

A new species of *Hemidactylus* from Harrar, Abyssinia.

By

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With plate 1.

Among some reptiles and batrachians, sent to me for determination from Museumcustos ED. LAMPE, Wiesbaden, there is also a small collection from Harrar, Abyssinia, containing a new species of *Hemidactylus*, of which I give a description here together with a list of the other specimens from the same place.

***Hemidactylus laticaudatus* sp. n.**

Plate 1.

Head, body, and tail much depressed. Snout rounded, about twice the diameter of the eye, distinctly longer than the distance between the eye and the ear-opening, which is small, oval, and vertical (about $\frac{1}{2}$ the diameter of the orbit); forehead concave. Digits moderately dilated, free, the distal joint long; 4 lamellae under the thumb and hallux, 6—7 under the fourth toe. Head covered with small granules, considerably larger on the snout, 11—13 in a row between the nostril and the eye; on the posterior part of the head small, round, smooth, scattered tubercles, smaller and flatter than those on the body. Rostral four-sided, nearly twice as broad as high, with distinct median cleft above; nostril pierced between the rostral and 3 or 4 small scales; 7 or 8 upper and 6 or 7 lower labials; symphysial large, triangular, 4 chin-shields, median pair largest and in contact behind the symphysial. Back covered with small granules, about 20 in a line as long as the nose, intermixed with a great number of small round obtusely pointed

tubercles, irregularly scattered; ventral scales imbricate, smooth, 10 in a line as long as the nose, the scales on the chin granular. Male with a series of femoral pores, interrupted in the middle by a short interspace, 6—9 on each side. Tail very depressed and flattened, in one specimen as broad as the neck, in the other considerably narrower, tapering to a fine point, and covered with smooth imbricate scales, arranged in verticils round the tail and intermixed with large, pointed nail-like tubercles in six longitudinal lateral series, three on each side: the tubercles in the outermost series are the largest, forming a serrated edge on each side of the tail; the scales on the under surface of the tail are larger than those on the upper; of the latter there are about 7 transverse rows in a verticil, of the former only 2—5; there are no transversely enlarged median plates on the under surface of the tail, the median inferior scales, however, being larger than the lateral and regularly placed in pairs.

Pale greyish brown above with five dark wavy transverse bands on the back, two on the posterior part of the head, and 7—10 broad dark crossbands on the tail; the head marbled with black, a narrow dark line from the nose through the eye to the shoulder; the under surfaces uniform whitish, on the tail marbled with black.

Two specimens, both males.

Measurements: Total length 115 and 100 mm; length of tail 60, 50 mm; head to ear-opening 14, 13 mm; nose 6,2, 6 mm; diameter of eye 3,5, 3,3 mm; width of head 11, 10 mm; fore limb 18, 17 mm; hind limb about 25 mm; largest breadth of tail 10, 6,5 mm.

The two specimens are very like each other, and there is no doubt about their belonging to the same species. The larger specimen, however, has, as shown above, a considerably broader tail than the other; it may be that this character varies with age. The larger specimen has also somewhat larger granules, especially on the nose, and only 6 femoral pores on each side, instead of 9 in the smaller specimen.

The new species, kindly revised by Dr. G. A. BOULENGER, for which I beg to express my sincere gratitude, seems to me to come rather near to *H. granti*, described by BOULENGER from Socotra, but differs from it by fewer lamellae under the toes, by the very much depressed tail, and by the quite unlike scaling of the tail.

Hemidactylus isolepis BLGR.

BOULENGER, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1895. p. 531.

A single male specimen.

Length of head and body 36 mm; length of tail 24 mm? (the tail is loose from the body, except a small piece of the base, and probably a part of the loosened tail has come off): length of head to ear-opening 9 mm; width of head 7 mm; length of fore limb 12 mm; length of hind limb 16 mm.

As my specimen differs somewhat from the description of *H. isolepis*, given by BOULENGER, I was doubtful, whether it ought to be referred to this species, especially as this is not hitherto found in Abyssinia. Dr. BOULENGER, however, has kindly compared it with the type-specimen, and says that it is a *Hemidactylus isolepis*. I am therefore able to state that this species is to be found in Abyssinia too. From the description, quoted above, the specimen differs in the following points: The anterior part of the head is covered with distinct juxtaposed scales, not granules; the scales are about 8 between the nostril and the eye; the upper labials are 7 and the lower 6 instead of 8 and 7, the head is broader and the colour is dark brown with narrow light transverse stripes across the back, five in number.

Tarentola annularis Geoffr.

One specimen.

Eremias spekii GTHR. var. **sextaeniata** STEJN.

STEJNEGER, P. U. S. Nat. Mus. 16, 1893, p. 718.

One specimen.

In Sitzber. Akad. Wiss. Wien. Mat. Nat. Cl. Bd. 116, Abt. 1, 1907 WERNER states the north range of this lizard to be 5° Lat. of North, and in his list of the distribution of the reptiles of these regions he does not mention it to be found in Abyssinia. TORNIER, however, mentions six specimens from Harrar (Zool. Jahrb. Abt. Syst. Bd. 22, 1905, p. 377), and therefore it seems as if the species were not rare in this place. All the specimens of TORNIER, as well as this one, belong to the variety *sextaeniata* STEJN. It seems to me that TORNIER (loc. cit.) has given sufficient reasons for his statement that the form is not to be considered as a distinct species but only as a variety of *E. spekii* GTHR.

Typhlops blanfordii BLGR.

Two specimens.

Boodon lineatus DUM. BIBR.

One specimen.

Dasypeltis scabra L.

One specimen.

Leptodira hotamboeia LAUR.

BOULENGER, Cat. Sn. III, p. 89. WERNER, Sitzber. K. Akad. Wiss. Wien.
Bd. 116. Abt. I. 1907.

One specimen; length 195 mm.

In the paper quoted above WERNER says he is able to recognize two different geographical forms or perhaps species of the common African snake *Leptodira hotamboeia*, a north one from the Soudan and a south one, spread over the whole of East- and South-Africa. According to him, the north form should be distinct from the common south one through its narrower head, a darker colour on the upper surfaces, the absence of dark temporal band, and 4—5 pairs of chinshields (instead of 3—4). Finding in this collection a small specimen of this species which, possibly, on account of the habitat, could be mistaken for a *L. attarensis*, which is WERNER's name for his north form of *L. hotamboeia*, I decided to go further into the matter of this question. For this purpose I have examined about 50 specimens from Cape, Natal, »Caffraria«, Congo, the German East-Africa, Abyssinia, and the Nile-regions, most of them in the collections of the Natural History Museum in Stockholm. It is true that I have had only two specimens from the regions of the supposed north form, but finding that at least one of these does not differ from the common appearance of the species and moreover that the characters which should distinguish the north form are also to be seen in many specimens from other parts of the habitat of the species, I can not see any reason for distinguishing a *L. attarensis* at least with the characteristics which are employed by WERNER.

At a first glance, however, at the specimen from Harrar, it can appear as if WERNER was right, for — with the exception of a small difference in the proportion between the length and the breadth of the head — it corresponds very well with WERNER's description of *L. attarensis* and seemed to me at first to differ distinctly from the



common appearance of *L. hotamboeia*. On the other hand, a specimen brought home by HEDENBORG from the Nile-regions, thus very likely from the habitat of *L. attarensis*, does not differ from the southern specimens in any point. There is, certainly, no distinct dark temporal band, but this character is of no value, the band being very often indistinct even in examples from southern regions. On further comparison of the specimens the difference between the Harrar-specimen and the more southern examples also was shown to be very unimportant, it corresponds on the whole very well with some of the small specimens from the southern regions.

A revision of the characters, employed by WERNER, gives the following results: As to the form of the head, it varies considerably according to the different state of contraction of the large temporal muscles. The same specimen may have quite a different appearance of the head: sometimes it is narrow and of the same width, sometimes it is very broad and swollen at the temples. Measurements of the headshields of two specimens of the same size, the one with narrow, the other with broad head, show, however, no differences, the dissimilarity in appearance being only accidental. I am not able to find the same average measurements of the length of the head from the hind margin of the parietals compared with the breadth of these shields which are stated by WERNER. He gives the number 1,87 in the north form and 1,68 at the most in the south one: the greatest measurements I have found are 1,80 and 1,78, both these in my most northern specimens, but the same measurements are also to be found in several specimens from the southern regions. Thus, this character is not to be used as a difference between geographical varieties or species: In reality, I found southern specimens with quite the same shape of the head as in both the Nile- and the Harrarspecimen.

Only in one specimen (from the German East-Africa) have I seen 5 pairs of chinshields; as this country, according to WERNER, belongs to the habitat of the south form, nor this character can be used as characteristic for a supposed north form. Yet, it appears as if the number of the chinshields should diminish southwards; then, I found 3 pairs in all the specimens from the Cape, in about the half of the specimens from the Congo, but only in a single specimen from the German East-Africa; the specimens from the Nile-regions and Harrar have both 4 pairs.

The colour varies considerably: the dark colour without any distinct temporal band, mentioned by WERNER as characteristic for *L. attarensis*, was found both in the specimen from Harrar and in several specimens from the Congo and the German East-Africa. Besides, the Nilespecimen is not darker than most examples from these countries. All the specimens from the Cape are in spirit lighth sandy coloured, and, with the exception of a single specimen, are provided with a very distinct dark temporal band. If I should establish varieties of this snake, I should therefore at first distinguish a lighth Cape-race with distinct temporal band and only 3 pairs of chinshields, but I can not find a north *L. attarensis* with the differences which WERNER mentions. It also will most certainly be shown that the lighth sandy colour, which is to be seen among my specimens only in the specimens from the Cape, may be found also in examples from the other regions of the distribution of the species, and I think that the differences are individual, and also are due to the differences of the environs, and that they have not yet formed any geographical races, limited to confined regions.

***Rana delalandii* GTHR.**

BOULENGER, Cat. Batr. Sal. p. 31.

Two specimens.

***Bufo regularis* REUSS.**

BOULENGER, Cat. Batr. Sal. p. 298.

Four specimens.

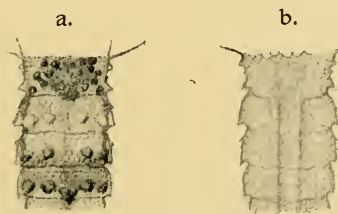
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Hemidactylus laticaudatus

(nat. size).

n. sp.



Base of the tail; 2/1

a. above, b. below.

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