

Project Update: June 2017

The latest fieldwork was done on the different mountains of our study area; Mt Bamboutos, Mt Manengouba and Mt Oku, during March, April and May 2017 respectively. Data on various threats, habitats types, species distribution and GPS coordinates were collected by using visual encountered surveys along transects. The following diversity and abundance of endemics skinks were found:

- We encountered two endemics species with one individual each from Mt Mbamboutos including: *Trachylepis mekuana* and *Leptosiaphos ianthinoxantha*. These individuals were observed around 2300 and 2700m asl. All these species share the same habitat characterised by low grassland due to the permanent presence of cattle and many medium rocks. The lowest abundance was likely due to the presence of recent bush fire on the mountain. Generally, at the end of the dry season, farmers use to put fire in their farm and the fire spreads right to the top of the mountain where endemic skink are known to occur.



Left: bush fire. Middle: *Leptosiaphos ianthinoxantha*. Right: *Trachylepis makuana*.

- On Mt Oku: *Lacertaspis chriswildii* was recorded around Ngashie village between 1800 and 2200 m asl where its habitat still appears intact. The specimen was observed along a small stream with tall trees with open canopy.



Left: *Lacertaspis chriswildii*. Right: Habitat of the species.

- Three endemics species were found in mount Manengouba: *Leptosiaphos ianthinoxantha*, *L. Vigitisserierum* and *Leptosiaphos Pauliani*. This later species (figure

a.) was not previously known from this site and this observation narrows the gap between the two known ranges between Mts Kupe and Bamboutos.



Left: *Leptosiaphos pauliani*. Middle: *L. ianthinoxantha*. Right: *L. vigittiserierum*