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The status of *Leptopelis barbouri* Ahl, 1929 and eleven other nomina of the current tree-frog genus *Leptopelis* (Arthroleptidae) described from East Africa, with a redescription of *Leptopelis grandiceps* Ahl, 1929

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Abstract

An investigation of name-bearing types and other relevant type specimens of twelve nominal *Leptopelis* taxa described from or distributed in the Eastern Arc Mountains in East Africa was carried out. Our aim was to clarify their status and where necessary revise respective nomina. We suggest several nomenclatural and taxonomic actions: 1) *Leptopelis barbouri* Ahl, 1929 is transferred to the synonymy of *Leptopelis flavomaculatus* (Günther, 1864) as a junior subjective synonym; 2) *Leptopelis grandiceps* Ahl, 1929 is resurrected from the synonymy of *Leptopelis uluguruensis* Barbour & Loveridge, 1928 as a valid species conforming to the tree frogs which have been known as '*L. barbouri*' and a lectotype is designated; 3) *Leptopelis usambarae* Ahl, 1929 is transferred from the synonymy of *L. uluguruensis* Barbour & Loveridge, 1928 to the synonymy of *L. grandiceps* Ahl, 1929 as a subjective synonym; 4) a lectotype of *Leptopelis amaniensis* Ahl, 1929 (synonym of *L. uluguruensis*), *Hylambates johnstoni* Boulenger, 1897 (synonym of *L. flavomaculatus*) and *Leptopelis signifer* Ahl, 1929 (synonym of *L. vermiculatus*) is designated to stabilize identity of the nomina; and 5) the type locality of *Leptopelis martiensseni* Ahl, 1929 and *Leptopelis tanganus* Ahl, 1929 is corrected.

Key words: anurans, taxonomy, nomenclature, type material, revalidation, lectotype designation, Eastern Arc Mountains, Eastern Afromontane

Introduction

The arthroleptid genus *Leptopelis* Günther, 1859 currently comprises more than 50 species of mainly arboreal frogs inhabiting sub-Saharan Africa. Five species are known from forested areas along the Eastern Arc Mountains in southern Kenya and Tanzania and Southern Highlands in southern Tanzania, East Africa (Harper *et al.* 2010): *L. barbouri* Ahl, 1929, *L. flavomaculatus* (Günther, 1864), *L. parkeri* Barbour & Loveridge, 1928, *L. uluguruensis* Barbour & Loveridge, 1928 and *L. vermiculatus* (Boulenger, 1909). With an exception of *L. flavomaculatus*, which tolerates more open areas and dry low-elevation forests, the other four species are restricted to humid, predominantly montane forests (Channing & Howell 2006; Harper *et al.* 2010).

In 1929 Ahl published his work on African tree frogs of the genus *Leptopelis*. The work introduced twenty-one new nomina (singular nomen, sensu Dubois 2000; all were listed also in Ahl 1931), but seventeen have been moved into synonymy (as in Frost 2014). With one exception, *L. barbouri*, which is currently treated as a valid species, all nominal taxa described from the Eastern Arc Mountains (mainly Usambara Mountains) by Ahl have been synonymized. In the checklist of East African herpetofauna (Loveridge 1957), followed by the review of East African tree frogs (Schlötter 1975), *L. amaniensis* Ahl, 1929, *L. grandiceps* Ahl, 1929, *L. tanganus* Ahl, 1929 and *L.*

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