

A review of the systematics of the genus *Bradypodion* (Sauria: Chamaeleonidae), with the description of two new genera

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Abstract

The taxonomic history and composition of the genus *Bradypodion* as construed by Klaver & Böhme (1986) and new morphological and molecular data relevant to the taxonomy of the group is reviewed. The combined evidence strongly supports a formal rearrangement of the group into three distinct genera. *Bradypodion*, type species *Chamaeleo pumilus* Daudin 1802, is retained for the southern African species. Two new genera are erected to accommodate additional well-diagnosed clades within central and east African species previously referred to *Bradypodion*. Species of the “*fischeri* complex” are assigned to *Kinyongia gen. nova*, whilst the endemic Mulanje chameleon is placed in the monotypic genus *Nadzikambia gen. nova*.

Key words: Chamaeleonidae, *Bradypodion*, Phylogeny, new genera, mitochondrial and nuclear DNA

Introduction

The first species of *Bradypodion* to be formally described was *Chamaeleo pumilus* Daudin 1802. Fitzinger (1843) subsequently designated *pumilum* as the type species for a new genus, *Bradypodion*. Over the course of the next 133 years, the taxonomy of *Bradypodion pumilum* and its cogeners underwent a convoluted series of taxonomic shifts including being assigned to two other genera viz: *Microsaura* and *Lophosaura* (Grey 1864, Boulenger 1887, Werner 1902, Methuen & Hewitt 1914, Fitzsimons 1943, Loveridge