

New taxa within the African snake genus *Dipsadoboa* Günther, 1858.

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ABSTRACT

Following extensive fieldwork by Raymond Hoser in Africa in 2009, the snakes of the pan-African genus *Dipsadoboa* Günther, 1858 was subjected to an intensive audit, including inspection of specimens of all previously named species in the genus, as well as a review of literature, published photos and the like. This examination included snakes from locations across the known sub-Saharan distribution of the genus as currently recognized.

That there were unnamed species within this genus, at least within the East African arc of so-called “sky islands” or constrained by them in intervening zones, was also common knowledge within herpetology (Branch *et al.* 2019).

The urgency of the need to identify and formally describe these forms to enable proper management and conservation plans has been underlined by the rampant ongoing human population growth in the region. The relevant countries of East Africa (Ethiopia, south to Mozambique) have grown more than 5 fold in human populations, individually and as a group since 1950 (over the past 70 years), creating massive environmental change and destruction (ongoing) and declines in most types of non-domesticated vertebrates.

The audit revealed a number of potentially unnamed forms, although this paper names just four.

These are all taxa within the so-called “*Crotaphopeltis shrevei* Loveridge, 1932” species complex, being the divergent population from the Rondo Plateau in southern Tanzania, known to be divergent for many years, but as yet unnamed; another population from south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia; the population from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as division of the recently described form *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 from north-east Mozambique, this one being formally named as a subspecies rather than full species.

Taxonomic vandalism by way of pretending these forms are not unique, or by assigning them non-ICZN compliant duplicate names in breach of Copyright laws could hamper conservation to the degree that one or more way well become extinct as has already happened for other similarly affected taxa, including as detailed in Hoser (2019a, 2019b).

Keywords: Africa; Snake; Reptilia; Squamata; Serpentes; Colubridae; *Crotaphopeltis*; *Dipsadoboa*; Congo; Cameroon; Tanzania; Mozambique; Malawi; Rondo plateau; new species; *swileorum*; *euanedwardsi*; *paulwoolfi*; new subspecies; *nampulaensis*.

INTRODUCTION

In mid 2009, I, Raymond Hoser travelled from Australia to Africa to conduct fieldwork on the reptiles and frogs there.

While collecting large numbers of Herald Snakes of the genus *Crotaphopeltis* Fitzinger, 1843 at various locations and when also viewing live specimens in collections, it became clear that the species diversity in the genus *Crotaphopeltis* and the associated genus *Dipsadoboa* Günther 1858

as presently conceived by most publishing herpetologists was being underestimated.

Snakes of the genus *C. hotamboeia* (Laurenti, 1768) are dealt with

in a separate paper, published in 2023 at the same time as this paper.

In terms of the genus *Dipsadoboa*, I flagged at end 2009 an intention to name three forms from southern Tanzania and nearby countries to the west.

In terms of both genera, *Crotaphopeltis* and *Dipsadoboa* in particular, Bill Branch of Port Elizabeth, South Africa and close friend Don Broadley of Zimbabwe, made threats to anyone seeking to work on, or publish about either genus, claiming a monopoly on them and an intent to name the two forms I had recently flagged as new species in various online posts.

In the decade from 2009 to 2019, they both repeatedly stated an intent to be the persons naming any new taxa (including the two I had identified as unnamed), or at least be listed as co-authors in any planned papers naming any new species in the genera.

These outrageous demands in the first instance followed a review of the African Cobras published by myself (Raymond Hoser), domiciled in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, early in 2019, and they viewed me as impinging on their hegemony of African herpetology and the “discovery” of new species there.

These demands also coincided with a series of police raids on people Branch and Broadley saw as being likely to publish descriptions of African reptile species over which they sought a hegemony over, which did a remarkable job in scaring off others in Africa and elsewhere with any inclination to name reptile species on that continent.

The result was that in terms of scientific descriptions of new reptile species and the like, Africa has probably fallen well behind every other continent on the planet and now probably has a greater percentage of unnamed reptile taxa than any other continent.

Combined with the fastest growing human population of all the continents (now in excess of 1.4 billion), Africa is on the cusp of a major man-made ecological Armageddon for many species of vertebrate.

Broadley and Branch, along with associates in crime Wolfgang Wüster and Mark O’Shea made numerous false complaints to the Australian wildlife authorities and police against me, resulting in several violent armed raids on our wildlife breeding facility and lab, most notably including “the big one” on 17 August 2011, effectively stalling or stopping the publication of dozens of important scientific papers, the screening of a series of 13 important 1 hour wildlife documentaries and loss of many years worth of scientific and collection records.

I note that it is also a matter of public record that both Broadley and his good friend Branch, were (separate of their activities in herpetology) found to have procured young black boys for anal sex over a period spanning many years, but over decades they evaded prosecution because of their high positions within government-owned Museums and close connections in law enforcement.

Don Broadley died on 10 March 2016, and this was followed by Bill Branch dying on 14 October 2018. I note that at the time, police had earlier that year in 2018, said that they were preparing to charge Branch with historical child sex offences, following ongoing protests from victims that did not let up.

However Broadley, the main perpetrator was never charged.

In any event, this meant that the various unnamed species I was aware of within the two genera *Crotaphopeltis* and *Dipsadoboa* were unnamed in 2022 and likely to remain unnamed indefinitely.

Significantly, a year after Branch’s death, he was listed as lead author in a paper (Branch *et al.* 2019) naming a new species of *Dipsadoboa* published online in the PRINO (peer reviewed in name only) journal *Zootaxa* (commonly called “Zootoxic”, for obvious reasons) (see also Hoser 2009, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2015a-f).

While Jesus Christ was reported to have returned from the dead a few days after his death in a book known simply as “*The Bible*”, Bill Branch seems to have exceeded that feat by a significant margin.

Engelbrecht *et al.* (2021) also listed Branch as a co-author on a paper dealing with *Crotaphopeltis* confirming Branch’s apparent resurrection from the dead some years after he “died”, but that paper failed to name any new species or subspecies, even though it published a detailed phylogeny flagging potentially unnamed forms I had identified and made known to others online in the decade preceding that publication.

Not to be outdone by Jesus Christ or Bill Branch, Don Broadley decided to continue publishing numerous papers for some years after his death, being listed as a co-author on numerous papers in the following years, including for example Trape *et al.* (2019), some three years after his death.

By the way, I must stress that there is no evidence that a religion is about to be set up celebrating the revival from the dead of Broadley, that will sacrifice young black boys for sex.

Nor to my knowledge has there yet been any petition to the Vatican for either of the two sex offenders to be Canonized as a result of the men apparently coming back from their graves long after they were declared dead. This is even though it is common knowledge that the senior clergy of the Catholic Church are quite partial to the idea of Canonizing strange people and having sex with little boys (BBC World 2021, Bowcott and Sherwood 2020, Lauer and Hoyer 2019).

I do note that cohort member, the rat-like Mark O’Shea has had his friends “shopping” him for fake honorary University degrees and Royal honours in the UK for some decades. He has repeatedly made it clear he will not give up until he succeeds, so a Canonization for Broadley or Branch arising from the apparent “miracle” of them coming back to life and engaging in herpetology for many years after their deaths is not out of the question.

In any event, in the two years since those above-mentioned papers were last published, it seems that Broadley and Branch have in fact finally died for the last time; no one else in the cohort are publicly known to be intending naming any new taxa in either genus and no new taxa in either genus have been formally named since 2019. Because as of end 2022 no one has publicly flagged any intention of doing so, it is unlikely anyone will be “offended” if I do what should have been done decades ago and that is to name the relevant unnamed forms.

I have made the assumption that after 2 years of apparent non-publication of further papers, that neither Branch or Broadley are going to emerge from their graves to have sex with the young boys they had sex with, as they are probably all grown up by now and Branch and Broadley are probably still worried about being charged for their historical sex offences.

In terms of the snakes of the genera *Crotaphopeltis* and *Dipsadoboa* it is self-evident that if I do not name the most obvious unnamed taxa now, their risk of extinction increases.

Therefore the main purpose of this paper is to formally identify and name four obviously unnamed forms within *Dipsadoboa* as is generally recognized.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The audit in terms of the four putative species or subspecies named within this paper included of a review of the previously published literature relevant to the genus, with a particular emphasis on type descriptions and publications of a taxonomic nature and the three identified taxa within the *Dipsadoboa shrevei* group.

While in the field, no brutal snake tongs were used to handle any snakes (see Hoser, 2007b).

The putative taxon, originally named as “*Crotaphopeltis shrevei* Loveridge, 1932” was audited across its known distribution, including closely associated species.

After stripping those publications from consideration that were derivative, rather than original in nature, it soon became clear that very little had been published on the genus and the *Dipsadoboa shrevei* group in particular.

Live and dead specimens were examined as were photos of specimens with good locality data.

Known distributions of relevant forms were mapped, with barriers between populations investigated to determine if they were of recent and potentially “man made” form, or if they had been around for longer and if so, how long?

In terms of the relevant candidate species, all were apparently constrained by elevation, with lowland areas or montane regions forming barriers between populations.

Where specimens appeared to be divergent, gaps in distribution were identified and a timeline put on this either by way of reference to previous molecular studies, biogeographical evidence, or both and if morphological divergence matched a dated divergence then it was determined to recognize the relevant taxa.

As already inferred, the relevant previously published literature was checked to see if there were any available synonyms for these apparently unnamed forms and if there were, these would obviously be used in preference to any new name to be proposed.

For the record there were no available synonyms for the four forms formally named in this paper.

Literature relevant to the taxonomic and nomenclatural conclusions with respect of the populations of the above-mentioned species or species groups within *Dipsadoboa* Günther 1858 and putative "*Crotaphopeltis shrevei* Loveridge, 1932" in particular included: Auerbach (1987), Baptista *et al.* (2019), Barbour (1914), Barbour and Amaral (1927a, 1927b), Barbour and Loveridge (1928), Barnett (2001), Barnett and Emms (2005), Bates *et al.* (2014), Bayliss *et al.* (2014), Behangana *et al.* (2020), Beolens *et al.* (2011), Berry (1970), Bittencourt-Silva (2019), Böhme *et al.* (2011), Boulenger (1896, 1897a, 1897b, 1901, 1906, 1907), Boycott (1992), Branch (1993), Branch *et al.* (2005, 2019), Broadley (1958, 1959, 1962, 1968, 1991), Broadley and Blaylock (2013), Broadley and Cotterill (2004), Broadley and Howell (1991), Broadley and Stevens (1971), Broadley *et al.* (2003), Burger *et al.* (2004), Carlino and Pauwels (2015), Chabanaud (1916, 1917), Chifundera (1990), Chippaux and Jackson (2019), Chirio (2009), Chirio and Lebreton (2007), Chirio and Ineich (2006), Conradie and Branch (2016), Conradie *et al.* (2016a, 2016b, 2021), Duméril *et al.* (1854), Engelbrecht (2017), Engelbrecht *et al.* (2020, 2021), Eniang *et al.* (2013), Ernst *et al.* (2020), Finke and Liepack (2021), Fitzinger (1843), Gans *et al.* (1965), Gemel *et al.* (2019), Gray (1858), Günther (1858, 1864, 1888, 1895), Haagner and Branch (1995), Haagner *et al.* (2000), Hallermann (1998, 2007), Harrington *et al.* (2018), Herrmann and Branch (2013), Honess and Bearder (1991), Hughes (2013, 2018), Jackson *et al.* (2007), Jacobsen (2009), Jacobsen *et al.* (2010), Joger (1982), Keogh *et al.* (2000), Köhler and Güsten (2007), Lanza (1983, 1990), Largen and Rasmussen (1993), Largen and Spawls (2010), Laurent (1956), Laurenti (1768), Lebreton (1999), Leaché *et al.* (2006), Lillywhite (2014), Lindholm (1905), Loveridge (1929, 1932, 1936, 1938a, 1938b, 1941, 1956, 1957), Lyakurwa (2017), Lyakurwa *et al.* (2019), Malonza *et al.* (2006, 2017), Marques *et al.* (2018), Masters *et al.* (2017), Matschie (1893), Mehrtens (1967), Menegon *et al.* (2008, 2014), Menzies (1966), Monard (1931, 1940), Monasterio (2016), Muchai and Malonza (2011), Müller (1910), Pauwels and Colyn (2023), Pauwels and David (2008), Pauwels and Vande Weghe (2008), Pauwels *et al.* (2002, 2004, 2006, 2016, 2019, 2022), Peters (1863, 1869), Pietersen *et al.* (2021), Pitman (1974), Pyron *et al.* (2013), Rasmussen (1981, 1985, 1986, 1989a, 1989b, 1993a, 1993b, 1997), Rasmussen and Huges (1996), Rasmussen *et al.* (2000), Razzetti and Msuya (2002), Reinhardt (1843), Ride *et al.* (1999), Robertson *et al.* (2003), Roman (1974), Rovero *et al.* (2014), Sanchez-Vialas *et al.* (2022), Schmidt (1923), Segniabeto *et al.* (2011, 2022), Schlüter and Hallermann (1997), Scortecci (1929, 1931), Seba (1734), Senter and Chippaux (2022), Smith (1849), Spawls *et al.* (2011, 2018), Sternfeld (1908, 1917), Tarn *et al.* (2018), Timberlake *et al.* (2012), Tolley *et al.* (2023), Trape and Balde (2014), Trape and Collet (2021), Trape and Mané (2000, 2004, 2006, 2015, 2017), Trape and Roux-Esteve (1995), Trape *et al.* (2019, 2020), Ullenbruch *et al.* (2010), Uthmüller (1939), Wallach *et al.* (2014), Werner (1897, 1899, 1908, 1909, 1913), Witte (1933), Zassi-Boulou *et al.* (2020) and sources cited therein.

RESULTS

The four candidate species were all shown to be either morphologically divergent (as detailed in the descriptions below), divergent by way of molecular evidence that had been previously published (as cited above), or both.

The three most obviously divergent forms are herein named as species in accordance with the rules of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999).

A less divergent form is formally named as a subspecies.

These newly named forms are *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. from Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania; *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. from the hilly areas of south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia, mainly south of Lake Rukwa; *Dipsadoboa paulwoolfi* sp. nov. from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo; as well as division of the recently described form *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 from north-east

Mozambique, the population from M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáué Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique, north-east of the main population is herein formally named as a subspecies *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. rather than as a full species.

INFORMATION RELEVANT TO THE FORMAL DESCRIPTIONS THAT FOLLOW

There is no conflict of interest in terms of this paper or the conclusions arrived at herein.

Several people including anonymous peer reviewers who revised the manuscript prior to publication are also thanked as are relevant staff at museums who made specimens and records available in line with international obligations.

In terms of the following formal descriptions, spelling of names should not be altered in any way for any purpose unless expressly and exclusively called for by the rules governing Zoological Nomenclature as administered by the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature.

Material downloaded from the internet and cited anywhere in this paper was downloaded and checked most recently as of 21 April 2023, unless otherwise stated and were accurate in terms of the context cited herein as of that date.

Unless otherwise stated explicitly, colour descriptions apply to living adult male specimens of generally good health and not under any form of stress by means such as excessive cool, heat, dehydration or abnormal skin reaction to chemical or other input.

While numerous texts and references were consulted prior to publication of this paper, the criteria used to separate the relevant species has already been spelt out and/or is done so within each formal description and does not rely on material within publications not explicitly cited herein.

In the unlikely event that one or more of the following taxa are synonymised by a later author/s, then the correct nomen to be used is that which occurs first by way of page priority, as listed in the abstract keywords.

Delays in recognition of these species and subspecies could jeopardise the long-term survival of the taxa as outlined by Hoser (2019a, 2019b) and sources cited therein.

Therefore attempts by taxonomic vandals like the Wolfgang Wüster gang via Kaiser (2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2014a, 2014b) and Kaiser *et al.* (2013) (as frequently amended and embellished, e.g. Rhodin *et al.* 2015, Thiele *et al.* 2020, Hammer and Thiele 2021) to unlawfully suppress the recognition of these taxa on the basis they have a personal dislike for the person who formally named it, including by way of breaching international copyright laws, should be resisted (e.g. Cogger 2014, Wellington 2015, Dubois *et al.* 2019, Mosyakin 2022 and Ceriaco *et al.* 2023).

Claims by the Wüster gang against this paper and the descriptions herein will no doubt be no different to those the gang have made previously, all of which were discredited long ago as outlined by Ceriaco *et al.* (2023), Cogger (2014), Cotton (2014), Dubois *et al.* (2019), Hawkeswood (2021), Hoser, (2007, 2009a, 2012a, 2012b, 2013, 2015a-f, 2019a, 2019b), ICZN (1991b, 2001, 2012, 2021), Mosyakin (2022), Wellington (2015) and sources cited therein.

Some material within descriptions is repeated to ensure each fully complies with the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999).

CONSERVATION THREATS TO THE NEWLY NAMED TAXA AND RELATIVES

There are no known significant immediate conservation threats to these newly named snake species and the subspecies, although the best part of the potential habitat for these taxa have been effectively erased by the creation of endless expanses human agriculture of ever increasing intensity throughout the region, brought about by the skyrocketing population of the region (East Africa) where women still as of 2022 have an average of more than 4 children per life time.

Unforeseen threats may include direct human activities (e.g. yet more land clearing for homes or farming activities), as well as potential threats caused by changed vegetation regimes. The region is awash with introduced species from the northern hemisphere and Australia, introduced animal pests and potential

pathogens, including those introduced via the legal importation of foreign reptiles and amphibians by government-owned zoos and other government backed commercial enterprises.

Denial of the existence of the relevant taxa *sensu* Wüster *et al.* as outlined by Hoser (2019a, 2019b), could ultimately cause extinction of this taxon in the same way it caused one or more earlier extinctions as documented by Hoser (2019a, 2019b), (and see Mitchell (1948) and Peters (1863)).

DIPSADOBOA SWILEORUM SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:F1FAD065-F194-45D1-B615-1C0F9333151B

Holotype: A preserved specimen in the Museum of Natural History, London, UK, specimen number: BMNH 1958.1.6.40 collected from Mtene, Rondo Plateau, Tanzania, Africa, Latitude 10.1500 S., Longitude -39.3333 E. This facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratype: A preserved specimen in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, specimen number MCZ 57434 collected from Lindi, Mtene, Rondo Plateau, Tanzania, Latitude 10.1500 S., Longitude -39.3333 E.

Diagnosis: Until now, putative *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), type locality Missas de Dondi, Bella Vista, Lubito, Angola (near the Atlantic Ocean) originally placed in the genus *Crotaphopeltis* Fitzinger, 1843, has been treated as a wide-ranging sub-Saharan species with a range extending from the type locality, west Angola, east through the Southern Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), North Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania. Morphological studies (e.g. Rasmussen 1986), and molecular studies (e.g. Branch *et al.* 2019) have confirmed the obvious, in that there are several species within the group.

Rasmussen (1986) had already formally separated the related taxon *Dipsadoboa wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897), a species endemic to the Usambara Mountains, in Tanzania, as well as *Dipsadoboa kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), apparently endemic to the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania, with diagnostic differences.

Branch *et al.* (2019) formally named *Dipsadoboa montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019, with a type locality of Mount Mabu in north Mozambique, providing both a morphological and molecular basis for doing so.

The other obviously unnamed species in this complex are formally named herein as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa swileorum sp. nov.* is the divergent form long known to inhabit the Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania;

2/ *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi sp. nov.* occurs in the hilly areas of south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia, mainly south of Lake Rukwa;

3/ *Dipsadoboa paulwoolffi sp. nov.* is the taxon found from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

4/ Furthermore an isolated population of *D. montisilva* from the M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáué Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique is formally named as a subspecies, *D. montisilva nampulaensis subsp. nov.*

The eight preceding forms are separated from one another as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), *sensu stricto* has the following unique suite of characters:

dorsals in 19-19-15 (rarely 14) rows; ventrals 203-214 in males and 199-213 in females, anal entire (or rarely divided); subcaudals 74-83 in males and 75-85 in females, 11-16+II maxillary teeth; no vestigial tooth behind the fang; juveniles pale without any distinct markings, becoming darker (brownish, grey, or blue-black, including anteriorly and on the upper labials) with increasing size and age, but invariably with a substantial amount of green or greenish pigment in adults.

2/ *D. wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897) is separated from the preceding species and the other six, by having dorsals in 19-19-13 (rarely 15) rows; 221 to 229 ventrals in males and 212-221 in females; 102-111 subcaudals in males and 98-106 in females; 15-16+II+1 maxillary teeth; juveniles with a characteristic pattern of cross-

bands, which disappear in the adults which have a more or less uniform ground color (yellow-brown to pale grey) with dark-edged scales.

3/ *D. kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), has the following unique suite of characters: dorsals in 17-17-13 rows; 191 ventrals in males and 195 in females (n=1 of each), anal divided; 72 subcaudals in each sex (n=1 for each) 14+II+1 maxillary teeth, color similar to the that of adult color of *D. shrevei*.

4/ *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 has the following unique suite of characters: 19-19-15 scale rows; 194-210 ventrals in males, 194-201 in females; 95-100 subcaudals in males, 98-90 in females; usually only two supralabials (4-5) entering the eye (three supralabials (3-5) in the other species), 1+1 or 1+2 temporals (1+1 in the others, except *D. wernerii* with 1+2), and an entire anal.

5/ *D. swileorum sp. nov.* is similar in most respects to *D. shrevei* as described above, but with 209 ventrals and 96 subcaudals (females), versus 199-213 ventrals and 75-85 subcaudals for females in *D. shrevei*, and the presence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Adult *D. swileorum sp. nov.* do not darken substantially as they age, as is seen in *D. shrevei*, being generally olive-brownish in colour.

6/ *D. euanedwardsi sp. nov.* is similar in most respects to both *D. swileorum sp. nov.* and *D. shrevei* as described above, but is separated from *D. shrevei* by possession of a vestigial tooth behind the fang (absent in *D. shrevei*) as well as a female ventral count of 199-204 and female subcaudal count of 75-81 (versus 209 and 75-85 in *D. swileorum sp. nov.*). Adults are a mainly gun-metal grey with darker head and barely any hint of green at all.

See examples online at:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/1170259>

and

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/22938012>

and

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nvoaden/15218910294/>

7/ *D. paulwoolffi sp. nov.* is similar in most respects to each of *D. swileorum sp. nov.*, *D. euanedwardsi sp. nov.* (in terms of adult colouration) and *D. shrevei* as described above, but separated from each of the others by having a male ventral and subcaudal count of 215-219 and 86-91, versus 213 or less ventrals in each of *D. euanedwardsi sp. nov.* and *D. shrevei* and is separated from each of *D. euanedwardsi sp. nov.* and *D. swileorum sp. nov.* by the absence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Other differences between *D. paulwoolffi sp. nov.* and the other taxa are spelt out in the table on top of page 66 of Rasmussen (1986).

8/ *D. montisilva nampulaensis subsp. nov.* is separated from nominate *D. montisilva* by the following character suite: 194 ventrals (N=1), versus 195-210 ventrals in *D. montisilva* (N=6); supralabials 3-5 entering the orbit, versus supralabials 4-5 entering the orbit in *D. montisilva*; a dorsum and venter that is a washed out light brown colour, dorsally and ventrally (venter light beige to cream in colour), versus dark olive-brown dorsally with an orange belly in *D. montisilva*, although it should be noted that colour intensity does increase slightly with age in specimens of this genus. The preceding species dubbed the *D. wernerii* group by Branch *et al.* (2019) are separated from all other members of the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 by having divided subcaudals (single in the so-called *D. unicolor* group), an entire anal (divided in the so-called *D. aulica* group), and 19 midbody scale rows (17 in the *D. duchesnii* group, ... see below).

Snakes in the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 are separated from all other African Snakes by the following unique suite of characters: Body not worm-like, no large pits on the labials or head shields; body not muscular; no paddle-like tail, one or more pairs of grooved venom fangs at the rear of the upper jaw; pupil vertically elliptic; head is much broader than the neck; loreal excluded from the orbit by the preocular; dorsum is not marbled red-brown or yellow; 194-270 ventrals; 100 or less subcaudals; usually a single anal; anterior temporal shield is single (modified

from Spawls *et al.* 2011).

Putative "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901", treated by most recent authors, including Branch *et al.* (2019) as being within *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 is nothing like the other members, being both morphologically divergent (wholly arboreal), much larger eyes, more bulbous head, etc and should be placed in a separate genus. The name *Dipsoglyphophis* Barbour and Amaral, 1927 is available as noted by Loveridge, 1941.

Loveridge, 1941 also regarded "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901" as being a species complex warranting further investigations, which nearly a century later has yet to be done.

Distribution: *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. is only known from the environs of the Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania.

Etymology: *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. is named in honour of the South African Swile family, from Cape Town, South Africa, including Benjamin Swile, Ernest Swile, Verona Swile, Marle Swile in recognition of logistics and assistance in herpetological fieldwork projects across southern Africa.

DIPSADOBOA EUANEDWARDSI SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:E1A5861F-E922-441F-9C01-B3CA053DE88D

Holotype: A preserved specimen in the Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique, Brussels, Belgium, specimen number IRScNB 8748 collected from Mbala (formerly Abercorn), Zambia, Africa, Latitude 8.8536 S., Longitude 31.3656 E.

This facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: 1/ A preserved specimen at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA, specimen number MCZ 554871 collected from Mbala (formerly Abercorn), Zambia, Latitude 8.8536 S., Longitude 31.3656 E.

2/ A preserved specimen at the Museum of Natural History, London, UK, specimen number BMNH 1907.10.14.2 collected from the Tanganyika Plateau (now in Zambia), Africa.

Diagnosis: Until now, putative *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), type locality Missas de Dondi, Bella Vista, Lubito, Angola (near the Atlantic Ocean) originally placed in the genus *Crotaphopeltis* Fitzinger, 1843, has been treated as a wide-ranging sub-Saharan species with a range extending from the type locality, west Angola, east through the Southern Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), North Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania. Morphological studies (e.g. Rasmussen 1986), and molecular studies (e.g. Branch *et al.* 2019) have confirmed the obvious, in that there are several species within the group.

Rasmussen (1986) had already formally separated the related taxon *Dipsadoboa weneri* (Boulenger, 1897), a species endemic to the Usambara Mountains, in Tanzania, as well as *Dipsadoboa kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), apparently endemic to the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania, with diagnostic differences.

Branch *et al.* (2019) formally named *Dipsadoboa montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019, with a type locality of Mount Mabu in north Mozambique, providing both a morphological and molecular basis for doing so.

The other obviously unnamed species in this complex are formally named herein as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. is the divergent form long known to inhabit the Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania;

2/ *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. occurs in the hilly areas of south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia, mainly south of Lake Rukwa;

3/ *Dipsadoboa paulwoolffi* sp. nov. is the taxon found from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

4/ Furthermore an isolated population of *D. montisilva* from the M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáué Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique is formally named as a subspecies, *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov..

The eight preceding forms are separated from one another as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), *sensu stricto* has the

following unique suite of characters:

dorsals in 19-19-15 (rarely 14) rows; ventrals 203-214 in males and 199-213 in females, anal entire (or rarely divided); subcaudals 74-83 in males and 75-85 in females, 11-16+II maxillary teeth; no vestigial tooth behind the fang; juveniles pale without any distinct markings, becoming darker (brownish, grey, or blue-black, including anteriorly and on the upper labials) with increasing size and age, but invariably with a substantial amount of green or greenish pigment in adults.

2/ *D. weneri* (Boulenger, 1897) is separated from the preceding species and the other six, by having dorsals in 19-19-13 (rarely 15) rows; 221 to 229 ventrals in males and 212-221 in females; 102-111 subcaudals in males and 98-106 in females; 15-16+II+1 maxillary teeth; juveniles with a characteristic pattern of cross-bands, which disappear in the adults which have a more or less uniform ground color (yellow-brown to pale grey) with dark-edged scales.

3/ *D. kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), has the following unique suite of characters: dorsals in 17-17-13 rows; 191 ventrals in males and 195 in females (n=1 of each), anal divided; 72 subcaudals in each sex (n=1 for each) 14+II+1 maxillary teeth, color similar to the that of adult color of *D. shrevei*.

4/ *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 has the following unique suite of characters: 19-19-15 scale rows; 194-210 ventrals in males, 194-201 in females; 95-100 subcaudals in males, 98-90 in females; usually only two supralabials (4-5) entering the eye (three supralabials (3-5) in the other species), 1+1 or 1+2 temporals (1+1 in the others, except *D. weneri* with 1+2), and an entire anal.

5/ *D. swileorum* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *D. shrevei* as described above, but with 209 ventrals and 96 subcaudals (females), versus 199-213 ventrals and 75-85 subcaudals for females in *D. shrevei*, and the presence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Adult *D. swileorum* sp. nov. do not darken substantially as they age, as is seen in *D. shrevei*, being generally olive-brownish in colour.

6/ *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to both *D. swileorum* sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* as described above, but is separated from *D. shrevei* by possession of a vestigial tooth behind the fang (absent in *D. shrevei*) as well as a female ventral count of 199-204 and female subcaudal count of 75-81 (versus 209 and 75-85 in *D. swileorum* sp. nov.). Adults are a mainly gun-metal grey with darker head and barely any hint of green at all.

See examples online at:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/1170259>

and

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and

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nvoaden/15218910294/>

7/ *D. paulwoolffi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to each of *D. swileorum* sp. nov., *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. (in terms of adult colouration) and *D. shrevei* as described above, but separated from each of the others by having a male ventral and subcaudal count of 215-219 and 86-91, versus 213 or less ventrals in each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* and is separated from each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. swileorum* sp. nov. by the absence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Other differences between *D. paulwoolffi* sp. nov. and the other taxa are spelt out in the table on top of page 66 of Rasmussen (1986).

8/ *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. is separated from nominate *D. montisilva* by the following character suite: 194 ventrals (N=1), versus 195-210 ventrals in *D. montisilva* (N=6); supralabials 3-5 entering the orbit, versus supralabials 4-5 entering the orbit in *D. montisilva*; a dorsum and venter that is a washed out light brown colour, dorsally and ventrally (venter light beige to cream in colour), versus dark olive-brown dorsally with an orange belly in *D. montisilva*, although it should be noted that colour intensity does increase slightly with age in specimens of this genus. The preceding species dubbed the *D. weneri* group by Branch

et al. (2019) are separated from all other members of the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 by having divided subcaudals (single in the so-called *D. unicolor* group), an entire anal (divided in the so-called *D. aulica* group), and 19 midbody scale rows (17 in the *D. duchesnii* group, ... see below).

Snakes in the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 are separated from all other African Snakes by the following unique suite of characters: Body not worm-like, no large pits on the labials or head shields; body not muscular; no paddle-like tail, one or more pairs of grooved venom fangs at the rear of the upper jaw; pupil vertically elliptic; head is much broader than the neck; loreal excluded from the orbit by the preocular; dorsum is not marbled red-brown or yellow; 194-270 ventrals; 100 or less subcaudals; usually a single anal; anterior temporal shield is single (modified from Spawls *et al.* 2011).

Putative "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901", treated by most recent authors, including Branch *et al.* (2019) as being within *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 is nothing like the other members, being both morphologically divergent (wholly arboreal), much larger eyes, bulbous head, substantially different scalation, etc and should be placed in a separate genus. The name *Dipsoglyphophis* Barbour and Amaral, 1927 is available as noted by Loveridge (1941).

Loveridge, 1941 also regarded "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901" as recognized at the time (and still now), as in fact being a species complex and warranting further investigations, which nearly a century later has yet to be done.

Distribution: *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. is only known from the environs of the type locality and the adjacent parts of the Luangwa River Valley, including Zambia, nearby parts of Malawi and presumably adjacent Tanzania.

Etymology: *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. is named in honour of the now Australian-based herpetologist Euan Edwards of the Gold Coast, Queensland, in recognition of a life-time's work in herpetology, including considerable fieldwork over many years in most parts of Africa, including the region this species occurs.

DIPSADOBOA PAULWOOLFI SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:301433B3-18E7-41FF-9434-71C850CC5187

Holotype: A preserved specimen in the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Musée royal d'Afrique centrale), Tervuren, Belgium, specimen number RGMC 18516, collected from Uvira, Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Kinshasa), Latitude -32.2212 S., Longitude 29.0824 E.

This facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratype: A preserved specimen in the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Musée royal d'Afrique centrale), Tervuren, Belgium, specimen number RGMC 18517 collected from Makungu, 950 m, Terr. de Fizi, Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (Kinshasa).

Diagnosis: Until now, putative *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), type locality Missas de Dondi, Bella Vista, Lubito, Angola (near the Atlantic Ocean) originally placed in the genus *Crotaphopeltis* Fitzinger, 1843, has been treated as a wide-ranging sub-Saharan species with a range extending from the type locality, west Angola, east through the Southern Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), North Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Morphological studies (e.g. Rasmussen 1986), and molecular studies (e.g. Branch *et al.* 2019) have confirmed the obvious, in that there are several species within the group.

Rasmussen (1986) had already formally separated the related taxon *Dipsadoboa wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897), a species endemic to the Usambara Mountains, in Tanzania, as well as *Dipsadoboa kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), apparently endemic to the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania, with diagnostic differences.

Branch *et al.* (2019) formally named *Dipsadoboa montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019, with a type locality of Mount Mabu in north Mozambique, providing both a morphological and molecular basis for doing so.

The other obviously unnamed species in this complex are formally

named herein as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. is the divergent form long known to inhabit the Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania;

2/ *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. occurs in the hilly areas of south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia, mainly south of Lake Rukwa;

3/ *Dipsadoboa paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is the taxon found from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

4/ Furthermore an isolated population of *D. montisilva* from the M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáué Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique is formally named as a subspecies, *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov..

The eight preceding forms are separated from one another as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), *sensu stricto* has the following unique suite of characters:

dorsals in 19-19-15 (rarely 14) rows; ventrals 203-214 in males and 199-213 in females, anal entire (or rarely divided); subcaudals 74-83 in males and 75-85 in females, 11-16+II maxillary teeth; no vestigial tooth behind the fang; juveniles pale without any distinct markings, becoming darker (brownish, grey, or blue-black, including anteriorly and on the upper labials) with increasing size and age, but invariably with a substantial amount of green or greenish pigment in adults.

2/ *D. wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897) is separated from the preceding species and the other six, by having dorsals in 19-19-13 (rarely 15) rows; 221 to 229 ventrals in males and 212-221 in females; 102-111 subcaudals in males and 98-106 in females; 15-16+II+1 maxillary teeth; juveniles with a characteristic pattern of cross-bands, which disappear in the adults which have a more or less uniform ground color (yellow-brown to pale grey) with dark-edged scales.

3/ *D. kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), has the following unique suite of characters: dorsals in 17-17-13 rows; 191 ventrals in males and 195 in females (n=1 of each), anal divided; 72 subcaudals in each sex (n=1 for each) 14+II+1 maxillary teeth, color similar to the that of adult color of *D. shrevei*.

4/ *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 has the following unique suite of characters: 19-19-15 scale rows; 194-210 ventrals in males, 194-201 in females; 95-100 subcaudals in males, 98-90 in females; usually only two supralabials (4-5) entering the eye (three supralabials (3-5) in the other species), 1+1 or 1+2 temporals (1+1 in the others, except *D. wernerii* with 1+2), and an entire anal.

5/ *D. swileorum* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *D. shrevei* as described above, but with 209 ventrals and 96 subcaudals (females), versus 199-213 ventrals and 75-85 subcaudals for females in *D. shrevei*, and the presence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Adult *D. swileorum* sp. nov. do not darken substantially as they age, as is seen in *D. shrevei*, being generally olive-brownish in colour.

6/ *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to both *D. swileorum* sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* as described above, but is separated from *D. shrevei* by possession of a vestigial tooth behind the fang (absent in *D. shrevei*) as well as a female ventral count of 199-204 and female subcaudal count of 75-81 (versus 209 and 75-85 in *D. swileorum* sp. nov.). Adults are a mainly gun-metal grey with darker head and barely any hint of green at all.

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and

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nvoaden/15218910294/>

7/ *D. paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to each of *D. swileorum* sp. nov., *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. (in terms of adult colouration) and *D. shrevei* as described above, but separated from each of the others by having a male ventral and subcaudal

count of 215-219 and 86-91, versus 213 or less ventrals in each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* and is separated from each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. swileorum* sp. nov. by the absence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Other differences between *D. paulwoolfi* sp. nov. and the other taxa are spelt out in the table on top of page 66 of Rasmussen (1986).

8/ *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. is separated from nominate *D. montisilva* by the following character suite: 194 ventrals (N=1), versus 195-210 ventrals in *D. montisilva* (N=6); supralabials 3-5 entering the orbit, versus supralabials 4-5 entering the orbit in *D. montisilva*; a dorsum and venter that is a washed out light brown colour, dorsally and ventrally (venter light beige to cream in colour), versus dark olive-brown dorsally with an orange belly in *D. montisilva*, although it should be noted that colour intensity does increase slightly with age in specimens of this genus. The preceding species dubbed the *D. wernerii* group by Branch *et al.* (2019) are separated from all other members of the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 by having divided subcaudals (single in the so-called *D. unicolor* group), an entire anal (divided in the so-called *D. aulica* group), and 19 midbody scale rows (17 in the *D. duchesnii* group, ... see below).

Snakes in the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 are separated from all other African Snakes by the following unique suite of characters: Body not worm-like, no large pits on the labials or head shields; body not muscular; no paddle-like tail, one or more pairs of grooved venom fangs at the rear of the upper jaw; pupil vertically elliptic; head is much broader than the neck; loreal excluded from the orbit by the preocular; dorsum is not marbled red-brown or yellow; 194-270 ventrals; 100 or less subcaudals; usually a single anal; anterior temporal shield is single (modified from Spawls *et al.* 2011).

Putative "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901", treated by most recent authors, including Branch *et al.* (2019) as being within *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 is nothing like the other members, being both morphologically divergent (wholly arboreal), much larger eyes, bulbous head, substantially different scalation, etc and should be placed in a separate genus. The name *Dipsoglyphophis* Barbour and Amaral, 1927 is available as noted by Loveridge (1941).

Loveridge, 1941 also regarded "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901" as recognized at the time (and still now), as in fact being a species complex and warranting further investigations, which nearly a century later has yet to be done.

Distribution: *Dipsadoboa paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is only known from the environs of the type locality Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, with the extent of distribution beyond here yet to be determined.

Etymology: *Dipsadoboa paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is named in honour of the Australian-based herpetologist Paul Woolf of the Walloon, Queensland, in recognition of a life-time's work in herpetology, including as foundation president of the Herpetological Society of Queensland Incorporated, including for his leading role in combating taxonomic vandalism by Hinrich (Code-wrecker) Kaiser, Wolfgang Wüster, Don Broadley and their cohort and encouraging other herpetologists to publicly condemn their copyright infringing, ICZN Code wrecking, illegal and dishonest practices (see Hoser 2015a-f).

DIPSADOBOA MONTISILVA NAMPULAENSIS SUBSP. NOV.
LSIDDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:F3649C7A-4F1D-41B0-BD11-282B74D97A43

Holotype: A preserved young female specimen in the Port Elizabeth Museum, South Africa, now known as Bayworld, Gqeberha, South Africa, specimen number PEM R21195, collected from M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáuè Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique, Africa.

This facility allows access to its holdings.

Diagnosis: Until now, putative *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), type locality Missas de Dondi, Bella Vista, Lubito, Angola (near the Atlantic Ocean) originally placed in the genus *Crotaphopeltis* Fitzinger, 1843, has been treated as a wide-ranging

sub-Saharan species with a range extending from the type locality, west Angola, east through the Southern Democratic Republic of Congo (Kinshasa), North Zambia, Mozambique and Tanzania.

Morphological studies (e.g. Rasmussen 1986), and molecular studies (e.g. Branch *et al.* 2019) have confirmed the obvious, in that there are several species within the group.

Rasmussen (1986) had already formally separated the related taxon *Dipsadoboa wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897), a species endemic to the Usambara Mountains, in Tanzania, as well as *Dipsadoboa kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), apparently endemic to the Kilimanjaro area of Tanzania, with diagnostic differences.

Branch *et al.* (2019) formally named *Dipsadoboa montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019, with a type locality of Mount Mabu in north Mozambique, providing both a morphological and molecular basis for doing so.

The other obviously unnamed species in this complex are formally named herein as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa swileorum* sp. nov. is the divergent form long known to inhabit the Rondo Plateau, south-east Tanzania;

2/ *Dipsadoboa euanedwardsi* sp. nov. occurs in the hilly areas of south-west Tanzania and nearby Malawi and Zambia, mainly south of Lake Rukwa;

3/ *Dipsadoboa paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is the taxon found from around Goma and west of there in the North Kivu Province, of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

4/ Furthermore an isolated population of *D. montisilva* from the M'páluwé Ridge Forest, Ribáuè Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique is formally named as a subspecies, *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov..

The eight preceding forms are separated from one another as follows:

1/ *Dipsadoboa shrevei* (Loveridge, 1932), *sensu stricto* has the following unique suite of characters:

dorsals in 19-19-15 (rarely 14) rows; ventrals 203-214 in males and 199-213 in females, anal entire (or rarely divided); subcaudals 74-83 in males and 75-85 in females, 11-16+II maxillary teeth; no vestigial tooth behind the fang; juveniles pale without any distinct markings, becoming darker (brownish, grey, or blue-black, including anteriorly and on the upper labials) with increasing size and age, but invariably with a substantial amount of green or greenish pigment in adults.

2/ *D. wernerii* (Boulenger, 1897) is separated from the preceding species and the other six, by having dorsals in 19-19-13 (rarely 15) rows; 221 to 229 ventrals in males and 212-221 in females; 102-111 subcaudals in males and 98-106 in females; 15-16+II+1 maxillary teeth; juveniles with a characteristic pattern of cross-bands, which disappear in the adults which have a more or less uniform ground color (yellow-brown to pale grey) with dark-edged scales.

3/ *D. kageleri* (Uthmüller, 1939), has the following unique suite of characters: dorsals in 17-17-13 rows; 191 ventrals in males and 195 in females (n=1 of each), anal divided; 72 subcaudals in each sex (n=1 for each) 14+II+1 maxillary teeth, color similar to the that of adult color of *D. shrevei*.

4/ *D. montisilva* Branch, Conradie and Tolley, 2019 has the following unique suite of characters: 19-19-15 scale rows; 194-210 ventrals in males, 194-201 in females; 95-100 subcaudals in males, 98-90 in females; usually only two supralabials (4-5) entering the eye (three supralabials (3-5) in the other species), 1+1 or 1+2 temporals (1+1 in the others, except *D. wernerii* with 1+2), and an entire anal.

5/ *D. swileorum* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *D. shrevei* as described above, but with 209 ventrals and 96 subcaudals (females), versus 199-213 ventrals and 75-85 subcaudals for females in *D. shrevei*, and the presence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Adult *D. swileorum* sp. nov. do not darken substantially as they age, as is seen in *D. shrevei*, being generally olive-brownish in colour.

6/ *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to both

D. swileorum sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* as described above, but is separated from *D. shrevei* by possession of a vestigial tooth behind the fang (absent in *D. shrevei*) as well as a female ventral count of 199-204 and female subcaudal count of 75-81 (versus 209 and 75-85 in *D. swileorum* sp. nov.). Adults are a mainly gun-metal grey with darker head and barely any hint of green at all.

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7/ *D. paulwoolfi* sp. nov. is similar in most respects to each of *D. swileorum* sp. nov., *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. (in terms of adult colouration) and *D. shrevei* as described above, but separated from each of the others by having a male ventral and subcaudal count of 215-219 and 86-91, versus 213 or less ventrals in each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. shrevei* and is separated from each of *D. euanedwardsi* sp. nov. and *D. swileorum* sp. nov. by the absence of a vestigial tooth behind the fang.

Other differences between *D. paulwoolfi* sp. nov. and the other taxa are spelt out in the table on top of page 66 of Rasmussen (1986).

8/ *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. is separated from nominate *D. montisilva* by the following character suite: 194 ventrals (N=1), versus 195-210 ventrals in *D. montisilva* (N=6); supralabials 3-5 entering the orbit, versus supralabials 4-5 entering the orbit in *D. montisilva*; a dorsum and venter that is a washed out light brown colour, dorsally and ventrally (venter light beige to cream in colour), versus dark olive-brown dorsally with an orange belly in *D. montisilva*, although it should be noted that colour intensity does increase slightly with age in specimens of this genus.

The preceding species dubbed the *D. wernerii* group by Branch *et al.* (2019) are separated from all other members of the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 by having divided subcaudals (single in the so-called *D. unicolor* group), an entire anal (divided in the so-called *D. aulica* group), and 19 midbody scale rows (17 in the *D. duchesnii* group, ... see below).

Snakes in the genus *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 are separated from all other African Snakes by the following unique suite of characters: Body not worm-like, no large pits on the labials or head shields; body not muscular; no paddle-like tail, one or more pairs of grooved venom fangs at the rear of the upper jaw; pupil vertically elliptic; head is much broader than the neck; loreal excluded from the orbit by the preocular; dorsum is not marbled red-brown or yellow; 194-270 ventrals; 100 or less subcaudals; usually a single anal; anterior temporal shield is single (modified from Spawls *et al.* 2011). Putative "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901", treated by most recent authors, including Branch *et al.* (2019) as being within *Dipsadoboa* Fitzinger, 1843 is nothing like the other members, being both morphologically divergent (wholly arboreal), much larger eyes, bulbous head, substantially different scalation, etc and should be placed in a separate genus. The name *Dipsoglyphophis* Barbour and Amaral, 1927 is available as noted by Loveridge (1941).

Loveridge, 1941 also regarded "*Leptodira duchesnii* Boulenger, 1901" as recognized at the time (and still now), as in fact being a species complex and warranting further investigations, which nearly a century later has yet to be done.

Distribution: *Dipsadoboa montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. is known only from the type locality, the M'pâlúwé Ridge Forest, Ribáuê Massif, Nampula Province, Mozambique. It is quite likely to be a range-restricted endemic, confined to the environs of the Ribáuê Massif, necessitating the urgent protection of the remaining undisturbed parts of this area.

Etymology: *D. montisilva nampulaensis* subsp. nov. is named in reflection of where it is known to occur.

CONSERVATION THREATS TO THE NEWLY NAMED TAXA AND RELATIVES

There are no known significant immediate conservation threats to these newly named snake species and subspecies, although

the best part of the potential habitat for these taxa have been effectively erased by the creation of endless expanses human agriculture of ever increasing intensity throughout the region, brought about by the skyrocketing population of the region (East Africa) where women still as of 2022 have an average of more than 4 children per life time.

Unforseen threats may include direct human activities (e.g. yet more land clearing for homes or farming activities), as well as potential threats caused by changed vegetation regime. The region is awash with introduced species from the northern hemisphere and Australia, introduced animal pests and potential pathogens, including those introduced via the legal importation of foreign reptiles and amphibians by government-owned zoos and other government backed commercial enterprises.

Denial of the existence of the relevant taxa *sensu* Wüster *et al.* as outlined by Hoser (2019a, 2019b), could ultimately cause extinction of these taxa in the same way it caused one or more earlier extinctions as documented by Hoser (2019a, 2019b), (and see also Mitchell (1948) and Peters (1863)).

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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