



A new species of the genus *Tropidophorus* Duméril & Bibron, 1839 (Squamata: Sauria: Scincidae) from Vietnam

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Abstract

A new species of the genus *Tropidophorus* is described from Hoang Lien Mountain, Sa Pa and Van Ban districts, Lao Cai Province, northern Vietnam. *Tropidophorus boehmei* **sp. nov.** is characterized by the combination of the following features: size relatively large (maximum SVL 103.5 mm); upper head scales smooth; frontonasal undivided; prefrontals very small, widely separated; loreals 2, anterior loreal undivided; supralabials 6; supraciliaries 7–8, supraciliary row completed along the entire length of the lateral edge of supraoculars; external ear opening present, tympanum superficial, tympanum diameter smaller than eye length; midbody scales in 30–32 rows; dorsal and lateral scales on body and tail smooth; paravertebral scales 60–69, not widened; scale rows at position of tenth subcaudal 17–18; ventral scales 56–66; medial subcaudals divided from first to fifth, remaining ones about 1.5 times wider than neighboring scales; 16–19 smooth lamellae under fourth toe; dorsum and tail base dark grey with light transverse bands and two dorsolateral rows of white dots from neck to tail base; body sides dark grey with irregular small white dots from behind the eye to tail base. In addition, previous records of *Tropidophorus berdmorei* from northern Vietnam are discussed.

Key words: *Tropidophorus boehmei* **sp. nov.**, *T. berdmorei*, taxonomy, phylogeny, Vietnam: Lao Cai Province: Hoang Lien Mountain

Introduction

The genus *Tropidophorus* Duméril & Bibron, 1839 is a skink group with a high level of local endemism, with 15 of 27 species being restricted to a single country (Greer & Biswas 2004; Chuaynkern *et al.* 2005; Ziegler *et al.* 2005; Honda *et al.* 2006; Nguyen *et al.* 2010). In Vietnam, a total of eight water skink species of the genus *Tropidophorus* have been recorded and three of them are endemic to the country (Nguyen *et al.* 2009). From the Indochinese Peninsula, 15 species of *Tropidophorus* are currently known: *T. baviensis* Bourret, 1939; *T. berdmorei* (Blyth, 1853); *T. cocincinensis* Duméril & Bibron, 1839; *T. quangxiensis* Wen, 1992; *T. hainanus* Smith, 1923; *T. hangnam* Chuaynkern, Nabhitabhata, Inthara, Kamsook & Somsri, 2005; *T. laotus* Smith, 1923; *T. laticutatus* Hikida, Orlov, Nabhitabhata & Ota, 2002; *T. matsuii* Hikida, Orlov, Nabhitabhata & Ota, 2002; *T. microlepis* Günther, 1861; *T. murphyi* Hikida, Orlov, Nabhitabhata & Ota, 2002; *T. noggei* Ziegler, Vu & Bui, 2005; *T. robinsoni* Smith, 1919; *T. sinicus* Boettger, 1886; and *T. thai* Smith, 1919 (Hartmann *et al.* 2009; Nguyen *et al.* 2009; Nguyen *et al.* 2010). With the exception of *T. berdmorei* and *T. laotus*, all aforementioned species have keeled dorsal and lateral scales. During recent field work in northern Vietnam, we found a collection of the water skinks from Hoang Lien (Fansipan) Mountain, which resembled