



A revised and updated checklist of the lizards of Peninsular Malaysia

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Abstract

A revised and updated checklist of the lizard fauna of Peninsular Malaysia includes 17 species not present in the most recent checklist (Das & Norsham 2007). Ten of these 17 species were omitted due to apparent oversight and seven others are additions based on subsequent descriptions. An updated taxonomy is employed for the lizard fauna that also alters the species content, bringing the total number of species currently recognized in Peninsular Malaysia from 95 to 108.

Key words:

Introduction

As a whole, the lizard fauna of Peninsular Malaysia has never been the sole focus of revisionary or taxonomic research as has been the case with Malaysia's amphibians (Berry 1975), turtles (Lim & Das 1999) and snakes (Tweedie 1958, 1988). In fact, since Boulenger (1912) and Smith (1930), the depth of research on Peninsular Malaysia's lizard fauna has never risen above that of a checklist (Denzer & Manthey 1991; Chan-ard et al. (1997); Manthey & Grossmann 1997; Das & Norsham 2007) even though this fauna composes a substantial portion (approximately 32%) of this region's herpetological diversity (sensu Das & Norsham 2007). Nonetheless, the utility of regional checklists should not be discounted because they theoretically provide an up-to-date working taxonomy for authors of various research disciplines centered in a particular geographic region. The latest checklist of the herpetofauna of Malaysia (Das & Norsham 2007) listed 95 species of lizards for Peninsular Malaysia as of 15 April 2006. Das and Norsham (2007), however, omitted 10 species previously reported from Peninsular Malaysia and five others have been described since their cut-off date. These additions and the utilization of more recent taxonomies for other species, significantly alter the content of Das and Norsham's (2007) checklist, increasing it from 95 species to at least 106. The updated checklist presented here will serve as a foundation for a monographic revision of the lizard fauna of Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore (Grismer in prep.).

Discussion

Listed below are the changes made to the checklist of Das and Norsham (2007). These include new species of lizards described after their 15 April 2006 cut-off; the addition of overlooked species along with their appropriate literature citations; and different taxonomic interpretations that in some cases, alter the species content of the Das and Norsham (2007) checklist. These data are listed in Table 1. The cut-off date for this report was 23 July 2008.