HERPETOLOGICAL NAME CHANGES

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The following changes in nomenclature are proposed to explain the reason for their use in a handbook on Australian reptiles to be published shortly. I am grateful to Mr. H. Cogger, herpetologist at the Australian Museum, Sydney, and Mr. K. R. Slater, then ecologist at the Australian Reptile Park, Gosford, for their painstaking assistance. Other new genera and species have been described and published elsewhere.

Family CHELONIIDAE

Chelonia japonica (Thunberg)

1787 **Testudo japonica** Thunberg, Kongl. Vetensk. Acad. Handl. Stockholm. 8: 178. Type locality, Japan.

1831 **Chelonia mydas** (var.) **japonica**, Gray, Synops. Rept., 1 : 53. [This is not **Chelonia mydas** (Linn.); 1758, **Testudo mydas** Linn., Syst. Nat. edn. 10. 1 : 197. Ascension Islands.]

1880 **Chelonia depressa** Garman, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., Cambridge, 6: 124. East India and North Australia.

1908 **Natador tessellatus** McCulloch, Rec. Austral. Mus., Sydney, 7: 127. Port Darwin, Northern Territory.

1955 **Chelonia mydas japonica**, Mertens, Zoologische Jahrbucher, 83 (5): 323-440.

There is ample evidence in the cranial characters of *japonica* to warrant specific distinction, at least, from *C. mydas*. The two species are also sympatric in Northern Territory waters. Future investigation may warrant the revival of the genus *Natador*. The specific differences between the questioned species were adequately pointed out by Fry, "On the status of *Chelonia depressa*," *Rec. Austral. Mus.*, 10 (7), 1913: 159-185.

Family CHELYDIDAE

Chelodina oblonga Gray

1841 **Chelodina oblonga** Gray, in Grey's Trav. Austral., 2: 446. Type locality, Western Australia.

1915 **Chelodina intergularis** Fry, Proc. Roy. Soc. Queensl., 27: 88. Type locality, Australia.

I have examined the type of *intergularis* in the Australian Museum and have no hesitation in synonymising it with *oblonga*. Fry used the separation of the gulars by the intergular as a diagnostic character. However, the dermal plates have since peeled away revealing that the bone sutures are identical with *oblonga* and that the extension of the intergular is just a slight abnormality. All other characters agree with *oblonga*.

Family SCINCIDAE

Egernia bungana De Vis

1887 **Egernia bungana** De Vis, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W. (2): 37. Type locality, Mt. Tambourine, Qld.

Specific rank is completely justified as *bungana* is sympatric with *Egernia major*. Both species coincide in scale descriptions only. They are completely different in coloration, reproductive rate, and size. No intermediate forms occur.

Tiliqua nigrolutea (Quoy and Gaimard)

1824 **Scincus nigroluteus** Quoy and Gaimard, Voy. Uranie Physic., Zool.: 176. Blue Mountains, N.S.W.

In captivity hybridization has occurred from unions between *nigrolutea* and *scincoides*. This was observed by Longley (1939) and later by me within our own vivariums. The young of these unions are fertile and reproduce. Some workers consider that this evidence is sufficient to relegate *nigrolutea* to subspecific rank. However, I do not agree. Having collected extensively and regularly in areas where the two species are sympatric I have never encountered an intermediate form, which indicates that mating between them does not occur under normal conditions.

Genus LYGOSOMA Gray

Following last reviewers of this genus, Smith (1937) and Loveridge (1948), I have treated as subgenera *Lygosoma, Sphenomorphus* and *Leiolopisma*. In later work, Mitchell (1953) has treated *Leiolopisma* as a full genus and Copland (1946) accords full generic rank to *Hemiergis* without reasonable explanation. While it is conceivable that both workers had a legitimate reason to follow this course I have no option but to follow Smith and Loveridge, until such time as this group is completely revised. Smith considered that *Siaphos* and *Hemiergis* should be absorbed into *Leiolopisma,* which he regarded as a section of *Lygosoma.* Loveridge preferred to refer to these sections as subgenera.

Family BOIDAE

Liasis amethistinus (Schneider)

1801 **Boa amethistinus** Schneider, Hist. Amph., 2: 254 [no type locality].

1933 **Liasis amethistinus kinghorni** Stull, Occ. Pap. Mus. Zool. Univ. Michigan, 227: 3. Type locality, Lake Barrine, Qld.

Loveridge (1948) appeared to doubt the validity of *L. a. kinghorni* which supports my findings on considerable overlap of scale characters and counts between those of New Guinea and Australia.

Morelia spilotes spilotes (Lacépède)

1804 **Coluber spilotus** Lacepede, Ann. Mus. Paris, 4: 194. Type locality, Australia [probably Sydney].

1869 **Morelia spilotes,** Krefft, Snakes of Austral., 29.

Morelia spilotes variegata Gray

1842 **Morelia variegata** Gray, Zool. Miscell., 43. Type locality, Port Essington, N.T.

1893 **Python spilotes** var. **variegata,** Boulenger, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 1: 82.

1955 **Morelia spilotes variegata,** Mitchell, Rec. S. Austral. Mus., 11 (4): 374.

The two forms are regarded as subspecifically distinct due to the limited geographical range of *spilotes spilotes* (central and south coast of N.S.W.) with small populations of intermediate forms in marginal areas. We reject *arges (argus)* Linnaeus,

"Africa," 1758, on the same grounds as Boulenger 1893, plus the date and doubtful locality.

Family COLUBRIDAE

Genus DENDRELAPHIS Boulenger = AHAETULLA Gray

In using *Dendrelaphis* Boulenger (1890), I am following advice given by Arthur Loveridge in a letter dated October 21, 1955, to K. Slater. I quote the passage from this communication. "I have just spent 2½ days on *Dendrelaphis*, a name which has to be applied to the Indo-Australian snakes we have been calling *Ahaetulla*. They form an extremely difficult group that may, or may not be subspecifically distinct, and we lack the material necessary to reach a firm decision. A revision of this genus is badly needed."

Stegonotus modestus (Schlegel)

1837 **Lycodon modestus** Schlegel, Phys. Serp., 2: 119. Type locality, Amboina Island and New Guinea.

1893 **Stegonotus modestus**, Boulenger. Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 1: 366.

1884 **Herpetophis plumbeus** Macleay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W., 8: 434. Type locality, Herbert River, Qld.

In synonymising *plumbeus* with *modestus* I am doing so after examining series from New Guinea and Australia and comparing skull and external characters. No differences at all were found. Live specimens were also studied from both localities in which the ecology is similar, and the range extended to the Darwin area.

Boiga irregularis irregularis (Merrem)

1802 **Coluber irregularis** Merrem, Bechstein, Herr de la Cepede's Naturg. Amphib., 4: 239 [no type locality].

1912 **Boiga irregularis**, Barbour, Mem. Mus. Comp. Zool. Harv., 44: 126.

1948 **Boiga irregularis irregularis**, Loveridge, Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. Harv., 101 (2): 387.

1842 **Dendrophis fusca** Gray, Zool. Miscell., 54. Type locality, Port Essington, N.T.

Australian and New Guinea material cannot be separated on ecological, external or osteological characters. The condition of the palatine teeth previously used to separate *irregularis* and *fusca* is present in all specimens from all localities.

Family ELAPIDAE

Pseudonaja nuchalis nuchalis Günther

1858 **Pseudonaja nuchalis** Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 227. Type locality, Port Essington, N.T.

1915 **Diemenia carinata** Longman. Mem. Queensl. Mus., 3: 31. Type locality, Charleville, Qld.

1950 **Demansia nuchalis nuchalis**, Glauert, Sn. of Western Australia, 24.

Pseudonaja is separated from *Demansia* on skull characters. An examination of the type of *carinata* revealed that the "keeled" condition described by Longman is not a normal morphological feature but a folding of the ventrals at the rib endings which commonly occurs through shrinkage in alcohol.

Demansia olivacea (Gray)

1842 Lycodon olivaceus Gray, Zool. Miscell., 54. Type locality, N.E. Australia.

1858 Demansia olivacea, Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 212.

1877 Diemenia papuensis Macleay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W., 2 : 40. Type locality, S.E. New Guinea.

On skull characters *Demansia olivacea* is specifically distinct from the rest of the genus of which *psammophis* is the type species. Boulenger 1896 confused juvenile *olivacea* with *psammophis* and placed *papuensis* in the synonymy of *psammophis* instead of *olivacea* where it rightfully belongs. On distributional grounds *torquata* and *ornaticeps* are herein regarded as full species and not races of *psammophis* as previously held, despite the similarity of skull characters.

Pseudechis colletti guttatus De Vis

1905 Pseudechis guttatus De Vis, Ann. Queensl. Mus., 6: 49. Cecil Plains, Queensland.

Subspecific recognition is based on an examination of skull characters which differ in no way from *Pseudechis colletti colletti* Boulenger. A large series of specimens were examined, many from intermediate localities where intermediate colouring and ventral counts occur. Subspecific status in *guttatus* is retained on lower average ventral count and consistency of coloration within its range of the most north-westerly race, *colletti*, the type form. *Pseudechis colletti guttatus* extends from the central western slopes of N.S.W. to south-eastern Queensland.

The skull characters in a large series of *Pseudechis porphyriacus, P. australis* and *P. papuanus* were also examined. All species bear close relationship, *porphyriacus* being the most distinct species. Only slight differences were discerned between *papuanus, colletti* and *australis*. These differences were mainly in minute maxillary deviations. In the case of *papuanus* the coloration, larger average ventral count, greater venom potency, and geographical separation appear to be merely distinctions of subspecific importance to *Pseudechis australis*. Specific rank is, however, retained on the feeblest of osteological characters combined with these features.

The genera *Aspidomorphus, Brachysoma* and *Cacophis* are used and herein described adequately for the first time.

Genus BRACHYSOMA Fitzinger

1843 Fitzinger, Syst. Rept., 25.

Maxillary as far forward as palatine with a pair of venom fangs followed by four smaller teeth; maxillary arch more or less rounded and about as long as its distance to end of the bone which terminates about opposite palato-pterygoidal suture; turbinal enlarged; palatine teeth arising from inner margin of the bone; prefrontals diagonally sutured to frontal; frontal broader than long; diameter of prefronto-nasal periphery more than four times in width of frontals; postfrontal contacts frontal but not prefrontal; supratemporal about as long as quadrate.

Head depressed, slightly distinct from neck; pupil round, no canthus rostralis; body depressed, belly rounded, tail moderate. Nostril in single nasal which does not contact preocular; loreal absent; body scales smooth in 15 rows midbody; anal and subcaudals divided.

Brachysoma diadema (Schlegel)

1837 Calamaria diadema Schlegel. Phys. Serp.. 2: 32. Type locality, Australia [probably Sydney].

The genus *Brachysoma* is revived to accommodate *diadema* which is the type species. I anticipate that specimens from Western Australia previously regarded as *diadema* can be referred to *christieanus* of Fry. An examination of a large series has revealed generic differences between the two snakes. Superficially similar in coloration, *diadema* is usually a darker snake in the juvenile stage with a reddish "patch" on the nape. Midbody scales are always in 15 rows and only four teeth follow the fangs on the maxillary. In *christieanus* the orange-coloured nape in juveniles is in the form of a broad "collar" which disappears with age. Adult snakes are dorsally black, midbody scale rows 15-17, and seven small maxillary teeth follow fangs. The generic differences are described elsewhere in this paper.

LUNELAPS* gen. nov.

Maxillary almost as far forward as palatine with seven small teeth following the large venom fangs; angulate maxillary arch, longer than its distance to end of bone which terminates posterior to palato-pterygoidal suture; enlarged turbinal; palatine teeth arising more or less on a median line; frontal longer than wide; prefrontals diagonally sutured to frontal; diameter of prefrontonasal periphery less than three times in width of frontals; postfrontal contacts frontal but not prefrontal; supratemporal about as long as quadrate.

Head depressed, slightly distinct from neck; pupil round, no canthus rostralis; body depressed, belly rounded, tail moderate. Nostril in single nasal which does not contact preocular; loreal absent; body scales smooth in 15-17 rows midbody; anal and subcaudals divided.

Australia, north of Tropic of Capricorn.

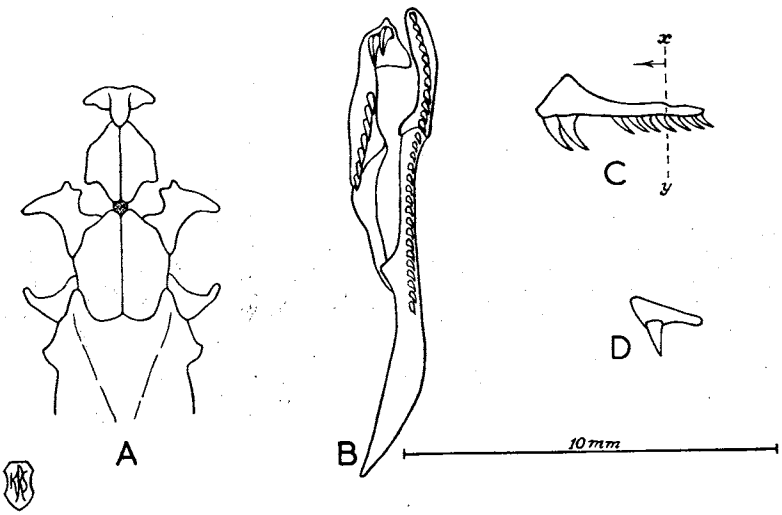
Lunelaps christieanus Fry

1915 Pseudelaps christieanus Fry, Proc. Roy. Soc. Queensl., 27 : 91.
1939 Glyphodon barnardi Kinghorn, Rec. Aust. Mus., 20 (4): 258.

The separation from *diadema*, both specifically and generically, has been explained in this paper. At one time both species were considered as members of the genus *Aspidomorphus* Fitzinger, but in this genus the pupil is elliptical and the frontal precluded from the orbital periphery, the opposite conditions applying in the genus *Lunelaps*. There are other differences which have been referred to in the previous description. Kinghorn (1939) included *barnardi* in

*North Australian aborigines frequently refer to this snake as a moonsnake, due to its nocturnal habits and lunate collar.

the genus *Glyphodon* Günther, on the grounds that the postfrontal and prefrontal bones were in contact in the skull that he examined. However he did not examine the skull of the type specimen which was a different snake. The type locality for *christieanus* is Darwin, and for *barnardi* Duaringa, Queensland.



Skull of *Lunelaps christieanus*. A, dorsal aspect of anterior portion. B, ventral aspect of maxillary, ectopterygoid, palatine and pterygoid. C, lateral aspect of maxillary. D, diagrammatic impression of transverse section of maxillary at x-y in C (not to scale).

Genus ASPIDOMORPHUS Fitzinger

1843 Fitzinger, Syst. Rept., 28.

Maxillary about as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by 7-10 smaller teeth arising from the median line of the expanded maxilla; maxillary arch shorter to about as long as its distance to the end of the bone which terminates posterior to palato-pterygoidal suture; combined frontal bones as long as to longer than broad; postfrontals and prefrontals in contact; quadrate shorter than to as long as supratemporal.

Head large, distinct from neck, pupil elliptical, canthus rostralis indistinct; body somewhat depressed, belly rounded, tail moderate. Nostril in an undivided nasal which contacts preocular; loreal absent; body scales smooth in 15 rows; anal and subcaudals divided.

Type species *Elaps mulleri* Schlegel, 1837. Type locality, Lobo, Triton Bay, Dutch New Guinea.

Aspidomorphus squamulosus (Duméril & Bibron)

1854 **Pseudelaps squamulosus** Dumeril & Bibron, Erpet. Gen., 7. 1235. Type locality uncertain.

No other species of Australian snake fits reasonably into this New Guinean genus and the inclusion of *squamulosus* is marginal.

Genus GLYPHODON Günther

1858 Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 211.

Glyphodon differs from *Aspidomorphus* in that in the former the pupil is round; the preocular does not contact the nasal scale. Type species *Glyphodon tristis* Günther, north-eastern Australia.

Glyphodon harriettae (Krefft)

1896 Cacophis harriettae Krefft, Proc. Zool. Soc. London, 319. Type locality, Warro, Port Curtis, Queensland.

Genus CACOPHIS Günther

1863 Gunther, Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (3), 12 : 361.

Maxillary as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by two small teeth; maxillary arch round, about as long as its distance to the end of the bone which terminates posterior to palato-pterygoidal suture; combined frontal bones broader than long and excluded from orbital periphery by suture of prefrontals and postfrontals; quadrate as long as supratemporal.

Head only slightly distinct from neck, pupil round, canthus rostralis absent; body somewhat depressed, belly rounded, tail moderate; nostril in an undivided nasal which contacts preocular; loreal absent; body scales smooth in 15 rows; anal and subcaudals divided.

Cacophis kreffti Günther

1863 Cacophis kreffti Gunther, Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (3), 12: 361. Type locality, north of the Clarence River, N.S.W.

Genus DENISONIA Krefft

1869 Krefft, Proc. Zool. Soc., 321.

Palatine anterior to maxillary; a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by five strongly recurved smaller teeth; postfrontals and prefrontals not in contact; supratemporal longer than quadrate. Pupil elliptical; canthus rostralis indistinct. Nasal scale contacts preocular; midbody scales in 17 rows; anal and subcaudals single.

Type species *D. maculata* (Steindachner).

Denisonia maculata (Steindachner)

1867 Hoplocephalus maculatus Steindachner, Reise Oesterr. Freg. Novara Reptiles, 81. [Type locality given as N.S.W., but undoubtedly in error as the species is not known outside 150 miles radius of Rockhampton, Qld.]

Denisonia devisi Waite & Longman

1920 Denisonia maculata var. devisi Waite & Longman, Rec. S. Austral. Mus., 1: 177. Type locality near Surat, Queensland.

Denisonia fasciata Rosen

1905 Denisonia fasciata Rosen, Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (7), 15: 179. Type locality, Western Australia.

A number of diverse species have hitherto been included in the genus *Denisonia,* but they can more properly be considered as generically separable. Therefore the following five new genera with a summary of diagnostic characters are proposed. The genus *Drepanodontis* has been dealt with already (Worrell, 1961: 54). Another paper, with illustrations of the skulls, is under preparation and in it the genera will be fully described. *Denisonia signata* (Jan) will also be dealt with separately.

Synopses of genera previously included in *Denisonia:*

Anal divided ..... *Drepanodontis*
Anal single
  Elliptical pupil
    scales in 17 rows ..... *Denisonia*
    scales in 19 rows ..... *Suta*
  Round pupil
    preocular and prefrontal scales in contact ..... *Unechis*
    preocular and prefrontal scales not in contact
      Postfrontal bones in contact with prefrontal bones ..... *Cryptophis*
      Postfrontal bones not in contact with prefrontal bones
        canthus rostralis distinct ..... *Drysdalia*
        canthus rostralis absent ..... *Parasuta*

DRYSDALIA* gen. nov.

Maxillary about as far forward as palatines; a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by three to four smaller teeth; postfrontals and prefrontals not in contact. Pupil round; canthus rostralis distinct; nasal scale contacts preocular; midbody scales in 15 rows; anal and subcaudals single. Type species, *D. coronoides* (Günther).

Drysdalia coronoides (Günther)

1858 **Hoplocephalus coronoides** Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 215. Type locality, Tasmania.

Drysdalia mastersii (Krefft)

1866 **Hoplocephalus mastersii** Krefft, Proc. Zool. Soc., 370 and 63. Type locality, Flinders Range, S. Australia.

Drysdalia coronata (Schlegel)

1837 **Elaps coronatus** Schlegel, Phys. Serp., 2: 454. Type locality, "Australia." [It occurs in South-Western Australia.]

UNECHIS gen. nov.

Maxillary as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by five very short recurved teeth; postfrontals and prefrontals almost in contact; prefrontals sutured to lateral margin of frontal. Pupil round; canthus rostralis absent; nasal scale does not contact preocular; midbody scales in 15 rows; anal and subcaudals single.

Unechis carpentariae (Macleay)

1887 **Hoplocephalus carpentariae** Macleay, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W. (2), 2: 403. Type locality, Peak Downs, Queensland.

SUTA gen. nov.

Maxillary almost as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by six slightly recurved smaller teeth; postfrontals and prefrontals almost in contact; prefrontals sutured to lateral margin of frontals. Pupil elliptical; canthus rostralis absent; nasal scale contacts preocular; midbody scales in 19 rows; anal and subcaudals single.

*After Mr. G. Russell Drysdale, Australian artist who accompanied me to Tasmanian islands where I collected the material for this generic description.

Suta suta (Peters)

1863 **Hoplocephalus sutus** Peters. Monatsb. Akad. Wiss. Berlin, 234. Type from Adelaide.

PARASUTA gen. nov.

Maxillary about as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by four smaller teeth; postfrontal not in contact with prefrontal which is diagonally sutured to the frontal. Pupil round; canthus rostralis absent; nasal contacts preocular; midbody scales in 15 rows; anal and subcaudals single. Type species, *P. gouldii* (Gray).

Parasuta gouldii (Gray)

1841 **Elaps gouldii** Gray, in Grey's Journ. Exped. W. Austral., 2: 444. Type locality, W. Australia.

Parasuta nigrostriata (Krefft)

1864 **Hoplocephalus nigrostriatus** Krefft, Proc. Zool. Soc., 181. Type locality, Rockhampton, Qld.

CRYPTOPHIS gen. nov.

Maxillary about as far forward as palatine with a pair of enlarged venom fangs followed by five to seven smaller teeth; postfrontals in contact with prefrontals which are sutured more or less to the lateral margin of frontals. Pupil round; canthus rostralis absent; nasal scale in contact with preocular; midbody scales in 15 to 17 rows; anal and subcaudals single. Type species, *C. pallidiceps.*

Cryptophis pallidiceps (Günther)

1858 **Hoplocephalus pallidiceps** Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 214. Type locality, Port Essington, N. Territory.

Cryptophis nigrescens (Günther)

1862 **Hoplocephalus nigrescens** Gunther, Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. (3), 9: 131. Type locality, Sydney.

Cryptophis flagellum (McCoy)

1878 **Hoplocephalus flagellum** McCoy, Prodr. Zool. Vict., 7. Type locality, Victoria.

Cryptophis dwyeri (Worrell)

1956 **Denisonia dwyeri** Worrell, Austral. Zool., 12 (3): 202. Type locality, Glenmorgan, and Gayndah, Qld.

In the original illustration of the skull of the species the postfrontal and prefrontal in *dwyeri* (1956) are not shown in contact.

The following synopses of genera separate the three unlike species previously united with the genus *Vermicella.*

Genus VERMICELLA Günther

1858 Gunther, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., 236.

Maxillary more anterior than palatine with a pair of large strongly recurved venom fangs followed by three very small teeth; frontal bones acute posteriorly, longer than broad; minute postfrontal barely contacts frontal and prefrontal which is broadly sutured to the lateral edge of the frontal. Snout broadly rounded, canthus rostralis absent, scales on muzzle not obliquely disposed, pupil round; nasal scale in contact with preocular; midbody scale rows 15; anal and subcaudals divided.

Vermicella annulata (Gray)

1841 Calamaria annulata Gray, in Grey's Journ. Exped. W. Austral., 2: 443. Type locality, "Australia."

1915 Furina multifasciata Longman, Mem. Queensl. Mus., 3: 30.

Longman's *multifasciata* is reduced to a synonym of *annulata,* despite the fact that the ventral scale count (284) is well above other records. This could be freakish or even a count error caused by a slipping epidermis prior to sloughing, where a large number of additional ventrals can be clearly seen and not readily detected as such, particularly on small snakes. My specimens from the type locality (Darwin) and south to Mataranka showed that the internasal shield may or may not be present.

NAROPHIS gen. nov.

Maxillary more anterior than palatine with a pair of strongly recurved venom fangs only; frontal bones posteriorly rounded, broader than long; prominent postfrontal not in contact with frontal or prefrontal which is broadly sutured to the lateral margin of the frontal more or less excluding it from the orbital periphery.

Snout elongate with a large posteriorly acute rostral, concave on the lower side with an angulate anterior edge; internasals obliquely disposed; canthus rostralis absent; pupil round; nasal scale in contact with preocular; midbody scale rows 15; anal and subcaudals divided.

Narophis bimaculata (Duméril & Bibron)

1854 Furina bimaculata Dumeril & Bibron, Erpet. Gen., 7: 1240. Type locality, "Tasmania" [undoubtedly Western Australia].

The status of *Vermicella calonota* has already been dealt with (Worrell, 1960: 133).

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SPHAEROBOLUS STELLATUS, A NEW FUNGUS FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

By T. E. H. APLIN, State Herbarium

The existence of *Sphaerobolus stellatus* Tode ex Pers. was first brought to the notice of the author when Mr. R. C. B. Elson, Applecross, reported that since April 3, 1961 he observed little 'black spots' which to all intents and purposes were being shot up from his lawn. These were causing concern by the way they spotted