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AHN

AFRICAN HERP NEWS

HAA
HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA
www.africanherpetology.org

FOUNDED 1965

The HAA is dedicated to the study and conservation of African reptiles and amphibians. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the African herpetofauna. Members receive the Association's journal, African Journal of Herpetology (which publishes review papers, research articles, and short communications – subject to peer review) and African Herp News, the Newsletter (which includes short communications, natural history notes, book reviews, bibliographies, husbandry hints, announcements and news items).

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S NOTE

Articles shall be considered for publication provided that they are original and have not been published elsewhere. Articles will be submitted for peer review at the Editor's discretion. Authors are requested to submit manuscripts by e-mail in MS Word '.doc' or '.docx' format.

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH:
Platysaurus intermedius parvus
Photograph by: Luke Verburgt

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HAA AWARDS
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AHN CONTENTS

AHN EDITORIAL

This issue is brief, but important.

My first year as Newsletter Editor is coming to an end, and throughout this year I have had the pleasure of reading through very interesting and important submissions. I thank all the authors for these contributions, as well as all the reviewers for taking the time to share their knowledge and expertise. I truly hope that 2019 sees more quality submissions. With that said, I beseech all upcoming authors to fully read and understand the "Instructions to Authors" provided in every AHN issue.

The instructions are provided to guide you and to assist me and my ever-so-talented production and layout person to produce the AHN efficiently and effectively. Unfortunately, we spend a considerable amount of time reformatting submissions to meet the layout criteria, which you should all know. We have taken the liberty of updating the Instructions to Authors (page 32) to better accommodate the new electronic-only newsletters we are now producing, and to better tie in with the style updates of the African Journal of Herpetology (see announcement on page 9). Please note that there are extensive changes to the referencing style. As of January 2019, any submissions not conforming to the specified instructions will be returned and asked to be resubmitted in the correct style. To assist authors in this endeavour, we will be providing templates for each article category on the updated website; however, until such time as it is up and running, please do not hesitate to contact me for the required templates.

In addition to the revised Instructions to Authors, please have a read through the Announcements sections, which includes important information on the upcoming HAA conference, student awards, and HAA research grant opportunities.

I wish you all a great end of year and very much look forward to the year ahead.

Jessica da Silva
Editor

AHN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STUDENT AWARDS

Dear HAA students,

The Herpetological Association of Africa would like to award the best student first-authored manuscript, published or accepted for publication in the African Journal of Herpetology in the four issues immediately prior to the next HAA conference. That is, if your manuscript has been accepted for publication in the AJH for issues 66-69, you stand a chance to receive a cash reward of **ZAR 5000**! To stand a chance of winning this award, submit your manuscript to AJH now! When submitting online, please check the box that indicates that your manuscript is eligible.

Articles will be evaluated by a committee of HAA members, none of whom have students in the competition, and judged based on technical merit, originality, relevance and potential impact on the field of African herpetology, as well as clarity of writing. Announcement of the award will be made at the 14th Herpetological Association of Africa Conference in 2019.

Conditional clause: the competition will only be run if there were at least two student publications in the last four journal issues.

HAA Committee 2019

STUDENT AND EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT

The Herpetological Association of Africa is pleased to announce a new initiative aimed at the development of students and early-career researchers in herpetology. Come rub shoulders with the giants and let the networking begin!

Do you have a super cool research project in mind but don't know where to start, and you have no idea about funding opportunities and available resources? Fret no more and come pick the brains of your fellow herpetologists via our Facebook page. Or, are you having trouble figuring out which analytical method to use, or how to make sense of your data for instance? Post your queries on our Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/pages/biz/Herpetological-Association-of-Africa-144176885638420), and we will try our best to get you expert advice. We are looking forward to stimulating and exciting discussions.

We also post requests for research assistance, advertisements for internships, graduate projects, job openings, and other opportunities that may not be restricted to the field of herpetology. So, keep an eye out, you do not want to miss out on these cool ventures!

What's more, pupils (below the age of 18 years old) and students (registered at a higher education institution) who join the HAA by end Feb 2019 pay for one year and will receive a membership until December 2021! In addition, you will receive the latest newsletter and journal from 2018. That is pay for one year and receive a three-and-a half year membership.

Hanlie Engelbrecht

HAA Committee: Student Issues

HAA RESEARCH GRANT

The Herpetological Association of Africa proudly announces that applications for the *HAA Research Grant* **(for ZAR 15 000)** are now open to all HAA professional and postdoctoral members (regardless of country of residence) in good standing (affiliated with a recognised research institution and proof of status will be required) who are working in any field of original research on African herpetology (Africa taken to include the continent of Africa, Madagascar, the Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Gulf of Guinea islands, Mascarenes and Seychelles). Applications must include a curriculum vitae and a maximum three-page (single-spaced) statement of the research project including the following:

- The title of the project
- A project outline, including the project objectives/goals/hypotheses, the methods to be used, key references and any figures that may help to elucidate the project.
- A budget (presented in ZA Rand) outlining how the money will be spent. Grant money may be used to purchase equipment or supplies, to fund travel to field sites (airfare, petrol, etc.) or other direct costs incurred by the proposed research. Funds may not be used to cover meeting or conference attendance, or associated travel nor may they be used as salary.

Please note: the awarded funds will be paid to the relevant institution, and that a financial and operating report should be submitted to the HAA by end November 2019.

Applications will be due on **28 Feburary 2019** and will be evaluated by a committee of HAA members. A single award will be given based solely on the merits of the proposal as judged by the review panel. Announcement of the award will be circulated via email and posted on the HAA Facebook page by **29 March 2019**.

Applications are to be sent to the HAA Secretary Buyi Makhubo (secretaryhaa@gmail.com).

HAA Committee 2019

HAA STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT

The Herpetological Association of Africa proudly announces that applications for the *HAA Student Research Grant 2019* **(for ZAR 15 000)** are now open to all HAA student members (regardless of country of residence) in good standing (must be currently enrolled in a university degree program, proof of student status will be required) who are working in any field of original research on African herpetology (Africa taken to include the continent of Africa, Madagascar, the Canary Islands, Cape Verde Islands, Gulf of Guinea islands, Mascarenes and Seychelles). Applications must include a curriculum vitae and a maximum three-page (single-spaced) statement of the research project including the following:

- A statement of the degree program and institution as well as the academic mentor/advisor's name and contact details
- The title of the project
- A project outline, including the project objectives/goals/hypotheses, the methods to be used, key references and any figures that may help to elucidate the project.
- A budget (presented in ZA Rand) outlining how the money will be spent. Grant money may be used to purchase equipment or supplies, to fund travel to field sites (airfare, petrol, etc.) or other direct costs incurred by the proposed research. Funds may not be used to cover meeting or conference attendance, or associated travel nor may they be used as salary.

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Applications are to be sent to the HAA Secretary Buyi Makhubo (secretaryhaa@gmail.com).

HAA Committee 2019

CHANGES TO AUTHORS' INSTRUCTIONS FOR AFRICAN JOURNAL OF HERPETOLOGY

This past year has some substantial changes made to the appearance of especially the online version of the African Journal of Herpetology. These changes have brought a more modernized look the journal in keeping up with international trends and providing a more interactive experience for the reader. Readers can now experience the online version in full colour, make use of quick links to references, and acquire additional information such as hyperlinks to authors' ORCID accounts, and identification of the associate editor who was responsible for the particular manuscript. Many of these changes are dealt with directly by the editorial office and the publishers. Other minor typological changes do apply to authors, and I encourage authors to consult with the Instructions for Authors when preparing your next manuscript for AJH.

The Instructions for Authors have been revised to incorporate these changes and will be posted on the journal webpage by end of 2018. However, here are some of the changes that authors might find helpful when preparing their manuscripts.

Manuscript categories – instead of page limits we now provide word limits for the various manuscript categories (e.g. 2500 for Short Communications and 200 words for its abstract).

Manuscript presentation - There should be no more than three heading levels: (1) **bold**, (2) ***bold italics***, (3) *italics*.

References – the reference style has been changed extensively to simplify its appearance and do away with unnecessary punctuation, examples include:

Article: Branch WR. 2007. A new species of tortoise of the genus *Homopus* (Chelonia: Testudinidae) from southern Namibia. Afr. J. Herpetol. 56:1–21.

Book: Spawls S, Howell K, Drewes R, Ashe J. 2002. A field guide to the reptiles of East Africa. London: Academic Press.

Chapter in a collection: Bruford MW, Hanotte O, Brookweld JFY, Burke T. 1992. Singlelocus and multilocus DNA Fingerprinting. In: Hoezel AR, editor. The South American Herpetofauna: Its Origin, Evolution, and Dispersal. Molecular Genetic Analysis in Conservation. Oxford: IRL Press.

Thesis: Russell AP. 1972. The foot of gekkonid lizards: a study in comparative and functional anatomy. [PhD thesis]. London: University of London.

Website: Wilgenbusch JC, Warren DL, Swofford DL. 2004. AWTY: a system for graphical exploration of MCMC convergence in Bayesian phylogenetic inference. [accessed 15 April 2011]. http://ceb.csit.fsu.edu/awty.

Figures – cost of colour figures in the printed version has been reduced to US$400 for the first four figures and US$75 for each additional figure.

Taxonomic authorities – we now include an official statement on taxonomic authorities as follows: "For articles on taxonomic and phylogenetic matters include the relevant taxonomic authority and date, e.g. *Pyxicephalus adspersus* (Tschudi, 1838). When possible, this information should appear in the title, abstract and introduction (at first mention only) so as to facilitate discovery, and the bibliographic details of the original published description included in the reference list."

The Editorial team hope that you will find these changes progressive and competitive, and we look forward to receiving your next manuscripts.

14th Herpetological Association of Africa Conference

9th - 13th September

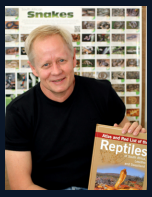
Cape St Francis Resort, Eastern Cape, South Africa

THIRD NOTICE AND NOTICE OF CHANGE OF VENUE

The 14th biennial Conference of the Herpetological Association of Africa will be held at The Cape St Francis Resort, Eastern Cape, South Africa from 9 to 13 September 2019.

https://www.capestfrancis.co.za/

Bordering the beach at Cape St Francis and just 90 minutes from Port Elizabeth airport, Cape St Francis Resort is a unique and exclusive paradise on the South African southern coast which draws holidaymakers from all over the world to enjoy the glorious beaches, excellent water-sport facilities, leisurely lifestyle and the magical beauty of the unspoilt surroundings.



PLENARY SPEAKERS:
Prof Graham Alexander and Prof Hannes Van Wyk.
Luke Verburgt will give a Travellog Presentation.
International plenary speakers to be announced soon!

Further requests or queries about the conference can be sent to the organising committee chair, Shelley Edwards (s.edwards@ru.ac.za).

Keep checking the HAA website for details of calls for abstract submission and registration dates!

Conference organising committee: Shelley Edwards, Krystal Tolley, Michael Bates, Jens Reissig, Che Weldon, Bryan Maritz, Jessica Da Silva, Hanlie Engelbrecht, Buyi Makhubo

KAITLIN ALLEN

Kaitlin Allen began her herpetological research in Africa working on the phylogeography of skinks from the Cameroon Volcanic Line in Dr. Aaron Bauer's lab at Villanova University near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA. Having earned her M.Sc. in Biology in 2015, she is continuing her research at the University of Kansas, where she is working with Dr. Rafe Brown on the effects of historic climate change on species diversification patterns in Central Africa.

The Cameroon Volcanic Line is a 1600 kilometer chain of mountains stretching from the Gulf of Guinea islands, along the Cameroon-Nigeria border and then eastward through Cameroon's Adamawa Plateau. It is unique in that it consists of continental volcanic massifs, off shore continental islands, and oceanic islands. These mountains are home to many unique plants and animals, but the true extent of the diversity in this area, as in much of Central Africa, is poorly known, especially for reptiles and amphibians.

At present, 71 amphibians and 25 reptiles are considered endemic to the continental volcanic line and another 10 reptiles and 10 amphibians are found only on the adjacent islands. However, Central African rainforests are understudied, suggesting that diversity and endemism could be even higher. Intensive surveys of these mountains are necessary to fully understand the diversity and conservation needs of this unique region.

With this in mind, Kaitlin Allen and her (now) husband Walter Tapondjou, with whom she began collaborating in Cameroon after he won the ZenScientist Grant from the Herpetological Association of Africa in 2014, have spent the last five years conducting extensive herpetological surveys along the Cameroon Volcanic Line. Genetic and morphological data obtained during these surveys are analyzed in the context of broader Central and West African sampling to determine the full diversity of the area as well as the patterns and processes giving rise to this diversity.

With a primary focus on skinks and chameleons, the results have suggested the existence of much higher species diversity than previously recognized, implying that many widespread species actually represent multiple, range-restricted, lineages. This was the case in a recent phylogeographic analysis of a common African skink genus, *Trachylepis*, conducted at Villanova University. In addition to high levels of hidden phylogenetic structure, results indicated that diversification of *Trachylepis* species was influenced primarily by historic climate patterns and isolation of lineages in montane areas. One new skink species from

A male *Trioceros montium* from Mt. Cameroon. Photo: Walter Tapondjou.

Central Africa was described (*Trachylepis gonwouoi*), and others await further analysis. Preliminary results on chameleons in the genus *Trioceros* show similar patterns of higher-than-expected lineage diversity, however, these groups are in need of further genetic and morphological analyses necessary for statistical species delimitation.

Determining the true species diversity and range limits for Central African herpetofauna is crucial to effective conservation of the herpetological taxa that are unique to the Cameroon Volcanic Line. Many of which are isolated on only one or two mountains. At lower elevations they are severely threatened by logging and palm oil

Forest habitat on the slope of Mt. Nlonako. Photo: Kaitlin Allen.

Surveying the crater lakes on the summit of Mt. Manengouba. From left to right: our guide Prosper, Dr. Luke Welton, Kaitlin Allen, and Walter Tapondjou. Photo: Luke Welton.

plantations, and at high elevations they are at risk of habitat loss due to climate change and fragmentation. At the University of Kansas, Kaitlin and Walter's research continues to focus on understanding the diversity of Central Africa's reptiles and amphibians using genetic techniques and species distribution modeling. Their goal is to determine how climate has impacted Central African species diversity and distribution in the past, and how it will impact their chances of survival in the future.

The holotype of *Trachylepis gonwouoi*, described in 2017 from Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo. Photo: Luke Welton.

PYXICEPHALIDAE

Amietia nutti
(Boulenger, 1896)
Nutt's River Frog

LEECH PARASITISM

D. F. HUGHES, M. BEHANGANA,
L. WILBER & E. GREENBAUM

African river frogs (Pyxicephalidae: Cacosterninae: *Amietia*) occur in permanent streams and rivers across Central, East, and southern Africa (Channing 2001; Channing and Howell 2006). *Amietia nutti* is a wide-ranging species with a distribution from eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to central Kenya, and from northern Ethiopia to southern Tanzania and extreme northern Zambia/Malawi (Channing et al. 2016; IUCN 2018; Manthey et al. 2017; Frost 2018). A taxonomic study by Channing et al. (2016) removed *A. nutti* (Boulenger 1896) from the synonymy of *A. angolensis* (Bocage 1866) and placed *A. lubrica*, a (former) species widespread in the Albertine Rift highlands (Larson et al. 2016), within the synonymy of *A. nutti* (Frost 2018). Published records for *A. nutti* range from 200–2900 m above sea level, where it can be found in association with stable waterways of both disturbed and undisturbed habitats (Channing and Howell 2006; Largen and Spawls 2010). Based on its widespread distribution and high tolerance of anthropogenic disturbance, *A. nutti* is currently assessed as Least Concern by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN 2018). However, despite its widespread occurrence, little is known about the natural history and ecology of this species. Here we report the first recorded incidence of leech parasitism for *A. nutti*.

On the night of 19 June 2015, we observed an adult female *A. nutti* (SVL = 70.3 mm) with an ectoparasite (Fig. 1) attached to its hind leg, in a small stream running through a mosaic of agricultural fields and grassland just outside of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, Kisoro District, Kigezi sub-region, Western Region, Uganda (1° 20' 42.396" S, 29° 36' 38.88" E, 2285 m a.s.l.). The frog host was identified to species from a maximum-likelihood phylogeny composed of GenBank (Larson et al. 2016) and unpublished sequences (data not shown) of *Amietia* species based on the 16S ribosomal RNA mitochondrial gene fragment. The ectoparasite was not collected, but based on the observed sanguivorous behavior, semi-aquatic frog host, and geographic location of the occurrence, it was identified as an aquatic jawed leech species (Arhynchobdellida: Hirudiniformes: Hirudinidae) in one of three closely related genera: *Aliolimnatis*, *Asiaticobdella*, or *Limnatis* (M.E. Siddall, pers. comm.).

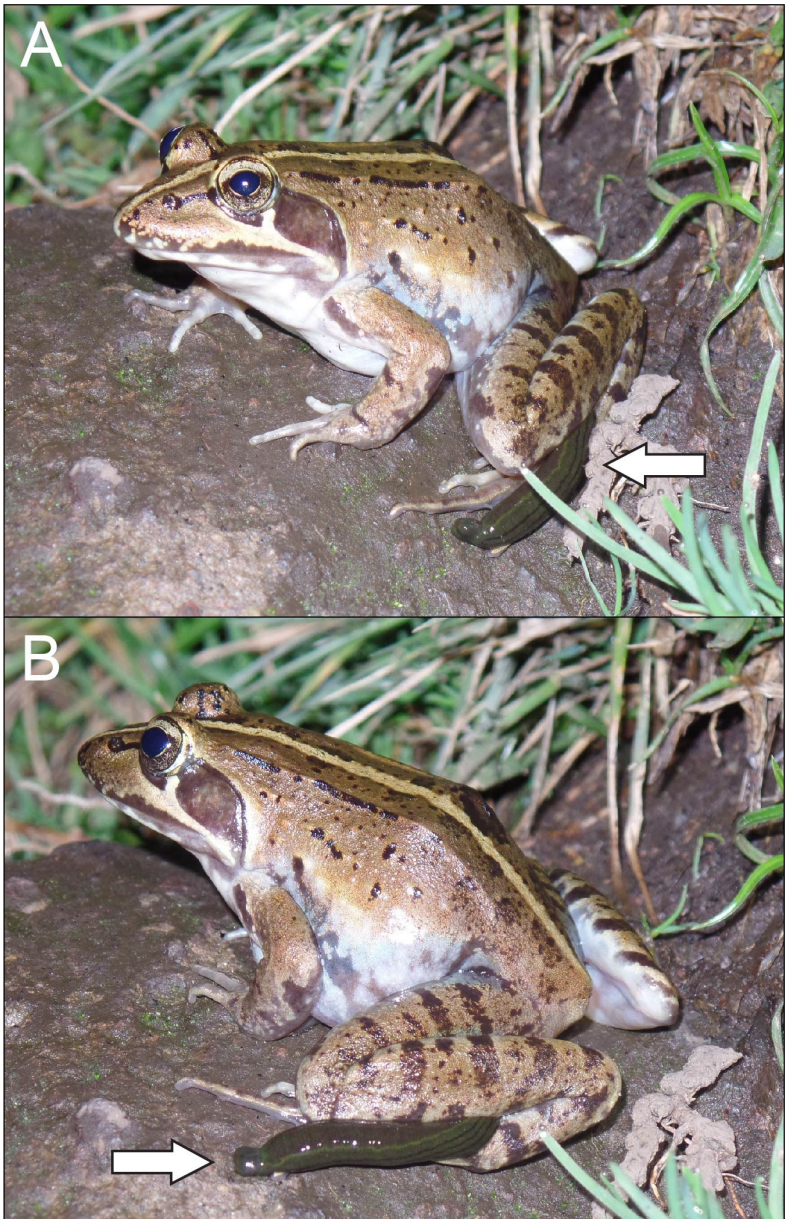


Figure 1. Adult female *Amietia nutti* with a leech parasite found near Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, southwestern Uganda. A) Anterior view, B) Posterior view. Photos by DFH.

Hirudinoid leeches are distributed across all continents (except Antarctica) and because they exhibit a highly conserved external morphology, species are identified by internal anatomy and gene sequences (Phillips and Siddall 2009; Tubtimon et al. 2014).

In general, hirudinoid leeches have been found parasitizing amphibians, including species in the families Bufonidae, Hylidae, Ranidae, and Salamandridae (e.g., Merilä and Sterner 2002; Toledo 2005). In Africa, Leigh-Sharpe (1933) reported on the hirudinoid leech *Limnatis nilotica* parasitizing the frog *Rana ridibunda* (= *Pelophylax ridibundus* Pallas 1771) from Casablanca, Morocco. In South Africa, Kruger and Du Preez (2015) described the parasitic association between the Marsupial leech (*Marsupiobdella africana*) and the African clawed frog (*Xenopus laevis* Daudin 1802). Other leeches found parasitizing on African amphibians include several *Malagabdella* species of the terrestrial leech family Haemadipsidae, which were found parasitizing at least four species of the anuran family Mantellidae (Rocha et al. 2012) in Madagascar. Species in the freshwater jawless leech family Glossiphoniidae are also well-documented parasites of amphibians (e.g. Tiberti and Gentilli 2010; McCallum et al. 2011). Ahmed et al. (2009) reported on the glossiphonid leech *Batracobdella algira* parasitizing frogs of the species *Rana saharica* (= *Pelophylax saharicus* Boulenger 1913) and *Bufo mauritanicus* (= *Sclerophrys mauritanica* Schlegel 1841) from the Republic of Tunisia. However, literature on hirudinoid leech parasites of pyxicephalid frogs is rare. The only other similar account we could find, was that of Moore (1958), who reported on a collection of leeches in the Natal Museum that included the hirudinoid leech *M. africana* parasitizing *Rana umbraculata* (= *Amietia vertebralis* Hewitt 1927) and the leech *Limnatis oligodonta* attached to an unidentified tadpole in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

Other parasites, such as haemo-protozoans and intestinal helminths, have been recorded from several pyxicephalid species, including *A. nutti* (*Amphibiophilus chabaudi* and *Falcaustra congoensis* [Bursey et al. 2018), *A. quecketti* (= *delalandii* Duméril and Bibron 1841) (*Hepatozoon thelleri* [Netherlands et al. 2014]), *A. angolensis* (Bocage 1866) and *A. wittei* (Angel 1924) (*H. thelleri* [Ball 1967]), and *Aubria subsigillata* (Duméril 1856) (unknown microfilaria [Aisien et al. 2015]). To the best of our knowledge, this is the first published account of a leech parasitizing *A. nutti*.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the staff of Mgahinga Gorilla National Park for facilitating our research program, especially the veteran park ranger, Ismael Bakebwa. Special thanks to our field companion Wendy Greenbaum. The frog specimen was collected under the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) IACUC protocol A-200902-1 and Uganda National Council of Science and Technology (UNCST) Research Permit NS 481, and deposited in the UTEP Biodiversity Collections (UTEP 21779 [Field No. DFH 398]). Lastly, we extend

our gratitude to Dr. Mark E. Siddall, Curator of the Annelida and Mollusca Collections at the American Museum of Natural History, for his help with identifying the leech.

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CHAMAELEONIDAE

Bradypodion thamnobates
Raw, 1976
Midlands Dwarf Chameleon

REPRODUCTION

J. REISSIG & C. A. TIEDEMANN

Howick, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa (29°31'853"S, 30°15'116"E, 2930CB, 1112m a.s.l).

On the 3rd of November 2018, an adult female Midlands Dwarf Chameleon (*Bradypodion thamnobates*) was observed giving birth to nine young. No still-births occurred. The mean weight of the nine live young was 0.267 g. The total length of the specimens was between 40-44mm (Table 1).

The female, which was measured after she had completed giving birth, had a snout-vent length of 71 mm and a tail length of 66 mm. Her weight was 6.0 g, which is still more than double the combined weight of the nine young, which collectively weighed 2.4 g. Anderson and Tolley (2013) provided data for two litters from Bradypodion occidentale females that allowed the calculation of an average clutch weight of 29% of the weight of the females after parturition. Reissig (2014) noted that a clutch of *Bradypodion melanocephalum* weighed 88% of the females total weight after birth while Reissig (2013) noted that in *Bradypodion setaroi* the clutch weighed 84% of the total weight of the female after birth. In this case the clutch only weighed 40% of the total females weight after parturition. This may be at the lower end of the parturition spectrum for this species. It is known that the age and the size of the individual chameleon as well as seasonal factors may all play roles in the clutch size (Bustard 1958; Brockelman 1975; Diaz-Panigua et al. 2002).

Birth in this chameleon species, for non-captive specimens, does not seem to have been previously documented during the month of November. T. J. Ping (pers. comm. 2018), has noted a litter of 31 babies which were produced by a wild female, during the month of October 2011. Branch (1998) and Tilbury (2010) mention only captive reproduction data, mainly in the United States of America, and that litter sizes vary from 8-20 individuals, with a total length of between 40-42 mm. This data seems to be based on a previous publication by Langerwerf (1992). Raw (1976) suggested that the species would probably produce 10-18 young per litter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Lynn Raw for his comments on this manuscript.

Table 1. Individual and mean morphometric measures of *Bradypodion thamnobates* specimens

Individual	SVL (mm)	Tail (mm)	Total (mm)å
1	23	20	43
2	24	20	44
3	23	21	44
4	24	19	43
5	23	20	43
6	22	21	43
7	22	19	41
8	21	20	41
9	21	19	40
Mean	*22.56*	*19.89*	*42.44*

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CHAMAELEONIDAE

Kinyongia vanheygeni
Nečas 2009

Poroto Single-horned Chameleon

D. W. PIETERSEN, J. P. DAVIES, & L. J. THOMPSON

The genus *Kinyongia* is largely restricted to East Africa and eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (Spawls et al. 2004; Tilbury 2018; Uetz et al. 2018). The Poroto Single-horned Chameleon (*Kinyongia vanheygeni*) was recently described from the Poroto Mountains in southern Tanzania (Nečas, 2009), and to date is only known from the type locality and the nearby Rungwe mountains (Tolley and Menegon 2014; Tilbury 2018).

On 5 January 2016 a single individual was located in Mughese Forest, Misuku Mountains, northern Malawi (9° 38’ 55”S, 33° 32’ 16”E, 0933DA, 1 837 m a.s.l.). It was found resting in the canopy of an understorey tree at a height of approximately 4 m. As we did not have collecting permits, no tissue samples were taken for DNA analysis and the individual was photographed (Fig. 1) but otherwise left undisturbed. Based on the height of the parietal casque, the noticeable swelling posterior to the vent and colouration, we believe that this individual is a male.

This individual was distinguished from all other chameleon species known to occur in Malawi by the tail being distinctly longer than the head and body, the lack of gular and ventral crests and the absence of occipital lobes. All of these characters, together with the elongated head, distinctly raised parietal casque and presence of small rostral appendages lead us to refer

Figure 1. (A) Adult male Poroto Single-horned Chameleon (*Kinyongia vanheygeni*) photographed in Mughese Forest, Northern Province, Malawi, on 5 January 2016 and (B) close-up of the head showing details of the rostral appendages. Photographs: Darren W.

this individual to the genus *Kinyongia*. It appears to be referable to the Poroto Single-horned Chameleon *K. vanheygeni*, the geographically closest species, on the basis of the presence of two short, nearly blade-like parallel rostral appendages, each consisting of three enlarged, conical scales (Nečas 2009; Tilbury 2018). The colouration is also similar to that recorded for *K. vanheygeni* (Nečas 2009; Tilbury 2018). It is distinguished from the geographically second-nearest species, Msuya's Forest Chameleon *K. msuyae*, by having a supraorbital ridge consisting of flat, slightly elevated tubercles (*versus* conical tubercles in *K. msuyae*) and colouration (Tilbury 2018).

This is the first record of the species in Malawi, and also the first record of this genus in Malawi (Spawls et al. 2004; Nečas 2009; Tolley and Menegon 2014; Tilbury 2018; Uetz et al. 2018). This record is approximately 75 km south of the type locality of *K. vanheygeni*, and 60 km south of the nearest known population on the Rungwe Mountains (Tolley and Menegon 2014; Tilbury 2018). Despite the relative close proximity between this new population and the only other known populations in southern Tanzania, these populations are separated by purportedly unsuitable mesic savannah. In light of this, a molecular study is warranted to determine whether this new population is in fact referable to *K. vanheygeni*, or whether it represents an undescribed species.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Colin Tilbury and Krystal Tolley for their discussions regarding this individual, and an anonymous reviewer for commenting on an earlier draft of this manuscript.

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LACERTIDAE

Nucras livida
(A. Smith, 1838)

D. J. OOSTHUIZEN

We planned a family holiday at Morewag Guest Farm near Springbok from 25 September 2017 until 1 October 2017. On arrival on 25 September 2017, I asked Len Mostert, owner of the guest farm, for permission to survey and trap reptiles on his farm for the duration of our stay. On 27 September I found and photographed without catching what I thought was a *Pedioplanis namaquensis* (Duméril and Bibron 1839) (Fig. 1). This was later identified as *Nucras livida* (A. Smith, 1838) by Darren Pietersen on Animal Demographic Unit's Virtual Museum, Reptile Map (ADU-VM) and Lynn Raw via online communication. This identification was subsequently confirmed by Aaron Bauer. Although the specimen shows some differences (i.e. 5 rather than 6 light lines on the nape), this is shared by a specimen from about 28 km SE of Britstown, Northern Cape (photograph in Burger 2014) and is likely to be geographical variation. The location where the lizard was found is in the quarter degree cell 2917DB (co-ordinates 29° 39' 0.67" S, 17° 48' 51.06"E) and the elevation is approximately 850 m above sea level. This is an extension of the range by at least 230 km from the nearest previous records of 20 km south of Niewoudtville and just north of Vredendal (Du Toit and Alblas 2003) This new record was submitted to the Reptile Atlas of Southern Africa and may be seen under record number SARCA 162644 (ADU-VM). This is one of four current ADU-VM records of *Nucras livida*.

Figure 1. *Nucras livida* photographed in its habitat near Springbok, NC, South Africa.

The habitat at the observation site is in Namaqualand Broken veld (Acocks 1988) with a shallow soft quartz sand top layer,

Figure 2. Photo of habitat where found.

and a harder layer beneath, there are numerous of rocky areas with scattered shrubs/bushes. (Fig. 2)

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I thank the farm owner, Len Mostert of Morewag Guest Farm, for permission to survey and trap on his farm, Aaron M Bauer, Darren Pietersen and Lynn R G Raw for confirming the identification.

Lynn Raw and Werner Conradie also commented on the draft.

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SCINCIDAE

Panaspis wahlbergi
Smith, 1849
Wahlberg's Snake-eyed Skink

G. K. NICOLAU, L. KEMP & W. CONRADIE

Two short surveys were conducted in the Port St Johns region of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa during the course of September and October 2016. The primary aim of these surveys was to record presence/absence data on the endangered Pondo Dwarf Chameleon (*Bradypodion caffer)* in two localities north of the town, however, concurrent sampling of other reptiles and amphibians took place throughout the duration of the two surveys and records were uploaded to the Animal Demography Unit (ADU) Virtual Museum (http://vmus.adu.org.za).

On the morning of 7 September 2016 an adult Wahlberg's Snake-eyed Skink (*Panaspis wahlbergi)* was found while removing rubble near the Amapondo backpackers in Port St Johns (Table 1). The importance of the record was overlooked at the time and active searching commenced after releasing the animal, therefore no photographic evidence of this specimen was captured. The second individual (Fig.1) was found on the morning of the 22 October 2016 under roof tiles along the Mtumbane River mouth (Virtual Museum Reptile Map No. 159540). Field identification for the two records of *P. wahlbergi* was based on the characteristic lack of eyelids, elongated cylindrical tail, small head and brown dorsal colour with blackish lateral band (Branch 1998).

Wahlberg's Snake-eyed Skink (*Panaspis wahlbergi*) is endemic to eastern half of sub-Saharan Africa. An isolated population in Namibia (Masterson 2014) has been shown to be a distinct species (Medina et al. 2016). Within South Africa, *P. wahlbergi* occurs mostly on the eastern side of the country occupying the Free State, North-West, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal Provinces and marginally into the Northern Cape Province (Masterson 2014, Conradie et al. 2011; Reptile Map No. 154991). The most southern Kwazulu-Natal record (Reptile Map No.159460) is from near the town of Margate (3030CD) and is the most southernmost record of this species and genus. The type locality by Smith (1849) is referred to as "eastward of the Cape Colony" and was assumed to be Natal by Broadley and Howell (1991) and refined to Durban specifically based on Smith's description. Our observations therefore serve as the first published records of *P. wahlbergi* for the Eastern Cape Province and will represent a southerly range extension of at least 100 km (Fig. 2). The Eastern Cape Province is also the southernmost distribution for several other reptile and amphibian genera: *Arthroleptis*, *Leptopelis*, *Natalobatrachus*, *Ptychadena, Amblyodipsas*, *Dendroaspis*, and *Thelotornis* (Venter and Conradie 2015)

The *Panaspis wahlbergi* complex was recently incorporated in a phylogenetic analysis of *Panaspis* and *Afroblepharis* (Medina et al. 2016) in which it is stated that there are still multiple undescribed species in this complex. Genetic samples should be collected from this southernmost locality and added into any future studies. Although these sightings were recorded on the outskirts of Port St Johns, the possibility of *P. wahlbergi* being introduced appears unlikely as there are currently no known introduced populations of this species, nor is the Indian Ocean Coastal Belt unusual for their occurrence (Jacobsen and Broadley 2000). It seems more likely that the

Table 1. Observations of *P. wahlbergi* from Port St Johns, September-October 2017.

Record	Date	Observer	Locus	Latitude	Longitude	Reptile Map #
1	07/09/2016	Gary K. Nicolau	3129 DA	31°38'37.99"S	29°31'15.43"E	-
2	22/10/2016	Luke Kemp	3129 DA	31°38'40.30"S	29°31'16.78"E	159540

presence of these fossorial skinks has been overlooked in the province, possibly due to low sampling within the former Transkei and Pondoland regions of the Eastern Cape Province (Venter and Conradie 2015), furthermore subsequent surveys (Conradie pers. comm.) have failed to document this species. It is still most likely that Smith' record referred to the greater Durban region and not the Eastern Cape Province as this was a major port and the type locality of many other species. Further surveys should be undertaken in the Eastern Cape Province to determine the species's southern limit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Figure 1. Lateral view of adult *Panaspis wahlbergi* (Reptile Map 159540) found next to Mtumbane River mouth, Port St Johns, Eastern Cape.

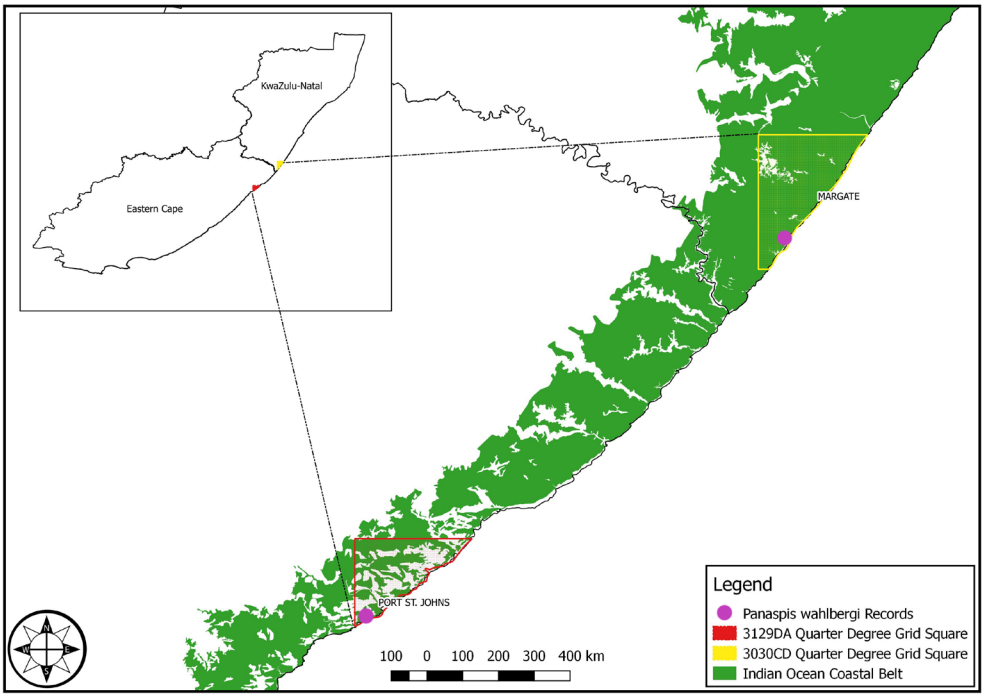

Figure 2. Previous southern-most record shown south of Margate in KwaZulu-Natal Province (Reptile Map 159460 ~3030CD), uploaded by J. Hey-mans. New southern-most record (Reptile Map 159540 ~3129DA) south of Port St Johns, both records fall within the Indian Ocean Costal Belt (Mucina and Rutherford 2006).

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African Herp News publishes longer contributions of general interest that would not be presented as either Natural History Notes or Geographical Distributions. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

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African Herp News publishes succinctly annotated species lists resulting from local surveys of amphibians and reptiles on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. The area surveyed may be of any size but should be defined as a geographic unit of special relevance to the herpetological community. For example, surveys should address declared or proposed conservation reserves, poorly explored areas, biogeographically important localities or administrative zones. The relevance of survey results should be judged by the extent that these records fill distributional gaps or synthesise current knowledge. As far as possible, survey records should be based on accessible and verifiable evidence (specimens deposited in public collections, photos submitted illustrating diagnostic features, call recordings and sonograms, or DNA sequences accessioned into international databases).

Survey results should be presented in the same format as used for Articles (described above), and must additionally include:

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Brief notes concerning the biology of the herpetofauna of the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

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The Keyword should be one or two words best describing the topic of the note (e.g., Reproduction, Avian predation, etc.).

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GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTIONS

Brief notes of new geographical distributions of amphibians and reptiles on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian Peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean. Records submitted should be based on specimens deposited in a recognised collection. A standard format is to be used, as follows:

FAMILY (bold, centred, uppercase)

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English common name (using Bill Branch's Field Guide to Snakes and Other Reptiles of Southern Africa, third edition, 1998, for reptiles; and Du Preez & Carruthers' A Complete Guide to the Frogs of Southern Africa, 2009, for amphibians as far as possible).

The body of the note should include information describing the locality (country; province; quarter-degree locus; location; latitude and longitude in D° M' S" format; elevation above sea level), providing the date (day, month, year), naming the collector(s), and stating the place of deposition and museum accession number, or fate of the animal. The body should also include information on the size, colour and taxonomic characters (e.g., scalation, webbing) used to identify the specimen, as well as the distance to the nearest published locality.

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Study citation (italics), if applicable

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study specimens, study area, and/or researchers.

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Author name ([in full], centred, upper case)

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References should be in the following format:

Article: Branch WR. 2007. A new species of tortoise of the genus *Homopus* (Chelonia: Testudinidae) from southern Namibia. Afr. J. Herpetol. 56:1–21.

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In text citations should be in chronological order: (Jacobs 1952, 1966; Edwards and Holmes 1965; Rosen et al. 1990). When a paper with more than two authors is cited, only the first appears in the text (Taylor et al. 1993). If a paper has more than ten authors, only the first five should appear in the references followed by et al. Cite unpublished data as e.g. Alexander (in press), which then appears in the list of references, or as G. J. Alexander (pers. comm.), in which case Graham J. Alexander's name and institutional affiliation should appear under Acknowledgements. Unpublished reports are cited as personal communications.

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