Occurrence of the Tokay Gecko *Gekko gecko* (Linnaeus 1758) (Squamata, Gekkonidae), an exotic species in southern Brazil

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The Tokay gecko *Gekko gecko* (Linnaeus 1758) is a lizard of the Gekkonidae family (Gamble et al., 2008) whose original distribution is limited to China, India, Indonesia, Indochina (Cambodia and Laos), Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam (Denzer and Manthey, 1991; Means, 1996; Grossmann, 2004; Rösler, 2005; Das, 2007; Rösler et al., 2011). *Gekko gecko* is a generalist species, inhabiting both natural and altered environments (Nabhitabhata and Chan-ard, 2005; Lagat, 2009) and feeding on a variety of prey, such as: arachnids, centipedes, crustaceans, beetles, longhorn beetles, ants, moths, gastropods, dragonflies, damselflies, termites, vertebrates and skins (Meshaka et al., 1997; Aowphol et al., 2006; Bucol and Alcala, 2013). *Gekko gecko* frequently colonizes urban areas and they largely use prey species such as insects attracted by artificial lights (Aowphol et al., 2006).

*Gekko gecko* is the best known species within its genus, and is the focus of many studies (Rösler et al., 2011). It is also widely marketed as a pet, for pest control, and for medicinal and ritualistic purposes (Wilson and Porras, 1983; Caillabet, 2013). It has been reported as invasive species in many regions worldwide such as Caribbean (Henderson et al., 1993), Hawaii, Florida (Kraus, 2009a), Belize (Caillabet, 2013) and Madagascar (Lever, 2003). In Taiwan, the species has been reported to occur in the wilderness, but it is unknown whether these are naturally occurring (i.e., isolated population) or introduced populations (Norval et al., 2011). Species introduction events are known to occur via the poultry trade, and have also been reported to occur through transportation on cargo ships (Wilson and Porras, 1983; Caillabet, 2013). Impacts from alien herpetofauna, have been affecting humans (e.g., social impact) and native species (e.g., ecological and evolutionary impacts) (Kraus, 2009b).

On January 6, 2008 we recorded an individual *Gekko gecko* (Fig. 1) outside of a newly docked container at the Porto de Itajaí (26°54’S; 48°40’W), municipality of Itajaí, Santa Catarina, Brazil. The container was transported from China (Oliveira, 2008 personal communication). The specimen was found in poor condition (i.e., weakened and dehydrated) and was sacrificed, fixed in 10% formalin and stored in 70% alcohol at the Fundação Universidade Regional de Blumenau (FURB 21184). It was identified as female, with a 128.7 mm snout-vent length. The analysis of stomach contents revealed an unidentifiable mass.

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its original distribution suggests a possible invasion event. The fact that the individual was female indicates a possibility of egg laying, potentially generating a local population. As previously mentioned, *Gekko gecko* is reported as having been introduced to various regions, and the species can disperse into natural areas (Meshaka et al., 1997; Norval et al., 2011).

The gecko *Hemidactylus mabouia* (Moreau de Jonnès 1818) is an African species that invaded Brazil probably by slave ships industry. *Hemidactylus mabouia* effectively colonized and is now known to occur in both natural and man-made environments, and is distributed across nearly all of Brazil (Vanzolini, 1978; Sousa and Freire, 2010). The occurrence of *Gekko gecko* in Brazil is a worrying phenomenon, because this species also has potential to spread and to establish populations. Because it is a species commonly sold as pet, its distribution may be more extensive than currently known (Bucol and Alcala, 2013). Similar to other localities, the species inhabits natural areas and disturbed areas, like buildings and human habitations (Meshaka et al., 1997; Aowphol et al., 2006; Rosler et al., 2011).

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