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## ***Gekko aaronbaueri*, a new gecko (Squamata: Gekkonidae) from central Laos**

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### **Abstract**

A new species of the genus *Gekko* Laurenti is described from central Laos. The species is distinguished from its congeners by its moderate size, i.e. maximum SVL 80.0 mm, dorsal pattern of five to six dirty white vertebral spots alternating with yellowish-edged, W-shaped blotches between nape and sacrum and six to seven pairs of dirty white spots interspersed with yellowish-edged dark blotches on the flanks between limb insertions, 0–1 internasal, 39–43 ventral scale rows between the weakly developed ventrolateral folds, 3–4 precloacal pores in males, sometimes separated by one poreless scale, 98–104 smooth dorsal scale rows around the body, 16 broad lamellae beneath digit I of pes, 15–16 broad lamellae beneath digit IV of pes, and enlarged subcaudal scales.

**Key words:** Karst, Systematics, *Gekko aaronbaueri* sp. nov., Gekkonidae, Laos

### **Introduction**

Rösler *et al.* (2011) reported a total of 46 valid species in the genus *Gekko* Laurenti, distributed across tropical Asia and western Oceania, from India eastwards to Melanesia. Until now, the only species of *Gekko* reported from Laos have been *G. gekko* (Linnaeus), *G. petricolus* Taylor, 1962 (Stuart 1999; Rösler *et al.* 2011) and a third species, *G. scientiadvertura* Rösler, Ziegler, Vu, Herrmann & Böhme, 2005, reported only recently from Ban Na Hin, Nam Kading National Biodiversity Conservation Area (NBCA), Borikhamxay Province, and Konglor cave, Phou Hin Boun National Biodiversity Conservation Area (NBCA), Khammouane Province (Teynié & David 2010, 2014). The last of these species is a member of the *Gekko japonicus* species group, which is distributed in China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam, including offshore Islands, based on on Rösler *et al.* (2011), in Laos. This group consists of 19 described species in addition to *G. scientiadvertura*: *Gekko adleri* Nguyen, Wang, Yang, Lehmann, Le, Ziegler & Bonkowski, 2013; *Gekko auriverrucosus* Zhou & Liu in Zhou *et al.*, 1982; *Gekko canhi* Rösler, Nguyen, Doan, Ho & Ziegler 2010; *Gekko chinensis* Gray; *Gekko hokouensis* Pope; *Gekko japonicus* (Schlegel); *Gekko liboensis* Zhou & Li in Zhou *et al.*, 1982; *Gekko melli* Vogt; *Gekko palmatus* Boulenger, 1907; *Gekko scabridus* Liu & Zhou in Zhou *et al.*, 1982; *Gekko scientiadvertura* Rösler, Ziegler, Vu, Herrmann & Böhme, 2005; *Gekko shibatai* Toda, Sengoku, Hikida & Ota, 2008; *Gekko similignum* Smith; *Gekko subpalmatus* Günther; *Gekko swinhonis* Günther; *Gekko taibaiensis* Song, 1985; *Gekko tawaensis* Okada; *Gekko vertebralis* Toda, Sengoku, Hikida & Ota, 2008; *Gekko wenxianensis* Zhou & Wang, 2008; *Gekko yakuensis* Matsui & Okada, 1968

Here we report a new, moderately sized species of the *Gekko japonicus* species group, the type series of which originates from Lom Yen Cave, an isolated karst mountain in Khammouan Province, central Laos. This new species is also known from five additional specimens collected or observed from three localities located 60–100

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