



## A new species of large *Cyrtodactylus* (Squamata: Gekkonidae) from Melanesia

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### Abstract.

A new species of large *Cyrtodactylus* is described from lowland rainforest on Batanta Island in the Raja Ampat Archipelago, Papua Barat Province, Indonesian New Guinea. The new species can be distinguished from all other Melanesian *Cyrtodactylus* by the combination of large size (over 110mm SVL), very robust build, presence of enlarged ventral tubercles below the lateral fold and around the angle of the lower jaw only, and dorsal colouration consisting of three to four irregular dark greyish-brown blotches. It is the second species of *Cyrtodactylus* known with certainty only from the Raja Ampat Islands. The morphology of the new species places it within the *C. loriae* group and suggests that it is closely related to *Cyrtodactylus irianjayaensis*.

**Key words:** Batanta, *Cyrtodactylus*, Gecko, Indonesia, new species, New Guinea, Raja Ampat Archipelago

### Introduction

The Indonesian provinces of Papua and Papua Barat cover the western half of New Guinea and together constitute one of the most poorly researched terrestrial biomes on the planet (Beehler 2007a). Faunal collections from this large and topographically complex area have been widely scattered and sporadic, particularly in recent times (Frodin 2007). However, the data currently available indicates that the region is biologically rich and that much of its diversity remains undescribed (Allison 2007).

The most speciose genus of geckos in the Melanesian region is *Cyrtodactylus*; a large and possibly non-monophyletic genus that also occurs throughout south and south-east Asia. Sixteen species are known from New Guinea and surrounding islands (Rösler et al. 2007) but the genus is rich in undescribed taxa, and many new forms have recently been described from Asia (e.g. Bauer 2003; Batuwida and Bahir 2005; for full list see Ngo and Bauer 2008) and the Melanesian region (Rösler 2000, Günther and Rösler 2003, Kraus and Allison 2006, Kraus 2007, Rösler et al. 2007). In this paper we describe a further new species of very large *Cyrtodactylus* from the island of Batanta off the western tip of the island of New Guinea. The new species brings the total number of described Melanesian *Cyrtodactylus* to 17 and is the second species of *Cyrtodactylus* known with certainty only from the Raja Ampat Islands.

### Material and methods

Specimens were collected by hand at night while spotlighting, fixed in 10% formalin and stored in 70% etha-