

Predation of Madeiran wall lizards *Teira dugesii* by the banded garden spider *Argiope trifasciata*

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Spiders are primarily invertebrate predators but some larger species can occasionally capture small vertebrates such as lizards, bats, birds and frogs (Valdez et al., 2020). For example, in 1987, the banded garden spider *Argiope trifasciata* was observed in two cases of predation, preying upon *Anolis porcatus* and *Anolis sagrei*, lizards endemic to Cuba (De Armas & Aláyon, 1987). Another example is some adults of *Hogna ingens* were observed feeding on juveniles of *Teira dugesii maui* on the Desertas Islands in the Madeira Archipelago (Cardoso et al., 2016).



Figure 1. *Argiope trifasciata* feeding on *Teira dugesii dugesii*, Miradouro Trigo de Negreiros or Moledos, Madeira

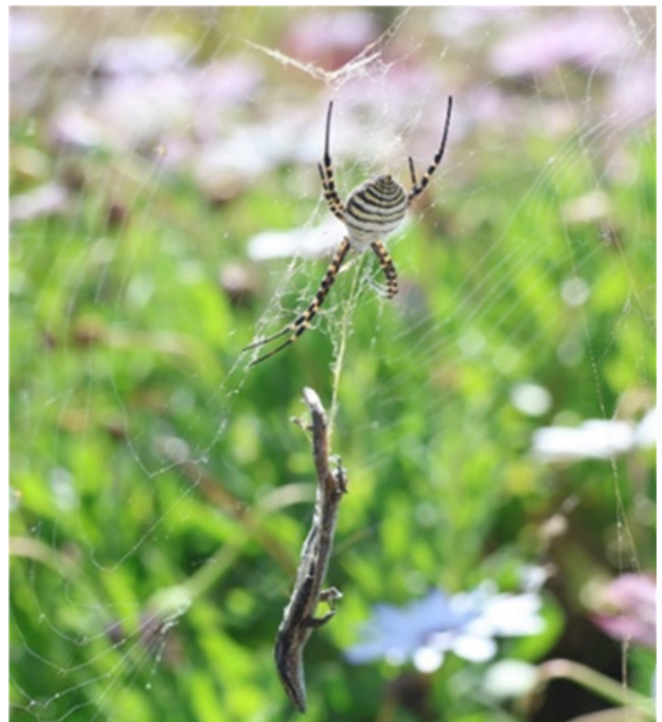


Figure 2. *Teira dugesii dugesii* secured by *Argiope trifasciata* using the wrapping technique, Escola EB123/PE Bartolomeu Perestrelo, Madeira

The Madeiran wall lizard *Teira dugesii* is endemic to the Madeira and Selvagens archipelagos, with a wide distribution in both archipelagos, occurring in a variety of habitats (Jesus et al., 2009). The banded garden spider *Argiope trifasciata* is of medium-size (4–25 mm) and is widely distributed on the island of Madeira, especially at lower altitudes (Araújo, 2009). There have been suggestions that this spider is an occasional predator of *T. dugesii* (Araújo, 2009), but until now this has not been documented.

This note is the first documented account of the predation of Madeiran wall lizards by banded garden spiders. The first observation was on 7 February 2023 in the Miradouro Trigo de Negreiros or Moledos (32° 42.3999' N, 17° 8.3595' W), where the spider was seen feeding on a wall lizard caught in a web (Fig. 1). The second observation was on the morning of 10 February 2024 in the Gardens of Garajau (32° 38.77194' N, 16° 50.85282' W), where the spider was on its web by a clump of heather *Erica platycodon*, when a wall lizard having sighted insects in the web went towards them and became entangled (Diogo Ladeira, pers. comm.). The spider used the prey wrapping technique to secure the lizard (Barrantes & Eberhard, 2007). The third observation was on the morning of 16 February 2024 at Escola EB123/PE Bartolomeu Perestrelo (32° 39.52032' N, 16° 54.91362' W) by a pot of *Dimorphotheca* spp., where a wall lizard was observed caught in the web of a banded garden spider (Fig. 2).

Although these are the first documented records of the banded garden spider preying upon the Madeiran wall lizard, this interaction may be frequent since both species seems to be widespread, sympatric and common throughout the Madeiran archipelago, especially at lower altitudes.

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