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A new species of the lizard genus *Bachia* (Squamata: Gymnophthalmidae) from the Cerrados of Central Brazil

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Abstract

A new species of *Bachia* of the *bresslaui* group, is described from Estação Ecológica Serra Geral do Tocantins, a recently created protected area in the Central Brazilian Cerrados of state of Tocantins. The new species is most similar to *Bachia psamophila* from which it differs in limb morphology and head and body scalation. As in *Bachia psamophila* the shovel-shaped snout of the new species is highly prominent, an adaptation related to its psamophilous habits.

Key words: *Bachia oxyrhina*, new species, Gymnophthalmidae, Brazil, Cerrado, Jalapão, Tocantins state, Estação Ecológica Serra Geral do Tocantins

Introduction

Fossorial gymnophthalmid lizards of the genus *Bachia* lack an external ear opening, have an elongate body and tail, present a distinctive eyelid and show substantial variation in levels of limb reduction (Colli *et al.* 1998; Kohlsdorf & Wagner 2006; Rodrigues *et al.* 2007). The genus was last reviewed on the basis of external attributes by Dixon (1973) who recognized 15 species and 12 subspecies which were allocated in four species groups: *bresslaui*, *dorbignyi*, *heteropa*, and *flavescens*. Since then, taxonomy of *Bachia* has been largely based on Dixon's review although the status of several species has been reevaluated and new species have been described (Hoogmoed & Dixon 1977; McDiarmid & DeWeese 1977; Avila-Pires 1995; Kizirian & McDiarmid 1998; Castrillon & Strussmann 1998; Rodrigues *et al.* 2007). These new contributions have increased the number of species in the genus to 20 (Rodrigues *et al.* 2007). Species of *Bachia* have also been the subject of molecular studies. In the study of Pellegrino *et al.* (2001) designed to investigate relationships among Gymnophthalmidae, three species (*Bachia bresslaui*, *B. flavescens* and *B. dorbignyi*) were sequenced for nuclear and mitochondrial genes and recovered as the basal genus of the tribe Cercosaurini. The genus was also recovered as the sister group of all cercosaurines by Castoe *et al.* (2004); these authors used the same species of *Bachia* and a slightly reduced data set than that used by Pellegrino *et al.* (2001), and assigned tribal rank (Bachini) to the genus based on its distinctive morphology. In a more recent study with larger taxon sam-

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