in the Vizcaino Desert of Baja California from El Rosario to near Pozo Grande. Specimens from Santa Catalina Island, California, are considered to represent introductions (Klauber, 1939; Savage, 1952). The elevational range is from sea level to 9360 ft (2855 m).


**Fossil Record.** Brattstrom (1958) reported the species from Rancho La Brea Pit 101, but Savage (1963) has indicated that the fragments are of iguanids, probably of the genus *Uta.*


**Etymology.** The names are derived as follows: *vigilis,* Latin, alert, watchful; *arizonae,* Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming; *sierrae,* Sierra Nevada; *utahensis,* Utah; and *wigginsi,* Dr. Charles H. Gilbert, inspirer of Van Denburgh; and *exorrhina,* Dr. Ira L. Wiggins, Stanford botanist, collector of the holotype.

1. *Xantusia vigilis vigilis* Baird

*Xantusia vigilis* Baird, 1859:254. See species account.

*Xantusia vigilis vigilis*: Savage, 1952:47. First use of trivial name.

**MAP.** Solid circles mark type-localities, open circles indicate other records. Question marks indicate areas where the species may occur.
**7. Xantusia vigilis wigginsi Savage**


- **Definition.** Dorsal scales 31-38 (34.3); 4th toe lamellae 16-20 (17.9); femoral pores 4-9 (6); ventrals 25-27 (26); 7th supraboral usually not as high as 6th. Tail spots generally restricted to tips of scales; dorsal spots (when present) numerous and small, often occupying only one scale; dorsolateral light stripes often present on body.

**COMMENT**

Becy (1967b) identified populations that are intermediate between *X. arizonae* and *X. vigilis* in geography, scalation, body proportions, and color patterns, and concluded that the two forms are conspecific. Morafka (1977:75) retained *X. arizonae* as a separate species and speculated that the morphologically intermediate populations are saxicolous *X. vigilis* that are convergent with *X. arizonae*. He also proposed the new combination *X. arizonae boholanae* for *X. henshawi boholanae* of Webb (1970), citing unspecified morphological observations and the karyotype data of Becy (1972). Since the same karyotype occurs in *vigilis, arizonae*, and *boholanae*, the chromosomal data cannot resolve this trichotomy. However, the morphological continuum between *arizonae* and *vigilis* (Becy 1967b) and the presence of 12 longitudinal rows of ventrals in all populations of *X. vigilis* (including *arizonae*) as compared to 14 in *henshawi* and *boholanae* (Webb, 1970, 1979), clearly indicate that the combinations *X. arizonae* and *X. henshawi boholanae* best reflect the relationships involved.

**LITERATURE CITED**


1955a. The gross and microscopic anatomy of the pituitary and the seasonal histological changes occurring in the pars anterior of the viviparous lizard Xantusia vigilis. Ibid. 47(9):225-246.


This page contains a list of sources cited in the text, including books, articles, and other publications relevant to the study of amphibians and reptiles. The references cover a wide range of topics, from specific species to broader taxonomic studies, and the bibliography reflects the comprehensive nature of the research in this field.