

VARANUS BANGONORUM. (Bangon Monitor Lizard). ECTOPARASITE. *Varanus bangonorum* is restricted to dwindling habitats on the islands of Mindoro and Semirara (Zdunek and Webb 2023. *Herpetozoa* 36:1–8) and was a cryptic species within *Varanus salvator* complex until 2014 (Welton et al. 2014. *Zootaxa* 3881:201–227). Ticks are well-known ectoparasites of varanids (e.g., Auffenberg and Auffenberg 1990. *Bull. Florida Mus. Nat. Hist. Biol. Sci.* 35:1–34; King and Keirans 1997. *Rec. West. Austral. Mus.* 18:329–330; Harkare et al. 2007. *Zoos Print J.* 22:2898) and previous studies on Luzon Island, Philippines found the tick *Amblyomma helvolum* (Acarina: Ixodidae) parasitizing two species of varanids, *V. marmoratus* and *V. olivaceus* (Auffenberg 1988. *Int. J. Parasitol.* 18:937–945). Herein we report the presence of a tick of the Ixodidae family on a wild *V. bangonorum*, on Mindoro Island in the Philippines.

On 7 November 2022, we observed a tick on a subadult *V. bangonorum* as it was foraging, in the vicinity of Barangay Udalo, Municipality of Abra de Ilog, Province of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines (13.4772°N, 120.8168°E; WGS 84; 36 m elev.). The tick was attached to the left side of the lizard's neck a few cm anterior from its arm, and it appeared partially engorged (Fig. 1).

Although it is impossible to identify the tick to species from our picture, we suspect it belongs to the genus *Amblyomma* (previously *Aponomma*), an apparent varanid lizard specialist (Barhadiya and Ghosh 2020. *Herpetol. Bull.* 153:35–36) which has been found on other monitor lizard species in the Philippines (Auffenberg 1988, *op. cit.*), and in other countries (Bayless and Simmons 2000. *Afr. J. Ecol.* 38:363–364). After carefully reviewing available sources on Philippine varanid ticks, to the best of our

knowledge, our report is the first case of *V. bangonorum* being parasitized by a species of ixodid tick.

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FIG. 1. *Varanus bangonorum* from the Province of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines, with a tick on its neck near the left shoulder.



