

First record of the Common House Gecko, *Hemidactylus frenatus* Duméril & Bibron, from Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean

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In recent years, the Common House Gecko (*Hemidactylus frenatus*) has been reported from numerous mainland and insular locations across the Caribbean region: Aruba, Antigua, Curacao, Dominica, Mexico, Puerto Rico, St. Barthélemy, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, and St. Martin (Behm et al. 2018, 2022, Sánchez 2018, Brisbane et al. 2021, Dewynter et al. 2022, Griffing et al. 2022, Thorpe 2022, Questel et al. 2023, Thibaudier et al. 2023, Lindsay et al. 2023, Valdez-Villavicencio et al. 2024, van den Burg & Debrot 2024). Here, we report on the establishment of the species on Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean.

We surveyed for the presence of *H. frenatus* on Bonaire at two sites near the harbor on eight nights between 31 January and 9 August 2024. Each site was visited on four nights, for 2.5 hours per night (20:00–22:30); 1) the main harbor (~12.147, -68.276), and 2) the harbor village and container storage area (12.149, -68.274). Climatic conditions on these days were dry and without cloud cover. No *H. frenatus* individuals were seen or heard during these surveys.

On 12 August 2024, at another site while not performing dedicated surveys, an adult *H. frenatus* was observed and collected (Figure 1) in a building north of the harbor area (12.159221, -68.275620). Subsequent observations of two additional specimens (one adult and one juvenile) were made on 14 August and 3 September 2024 during midday in the same building. We confirmed the species identity using the lamellae on the 4th and 5th digit (Krysko and Daniels 2005). The building was recently constructed using mostly imported building materials, which are a known common pathway for invasive species (Turbelin et al. 2022).



Figure 1. *Hemidactylus frenatus* captured on 12 August 2024 at a newly constructed building on Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean. Photo: Timothy P. van Wagensveld.

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