Nomenclatural status of
FITZINGER’s (1861) *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*,
and confirmation of *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820)
from the Nicobar Archipelago
(Squamata: Sauria: Agamidae)

Nomenklatortischer Status von FITZINGER’S (1861) *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, und
Bestätigung von *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) für die Nikobaren
(Squamata: Sauria: Agamidae)

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ABSTRACT

The specimens of agamid lizards collected from the Nicobar Islands during the voyage of the Austrian fregate ‘Novara’, on which FITZINGER (1861) based *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, were found extant in the collection of the Museum of Natural History in Vienna; the name is shown to be a nomen nudum. The identities of *P. archiducissae* and *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) as evaluated by STEINDACHNER (1861), were verified. This report confirms the presence of *B. cristatella* from the Nicobars Archipelago, India.

KEY WORDS

Reptilia, Sauria, Agamidae; *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, *Bronchocela cristatella*, distribution, nomenclature, taxonomy, Nicobar Archipelago, India

The name *Pseudocalotes archiducissae* appears for the first time in a list of mammals and reptiles collected during the voyage of the Austrian fregate, ‘Novara’, around the world, authored by FITZINGER (“1860”: 387 and 398, although published in 1861). GANS (1955) provided an itinerary of the voyage of the ‘Novara’. The taxon was subsequently considered a synonym of *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) by STEINDACHNER (1867: 27), who provided diagnostic characters of the purported new taxon. SMITH (1935: 184), too, treated the Nicobarese species tentatively as synonymous with *B. cristatella*, mentioning that the type of the former was lost, as did WERMUTH (1967) and BARTS & WILMS (1997: 64.1), although no worker subsequently appears to have tried to trace the material. BARTS & WILMS (1997: 66.1) considered *B. danieli* (TIWARI & BISWAS, 1973) to be a valid taxon. Given that two species of the genus are reported as sympatric on the Nicobars, and the fact that *B. cristatella* has not been recorded from these islands in recent years (DAS 1999), a note verifying the systematic status of *P. archiducissae* and reporting on the discovery of the so-named lost specimens at the Natural History Museum, Vienna (NMW), was thought important.

Interest in the herpetofauna of the Nicobar Archipelago was to be spurred nearly a century later by the collections by the staff of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in the 1960s, leading to a large number of species descriptions. These included an agamid, collected from the Nicobars and described as *Calotes danieli* TIWARI & BISWAS, 1973. However, no further specimens