A NEW SPECIES OF DIXONIUS (SAURIA: GEKKONIDAE) FROM SOUTHERN VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT. – A new species of Dixonius is described from Nha Trang, southern Vietnam. The new species reaches an SVL of 42.4 mm, and is diagnosable from congeneric species in showing the following combination of characters: head wider than long in adults; two supranasals in narrow contact; dark canthal stripe present, but terminating at back of head; lips unbarred; and dorsum of body and tail brownish olive, with dark blotches.


INTRODUCTION

Dixonius was established by Bauer et al. (1997) for Asian gekkonids formerly placed in the genus Phyllodactylus, on the basis of morphology and its disjunct distribution. Rösler (2000) and Kluge (2001) recognised two species within the new Asian genus: melanostictus Taylor, 1962 (type locality: “Mauk Lek Road-Camp (Friendship Highway), Sara Buri” [14° 35’N; 101° 05’E; eastern Thailand; spelling of type locality emended to Muak Lek by Taylor, 1962: 218]; FMNH 178231 (holotype) and FMNH 178232 (paratype) and siamensis Boulenger, 1898 (type locality: “Dung Phya Fai, Siam...at an altitude of 700 feet” = Dong Paya Fai Mountains, 14° 30’N; 101°–102° 40’E, Sara Buri and Nakhon Ratchasima Provinces, eastern Thailand, mostly protected as Khao Yai National Park and Tap Lan National Park; BMNH 1946.8.24.40–41; two syntypes; and “Siam” [= Thailand]; BMNH 97.3.31.1–2; two syntypes).

Malcolm A. Smith (1930: 20, 1935: 81) treated two other names, paviei Mocquard, 1904, and burmanicus Annandale, 1905, as synonymous with siamensis. The holotype of paviei, is from “Vatana” (= Chaeng Wattana, ca. 13° 45’N, 100° 31’E: a northern suburb of Bangkok, across the highway from the airport, Phra Nakhon Province, Thailand is MNHN 1885.349; Brygoo, 1990). The holotype of burmanicus, reported to be in “Calcutta” (= Indian Museum Reptile Registry, the collection now accessioned with the ZSI, Kolkata, India) by M. A. Smith (1935), and collected at “Tavoy” (at present Dawei, 14° 06’N 99° 25’E) (CUZM R 2003.58, holotype; CUZM R 2003.57; 60, 6; three paratypes); and “Thailand, Kanchanaburi Province, Sai Yok National Park” (ZMB 65437, paratype), Sai Yok District, Kanchanaburi Province, Sai Yok District.

The genus Dixonius has also been reported from Vietnam in the literature. Tirant (1904) presented what was known of the saurofauna of Indo-China at the time, but did not list this taxon. Nguyen and Ho (1996: 17) reported siamensis from “Gia Lai (Chu Sê)” (13° 59’N, 108° 00’E), presumably following the concept of Taylor (1963: 753), as did Bobrov (1992, 1993, 1995), who reported the species as occurring in South Annam, although it is unclear whether specimens were actually examined.

I report here a fourth species of the genus Dixonius from the eastern coast of southern Vietnam on the basis of two adults and two hatchlings. Generic allocation follows Bauer et al. (1997), who diagnosed Dixonius as showing the following suite of characters: digits bearing a single pair of enlarged terminal scanners; dorsal scation tuberculate; tubercles keeled longitudinally; granules on snout larger than those on dorsum of body; rostral scale with median cleft; first supralabial enters nostril; enlarged chinshields and lateral gulars; margins of pupil crenellate (in preserved specimens); preanal pores present; series of cloacal spurs present; and midventral row of transversely enlarged caudal scales.