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Eleven who may disappear!
From rare to rarer … Species splits of rare Australian skinks, making rare skinks even rarer, with eleven new species formally described!

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ABSTRACT

As part of an ongoing audit of Australian reptiles, further unnamed species of skink from eastern Australia were identified in the past 3 years.

Most have never been flagged in any way by other herpetologists besides myself, but all 11 described herein are morphologically divergent, allopatric to their closest relatives and separated from them by well-established biogeographical barriers of known antiquity.

Each species is believed to be at least 2 MYA divergent from their nearest relatives.

Molecular evidence suggesting these facts is also available for 6 of the 11 taxa.

All eleven species are formally named for the first time.

These are four new species within the genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, one within the genus *Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, three within the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 and three within the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

Keywords: Lizards; Australia; *Harrisoniascincus*; *Ndurascincus*; *Eroticoscincus*; *Anepischetosia*; *Lampropholis*; *zia*; *graciloides*; *adonis*; *couperi*; *maccoyi*; *sharmani*; *brindabellaensis*; *shireenhoserae*; *simonkortlangi*; taxonomy; Australia; nomenclature; new species; *notacartula*; *wildlifedepartmentscumorum*; *nswpolicearecrooks*; *wellsandwellingtonorum*; *sexy*; *timhudosni*; *caitlanhudsonae*; *merceicai*; *snakemansbogensis*; *splinter*; *grunt*.

INTRODUCTION

As part of an ongoing audit of Australian reptiles, most major groups of Australian reptiles have been scrutinized by myself for obviously unnamed species to year 2025.

Other than a small number of legacy papers that have been delayed to 2025 due to peer review (notably including one on the *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* group of lizards and another on the Australian Blind Snakes, both published also in mid 2025), the vast bulk of Australia's reptiles and frogs have now been formally named.

Including the above-mentioned papers, this includes roughly 500 species as well as further subspecies I have formally named from Australia in the past 20 years.

This paper deals with 11 further unnamed species of skink from eastern Australia that were identified in the past 3 years and await formal description.

There is no reason to delay these descriptions as there can only be negative conservation implications in doing so as detailed by Hoser (2019a, 2019b).

Most of these 11 species have never been flagged in any way by other herpetologists besides myself, but all are morphologically divergent, allopatric to their closest relatives and separated from them by well-established biogeographical barriers of known antiquity.

Each species is believed to be at least 2 MYA divergent from their nearest relatives making them clearly and obviously distinct species.

Molecular evidence suggesting these facts is also available for 6 of the 11 taxa, although the authors of the relevant studies in every case failed to properly interpret their own results.

The relevant publications were those of Chapple *et al*. (2023) and Schembri *et al*. (2025).

All relevant eleven skink lizard species are formally named for the first time.

These are four new species within the genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, one within the genus *Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, three within the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 and three within the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Relevant taxonomic literature relevant to the putative species and nearest relatives was reviewed. This included publications that may have flagged potential senior synonyms or otherwise for the relevant taxa believed to be new to science.

This included of course those of Chapple *et al*. (2023) which flagged new species within the genera *Harrisoniascincus*, *Eroticoscincus* and *Ndurascincus* as well as that of Schembri *et al.* (2025) which was a mess of a paper, but in that mess managed to flag yet another three unnamed species within the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

The six relevant flagged species all appeared to be divergent from nearest relative (usually the same putative species) 2 or more million years prior.

The other five named species in this paper are all also believed to be divergent from nearest relative by 2 MYA or more due to their allopatry across known biogeographical barriers that have split other similarly affected taxa for 2 or more million years.

Following from these above cited papers the literature relevant to each of the genera was reviewed as were relevant published synonyms lists, this notably including Cogger *et al.* (1983), Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) and Wells (2002).

My frequent citing of Wells and Wellington's works in this paper is not out of any friendship or favour to them, but simply because of the inalienable fact that they have been at the centre of the relevant herpetological entities and their science for most of the last half century.

I note that in spite of the non-stop narrative against the two men, Richard Wells and Ross Wellington, the scientific record and evidence tends to validate them in the overwhelming majority of times their scientific conclusions are questioned or scrutinized.

I note that all four genera subject of this paper are "Wells and Wellington" or "Wells" ones, and also note that for 200 years prior lots of other herpetologists had the opportunity to name these same entities and chose not to.

In another 100 years the act of naming the relevant four genera will be derided by others as self-evident and obvious as part of a concerted campaign to deny Wells and Wellington any honour for their work and being "first".

Following the literature review, I then inspected thousands of specimens, live, dead and from quality photos of the relevant species from the relevant areas, including nearest related taxa.

So when a putative taxon was split, this included all populations of the relevant putative taxon.

For *Harrisoniascincus*, *Eroticoscincus*, *Anepischetosia* most Australian herpetologists have treated the genera as monotypic, so in effect I inspected all available specimens of each putative species.

The genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 is relatively confined in terms of number of species and all putative species from all parts of their known ranges (all exclusively in eastern Queensland) were inspected.

Literature relevant to the taxonomic and nomenclatural conclusions herein include Boulenger (1915), Cabrelli and Hughes (2015), Chapple *et al*. (2023), Cogger (2014), Cogger *et al*. (1983), Commonwealth of Australia (2023), Coventry (1970), Czechura (1981), Ehmann (1992), Fitzinger (1843), Greer (1974, 2017, 2025), Hoser (2022), Hutchinson (1979), Hutchinson *et al*. (1990), Ingram (1991), Ingram and Ehmann (1981), Lönnberg and Andersson (1913), Lucas and Frost (1894), Moussalli *et al*. (2005), Murphy (1995), Ride e*t al*. (1985, actually published in 1987) and Ride *et al.* (1999), Sadlier (1990), Sadlier *et al.* (2006), Schembri *et al.* (2025), Schuster (1981), Shea and Sadlier (1999), Stoll *et al*. (1964), Swan *et al*. (2017, 2022), Torkkola *et al.* (2022), Wells (2002), Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985), Wilson (2005, 2022), Wilson and Knowles (1988), Wilson and Swan (2021) and sources cited therein.

RESULTS

As already mentioned in the abstract and earlier in this paper, the final result is 11 newly identified and named species.

There remain (as of mid 2025) other unnamed species of skink in Australia not subject of this paper and in other genera.

These are four new species within the northeast New South Wales and southeast Queensland genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, one new species within the genus *Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985 from southeast Queensland, three new species within the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 all from south-east Queensland and three species within the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985, all from south-east New South Wales and northeast Victoria.

THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF THE RELEVANT TAXA

While none are believed to be endangered or threatened at the current time, all have relatively limited ranges as compared to other lizards of similar size that inhabit the east and southeast of Australia.

My own observations have seen significant shifts in species compositions of skinks in parts of south-east Australia.

The trend has been towards warm climate and open terrain specialists gaining advantage over others. This is not so much a manifestation of climate change and global warming, noting it is an easy culprit to blame, but rather the simple fact that human activity removes tree cover and makes the ground microhabitats considerably warmer for basking species like lizards.

By way of example the live-bearing cool climate skinks have been in serious decline for decades throughout most parts of the Dandenong Ranges east of Melbourne, an area of intense human activity in the form of housing, recreation and industrial-grade agriculture.

Egg-laying invasives have moved up now cleared valleys to higher elevations, where they occupy human habitation and lay eggs in places created by humans that are suitable for egg laying in an area otherwise too cool for eggs to hatch.

Such sites include concrete driveways, compost bins and the like.

Significant is that loose rock or boulders are rare in the Dandenong Ranges, but human activity includes the bringing into the Dandenong Ranges of rocks and boulders for driveways, walls, gardens and the like, effectively transforming a cold closed forest habitat into an open and by day warm habitat in which egg-laying lizards can live and breed in huge numbers.

While skinks of the genus *Anepischetosia* do not appear to be in decline in many areas, they are now virtually extinct in the type locality of Ringwood, Victoria, where the forests are mainly cleared for housing and invasive egg-laying skinks of the genera *Saproscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984, *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843 and *Allengreerus* Hoser, 2009 have taken over.

Remaining areas of apparently untouched forests are in turn invaded by a veritable tidal wave of invasive egg-laying lizards from adjacent areas of human occupation and the surviving live-bearers tend to eventually expire.

This is a pattern I see being repeated across Australia wherever there is a significant human footprint.

With small skinks effectively under the radar for government wildlife departments, wildlife rescue organisations and herpetologists alike, it is entirely plausible that small species of lizard may go from common to rare and then extinct literally under the radar and unseen until it is too late.

This is exactly why it is important that the 11 newly identified species be formally named and why their populations should be assessed and monitored into the future.

CONSERVATION AFTER THE PUBLICATION OF THESE DESCRIPTIONS

Human overpopulation and its consequences are without doubt the greatest long-term threat to the relevant species as outlined in Hoser (1989, 1991, 1993 and 1996). Delays in recognition of these species could jeopardise the long-term survival of the taxa as outlined by Hoser (2019a, 2019b) and sources cited therein.

Therefore attempts by taxonomic vandals, paedophiles, serial rapists, animal abusers and wildlife traffickers like the members of the Adam Britton and 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, Naish 2013, as regularly altered and amended, Thiele *et al.* 2020, Hammer and Thiele 2021, Wüster *et al*. 2021, Foley and Rutter 2020) to unlawfully suppress the recognition of these taxa on the basis they have a personal dislike for the person who formally named it/them should be resisted (e.g. Ceriaco *et al*. 2023, Cogger 2014, Dubois *et al*. 2019, Hoser 2001a, Mosyakin 2022 and Wellington 2015).

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, including for instance against Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985), (see for example Shine 1987, Shea 1987, Shea and Sadlier 1999), all of which were discredited long ago as outlined by Ceraico *et al*. (2023), Cogger (2014), Cotton (2014), Dubois *et al*. (2019), Hawkeswood (2021), Hołyński (1994, 2020), Hoser, (2001, 2007,

2009, 2012a-c, 2013, 2015a-f, 2019a-b, 2020a-b, 2021a-b, 2023, 2024a-b), ICZN (1991, 2001, 2021), Jiménez-Mejías *et al*. (2024), Kok (2023), Mosyakin (2022), Pethigayoda (2023), Wellington (2015), Winkler (2024), Zheng and Gold (2020) and sources cited therein.

Attempts to engage in acts of scientific fraud to try to rename any of these newly named taxa should be exposed and dealt with appropriately, as was done with David Williams, when in 2001 he attempted to rename and/or claim name authority for the species *Pailsus rossignolii* Hoser, 2000a.

He did this in the first instance in 2001, by altering versions of his online "paper" (as seen in Williams and Starkey 1999a, 1999b and 1999c), all of which were different and changed versions of a single paper originally published in the first form in 1999, claiming (without any evidence) to refute the existence of the species *Pailsus pailsei* Hoser, 1998 (see Hoser 2001a for details).

Claims by Shea and Sadlier (1999) and similar elsewhere by the Wüster gang to the effect that earlier published names are unavailable for zoological nomenclature are patently false and the making of these false claims is seriously counter to wildlife conservation (Hoser, 2007, Ceriaco *et al*. 2023, Cogger 2014, Cotton 2014, and so on).

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 (Ride *et al.* 1999 and ICZN 2012).

Material downloaded from the internet and cited anywhere in this paper was downloaded and checked most recently as of 21 April 2025, 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, excessive aging or abnormal skin reaction to chemical or other input. This includes the descriptions of the lizards not including pre-sloughing animals, which are often significantly different to the usual coloration for the specimen or species, being usually more whitish or dull.

Note that there is ordinarily some sexual dimorphism between adults of species within the relevant taxa in this genus.

References to tails are the original (unbroken and not regenerated) ones unless otherwise stated.

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.

Some material within descriptions may be repeated to ensure each fully complies with the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al*. 1999) and the 2012 amendments (ICZN 2012).

The "version of record" is the printed version and not pdf version. Both are identical in all materially relevant ways except for the fact that the images in the printed version may be in black and white, as opposed to colour as seen in the pdf version.

The people who assisted with provision of photos and other materials used within this paper or for research by me are also thanked for their assistances, for which they sought nothing in return.

Spellings of scientific names herein is intentional should not be altered unless mandatory under relevant rules of zoological nomenclature.

Some names are unusual or provocative and I make no apologies for this.

The relevant species are innocuous and "boring" and so unusual names may draw attention to them and their long-term conservation needs.

HARRISONIASCINCUS NOTACARTULA SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:E010C6D4-EE8C-4623-966A-9581B5B540C0

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.181968.001 collected from the Tooloona Falls Walk, Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.2306S., Longitude 153.1361 S.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.181965.001 collected from the Tooloona Falls Walk, Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.2306S., Longitude 153.1361 S.

Diagnosis: *Harrisoniascincus zia* (Ingram and Ehmann, 1981), was originally described as "*Leiolopisma zia*" and transferred to the monotypic genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

A molecular study of Chapple *et al.* (2023) found that this genus diverged from nearest relatives (*Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984) 22 MYA.

As a pair, these two genera diverged from next nearest relative 32.6 MYA.

This confirms the judgment of Wells and Wellington (1984 and 1985) as correct, although it took other Australian herpetologists 38 years to get to the same place.

While no one else has suggested that *Harrisoniascincus zia* as defined by Ingram and Ehmann (1981) is any more than a single species (*sensu* Cogger 2014), my own detailed studies and observations of the putative species have given rise to compelling evidence of at least 5 species involved, each allopatric and evolving separately and having diverged from one another at least 2 MYA.

The time divergence is based on the timeline of unsuitable habitats developing between the relevant populations.

This has obviously coincided with the increased aridification of environments and intervening habitat between extant populations at the commencement of the Pleistocene.

Harrisoniascincus zia is herein confined to the "Main Range", upland region of the New South Wales / Queensland border area, generally around the type locality of Mount Superbus State Forest in South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.13 S., Longitude 152.26 E. The extent of the range of this taxon is from Mistake Mountains, South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -27.915075 S., Longitude 152.334415 E. as the north and westernmost area of the range and Old Bonalbo, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.643042 S., Longitude 152.597103 E. and Woodenbong, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.3889 S., Longitude 152.6126 E. as the south and south-east extremity in the range.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Lamington Plateau in the Lamington National Park, south-west of the Gold Coast, Queensland, bound in the southwest by Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Border Ranges National Park in far north New South Wales and immediately adjacent Queensland, generally south and west of Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a taxon found on the Dorrigo Plateau and adjacent New England National Park, generally south of Tyringham, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.2354 S., Longitude 152.4990 E.

H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is a taxon from around Mount Hyland in the south, extending northwest into the Guy Fawkes River National Park in New South Wales, Australia.

The five preceding species are separated from one another by the following combinations of characters.

H. zia is brown on the head and dorsum. Colour is slightly darker on top of the head and lighter on the tail, but of the same colour for the entire length of the tail. There is no obvious dark spotting on the upper surface of the head.

There are irregularly scattered pale and poorly defined spots on the back of head, neck, dorsum and tail. The spots are expanded and less distinct on the tail.

On the dorsum there is barely any lightening of colour towards the dorsolateral edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the

interface with the dorsum.
Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is a blackish grey to greyish-brown colour, extending in similar form to the lower flank, where it rapidly transforms to the whitish ventral colour, with scattered darker spots extending below the general line, which is neither straight nor well defined.
Side of head is brownish, except for the upper labials which are whitish and with poorly defined grey etchings of the scales.
Infralabials and chin shields have scattered small grey spots of moderate definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise whitish-cream scale under the throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not central midline area.
The black mark on middle of the front of the snout only goes about halfway up the rostral scale.
H. notacartula sp. nov. is brown on the head and dorsum, with small, scattered irregular moderately well-defined irregularly shaped black spots or marks on head, neck and dorsum. There are widely scattered scales on the neck and dorsum that have lightened centres.
Colour of head is same as that of the body, while the upper surfaces of the tail is a different and slightly darker shade of brown to that of the upper body.
The side of the dorsolateral edge is formed into a well-defined light reddish-yellow stripe, which extends onto the original tail and widens to form a broad and ill-defined orange stripe running along the anterior half of the tail.
Side of head is brownish, including most of the upper labials which generally have tiny white patches near the lower edge.
On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.
Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is an even brown colour, this brown being slightly darker than that of the dorsum. It has numerous moderately well-defined evenly spaced whitish spots. This is effectively continuous to the latero-ventral edge, where the light whitish-cream ventral scales begin.
Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.
The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.
H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is readily separated from the two preceding species by having a strongly contrasting light brown colour on the dorsum and dark brownish black on the flanks. Upper surfaces of the limbs and most of the tail is reddish in colour with evenly spaced and well-defined whitish spots of moderate size.
Both anterior and posterior of the head have well-defined irregularly spaced black flecks and spots of moderate size. The line at the dorsolateral edge is whitish in colour with a slight reddish or yellowish tinge. Upper labials are generally blackish or grey, except for some minor light etchings.
White spots are on the lower flanks only. They are well spaced and irregularly spaced and of moderate size and reasonably well defined.
Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.
The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. and *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* are both readily separated from the three preceding species by the fact that the black mark on the rostral extends to the top of the scale to touch the posterior scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a lizard with a brown dorsum and numerous well-defined, moderately sized irregularly shaped, but mainly triangular, black spots. Flank is dark brownish-black and without any spots or light patches or alternatively in some specimens only scattered ill-defined, irregularly spaced light spots on the lower parts of the flank. The line on the dorsolateral edge of the dorsum is light brown, with reddish patches, extending onto the tail where it breaks up into reddish spots which also expand in size. Upper labials are light brown, not white and not with any white spots or white etching. The upper surfaces of the limbs are slightly russet.
Venter is a strong yellow colour in many specimens.
H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* but is separated from that species by having white marks on the lower parts of the upper labials, no russet on the upper surfaces of the limbs and dark as well as light spots on the lower flank.
The five preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: It is a rainforest dwelling, egg-laying smooth-scaled skink (50 mm snout vent length in adults 120 mm total length with original tail) with small and short limbs which fail to touch or overlap when adpressed, parietal shields in contact between the interparietal, transparent palpebral disc in a movable lower eyelid, a divided frontoparietal, supranasals absent, rostral-frontonasal suture wider than the frontal, 7-8 supraciliaries (rarely 6 or 9), 22-26 midbody scale rows, 14-17 rough and undivided lamellae under the fourth toe, a light or whitish edge to the dorsolateral edge from above, this being black when viewed from the side, dark spotting of the scales under the neck, whitish to bright yellow underneath, a dark vertical mid-rostral scale dash at the tip of the snout and mid-dorsals have 3-5 striations (modified from Ingram and Ehman, 1981, Cogger 2014 and altered somewhat).
The holotype of *H. zia* is depicted (dead and preserved) online at:
https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/b22acb07-c729-4841-868f-51b7361d11cf#gallery
H. notacartula sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson (2022) on page 160 at bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235425018/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235421358/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, both photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/46186788452/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”
and
https://images.ala.org.au/image/viewer?imageId=a618f58f-919f-41c4-92f6-9a6dd5f1879d
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Braden McDonald.
H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is depicted in life in Swan *et al*. (2022) on page 170 and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/50704237266/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/51787377470/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/152410663@N05/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Brenton von Takech, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/154630905@N06/26399127568/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nic Gambold.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 572 bottom, Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 339 bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/52588313555/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/pokerchampdaniel/3067286785/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Daniel O’Brien, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/25017572132/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/48840416382/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, both photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/14704572
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/260879613

from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Alexander Dudley.

Distribution: *H. notacartula sp. nov.* is effectively confined to the Lamington Plateau in the Lamington National Park, south-west of the Gold Coast, Queensland, bound in the southwest by Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

Etymology: Following the publication of the papers of Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) in which the authors established the name *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, Richard Shine and other would-be scientists decided to hatch a plan to steal legitimate "name authority" from Richard Wells and Ross Wellington.

Shine, Glenn Shea and others, calling themselves the "*Australian Society of Herpetologists*" petitioned the International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) to formally erase the works of Wells and Wellington from the scientific record. This application was filed with the ICZN in 1987 and ultimately in 1991 the ICZN voted near unanimously in favour of Wells and Wellington to squash the audacious application.

In anticipation of the Wells and Wellington works being erased from the scientific record, associates of Shea and Shine, within the same cohort decided to effectively steal from the works of Wells and Wellington and rename taxa they had already properly identified and named in accordance with the relevant rules that bind all zoologists, this being the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (second edition) (Stoll *et al*. 1964), being the relevant code in force at the time.

Note that Ride *et al.* 1985 was actually published in 1987 as detailed explicitly by Wilson (2023a-b).

This petition against Wells and Wellington effectively ran in the period from 1987 to 1991.

Hutchinson *et al*. (1990), the *et al.* consisting of a notorious group of liars, thieves, police-protected criminals and ego-driven pseudoscientists coined the objective junior synonym name *Cartula* for the same skinks.

They also lied by falsely claiming to have "discovered" the new genus and then peddled their name as the only available and correct ICZN name, which it never was.

This kind of action has since become to be known as taxonomic vandalism.

Besides breaching the established rules of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* including editions including and post-dating edition 2, from 1964, being also edition 3 from 1987 and edition four from year 2000, taxonomic vandalism also breaches Moral Rights provisions of Copyright laws including the Australian Copyright Act, 1968 at Section 195.

While it is inappropriate to recognize Hutchinson or the "*et al*." for their unscientific acts of taxonomic vandalism, it is appropriate that this destructive force be made known to others and the historical record of events should not be whitewashed or ignored.

So, by naming the relevant species *H. notacartula sp. nov.* the name itself is a straight extrapolation of the words "Not a Cartula" and reminds people of the correct genus level placement of the species when reading of the etymology of the species.

The other three illegally coined genus names by the thieves Hutchinson *et al*. (1990) were *Bartleia*, *Bassiana* and *Niveoscincus* all of which are junior synonyms and should therefore never be used as correct.

Further detail of the relevant preceding events can be found in Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985), (see for example Shine 1987, Shea 1987, Shea and Sadlier 1999, being the earlier attempts to legitimise the attempt to overwrite the Wells and Wellington names), all of which were discredited long ago as outlined by Ceraico *et al*. (2023), Cogger (2014), Cotton (2014), Dubois *et al*. (2019), Hawkeswood (2021), Hołyński (1994, 2020), Hoser, (2001, 2007, 2009, 2012a-c, 2013, 2015a-f, 2019a-b, 2020a-b, 2021a-b, 2023, 2024a-b), ICZN (1991, 2001, 2021), Jiménez-Mejías *et al*. (2024), Kok (2023), Mosyakin (2022), Pethigayoda (2023), Wellington (2015), Winkler (2024), Zheng and Gold (2020) and sources cited therein.

HARRISONIASCINCUS WILDLIFEDEPARTMENTSCUMORUM SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:613E0CDF-3935-41EB-9B0F-1D034AC58F4C

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.151812.001 collected from the Tweed Valley Lookout, Border Ranges National Park, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.2226 S., Longitude 153.0549 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Four preserved specimens at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, being specimen numbers R.133479.001, R.133480.001, R.133481.001 and R.151813.001 all collected from the Tweed Valley Lookout, Border Ranges National Park, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.2226 S., Longitude 153.0549 E.

Diagnosis: *Harrisoniascincus zia* (Ingram and Ehmann, 1981), was originally described as "*Leiolopisma zia*" and transferred to the monotypic genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

A molecular study of Chapple *et al*. (2023) found that this genus diverged from nearest relatives (*Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984) 22 MYA.

As a pair, these two genera diverged from next nearest relative 32.6 MYA.

This confirms the judgment of Wells and Wellington (1984 and 1985) as correct, although it took other Australian herpetologists 38 years to get to the same place.

While no one else has suggested that *Harrisoniascincus zia* as defined by Ingram and Ehmann (1981) is any more than a single species (*sensu* Cogger 2014), my own detailed studies and observations of the putative species have given rise to compelling evidence of at least 5 species involved, each allopatric and evolving separately and having diverged from one another at least 2 MYA.

The time divergence is based on the timeline of unsuitable habitats developing between the relevant populations.

This has obviously coincided with the increased aridification of environments and intervening habitat between extant populations at the commencement of the Pleistocene.

Harrisoniascincus zia is herein confined to the "Main Range", upland region of the New South Wales / Queensland border area, generally around the type locality of Mount Superbus State Forest in South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.13 S., Longitude 152.26 E. The extent of the range of this taxon is from Mistake Mountains, South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -27.915075 S., Longitude 152.334415 E. as the north and westernmost area of the range and Old Bonalbo, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.643042 S., Longitude 152.597103 E. and Woodenbong, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.3889 S., Longitude 152.6126 E. as the south and south-east extremity in the range.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Lamington Plateau in the Lamington National Park, south-west of the Gold Coast, Queensland, bound in the southwest by Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Border Ranges National Park in far north New South Wales and immediately adjacent Queensland, generally south and west of Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a taxon found on the Dorrigo Plateau and adjacent New England National Park, generally south of Tyringham, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.2354 S., Longitude 152.4990 E.

H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is a taxon from around Mount Hyland in the south, extending northwest into the Guy Fawkes River National Park in New South Wales, Australia.

The five preceding species are separated from one another by the following combinations of characters.

H. zia is brown on the head and dorsum. Colour is slightly darker on top of the head and lighter on the tail, but of the same colour for the entire length of the tail. There is no obvious dark spotting on the upper surface of the head.

There are irregularly scattered pale and poorly defined spots on the back of head, neck, dorsum and tail. The spots are expanded and less distinct on the tail.

On the dorsum there is barely any lightening of colour towards the dorsolateral edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.

Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is a blackish grey to greyish-brown colour, extending in similar form to the lower flank, where it rapidly transforms to the whitish ventral colour, with scattered darker spots extending below the general line, which is neither straight nor well defined.

Side of head is brownish, except for the upper labials which are whitish and with poorly defined grey etchings of the scales.
Infralabials and chin shields have scattered small grey spots of moderate definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise whitish-cream scale under the throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not central midline area.
The black mark on middle of the front of the snout only goes about halfway up the rostral scale.
H. notacartula sp. nov. is brown on the head and dorsum, with small, scattered irregular moderately well-defined irregularly shaped black spots or marks on head, neck and dorsum. There are widely scattered scales on the neck and dorsum that have lightened centres.
Colour of head is same as that of the body, while the upper surfaces of the tail is a different and slightly darker shade of brown to that of the upper body.
The side of the dorsolateral edge is formed into a well-defined light reddish-yellow stripe, which extends onto the original tail and widens to form a broad and ill-defined orange stripe running along the anterior half of the tail.
Side of head is brownish, including most of the upper labials which generally have tiny white patches near the lower edge.
On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.
Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is an even brown colour, this brown being slightly darker than that of the dorsum. It has numerous moderately well-defined evenly spaced whitish spots. This is effectively continuous to the latero-ventral edge, where the light whitish-cream ventral scales begin.
Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.
The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.
H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is readily separated from the two preceding species by having a strongly contrasting light brown colour on the dorsum and dark brownish black on the flanks. Upper surfaces of the limbs and most of the tail is reddish in colour with evenly spaced and well-defined whitish spots of moderate size.
Both anterior and posterior of the head have well-defined irregularly spaced black flecks and spots of moderate size. The line at the dorsolateral edge is whitish in colour with a slight reddish or yellowish tinge. Upper labials are generally blackish or grey, except for some minor light etchings.
White spots are on the lower flanks only. They are well spaced and irregularly spaced and of moderate size and reasonably well defined.
Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.
The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. and *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* are both readily separated from the three preceding species by the fact that the black mark on the rostral extends to the top of the scale to touch the posterior scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a lizard with a brown dorsum and numerous well-defined, moderately sized irregularly shaped, but mainly triangular, black spots. Flank is dark brownish-black and without any spots or light patches or alternatively in some specimens only scattered ill-defined, irregularly spaced light spots on the lower parts of the flank. The line on the dorsolateral edge of the dorsum is light brown, with reddish patches, extending onto the tail where it breaks up into reddish spots which also expand in size. Upper labials are light brown, not white and not with any white spots or white etching. The upper surfaces of the limbs are slightly russet.
Venter is a strong yellow colour in many specimens.
H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* but is separated from that species by having white marks on the lower parts of the upper labials, no russet on the upper surfaces of the limbs and dark as well as light spots on the lower flank.

The five preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: It is a rainforest dwelling, egg-laying smooth-scaled skink (50 mm snout vent length in adults 120 mm total length with original tail) with small and short limbs which fail to touch or overlap when adpressed, parietal shields in contact between the interparietal, transparent palpebral disc in a movable lower eyelid, a divided frontoparietal, supranasals absent, rostral-frontonasal suture wider than the frontal, 7-8 supraciliaries (rarely 6 or 9), 22-26 midbody scale rows, 14-17 rough and undivided lamellae under the fourth toe, a light or whitish edge to the dorsolateral edge from above, this being black when viewed from the side, dark spotting of the scales under the neck, whitish to bright yellow underneath, a dark vertical mid-rostral scale dash at the tip of the snout and mid-dorsals have 3-5 striations (modified from Ingram and Ehman, 1981, Cogger 2014 and altered somewhat).
The holotype of *H. zia* is depicted (dead and preserved) online at:
https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/b22acb07-c729-4841-868f-51b7361d11cf#gallery
H. notacartula sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson (2022) on page 160 at bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235425018/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235421358/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, both photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/46186788452/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”
and
https://images.ala.org.au/image/viewer?imageId=a618f58f-919f-41c4-92f6-9a6dd5f1879d
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Braden McDonald.
H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is depicted in life in Swan *et al.* (2022) on page 170 and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/50704237266/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/51787377470/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/152410663@N05/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Brenton von Takech, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/154630905@N06/26399127568/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nic Gambold.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 572 bottom, Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 339 bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/52588313555/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/pokerchampdaniel/3067286785/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Daniel O’Brien, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/25017572132/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/48840416382/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, both photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/14704572
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/260879613
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Alexander Dudley.
Distribution: *H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov.* is effectively confined to the Border Ranges National Park in far north New South Wales and immediately adjacent Queensland, generally south and west of Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

Etymology: *H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov.* is named in recognition of evil, corrupt and dishonest wildlife department bureaucrats in Australia who have been actively working against wildlife conservation for decades.

The corrupt and dishonest self-serving bureaucrats in this department are colloquially referred to as "*scum*".

Further details are in Hoser (1989, 1991, 1993 and 1996), but I note here that as of year 2025, the corruption remains as entrenched as it has ever been (or was in the 1990's) and the negative conservation impacts, including extinctions also continue.

The etymology highlights this important public issue in the hope that at some stage the extremely serious public service corruption in terms of Australian wildlife departments is actually removed, although frankly I see this as highly unlikely as it is completely entrenched.

HARRISONIASCINCUS NSWPOLICEARECROOKS SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:CA17B7A5-235A-4511-ACF1-FF6E0138ECFB

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.130015.001 collected from The Glade at Dorrigo National Park, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.37166 S., Longitude 152.72943 E.

This government owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Three preserved specimens at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen numbers R.130016.001, R.130017.001 and R.130046.001 all collected from The Glade at Dorrigo National Park, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.37166 S., Longitude 152.72943 E.

This government owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Diagnosis: *Harrisoniascincus zia* (Ingram and Ehmann, 1981), was originally described as "*Leiolopisma zia*" and transferred to the monotypic genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

A molecular study of Chapple *et al.* (2023) found that this genus diverged from nearest relatives (*Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984) 22 MYA.

As a pair, these two genera diverged from next nearest relative 32.6 MYA.

This confirms the judgment of Wells and Wellington (1984 and 1985) as correct, although it took other Australian herpetologists 38 years to get to the same place.

While no one else has suggested that *Harrisoniascincus zia* as defined by Ingram and Ehmann (1981) is any more than a single species (*sensu* Cogger 2014), my own detailed studies and observations of the putative species have given rise to compelling evidence of at least 5 species involved, each allopatric and evolving separately and having diverged from one another at least 2 MYA.

The time divergence is based on the timeline of unsuitable habitats developing between the relevant populations.

This has obviously coincided with the increased aridification of environments and intervening habitat between extant populations at the commencement of the Pleistocene.

Harrisoniascincus zia is herein confined to the "Main Range", upland region of the New South Wales / Queensland border area, generally around the type locality of Mount Superbus State Forest in South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.13 S., Longitude 152.26 E. The extent of the range of this taxon is from Mistake Mountains, South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -27.915075 S., Longitude 152.334415 E. as the north and westernmost area of the range and Old Bonalbo, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.643042 S., Longitude 152.597103 E. and Woodenbong, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.3889 S., Longitude 152.6126 E. as the south and south-east extremity in the range.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Lamington Plateau in the Lamington National Park, south-west of the Gold Coast, Queensland, bound in the southwest by Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Border Ranges National Park in far north New South Wales and immediately adjacent Queensland, generally south and west of Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a taxon found on the Dorrigo Plateau and adjacent New England National Park, generally south of Tyringham, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.2354 S., Longitude 152.4990 E.

H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is a taxon from around Mount Hyland in the south, extending northwest into the Guy Fawkes River National Park in New South Wales, Australia.

The five preceding species are separated from one another by the following combinations of characters.

H. zia is brown on the head and dorsum. Colour is slightly darker on top of the head and lighter on the tail, but of the same colour for the entire length of the tail. There is no obvious dark spotting on the upper surface of the head.

There are irregularly scattered pale and poorly defined spots on the back of head, neck, dorsum and tail. The spots are expanded and less distinct on the tail.

On the dorsum there is barely any lightening of colour towards the dorsolateral edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.

Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is a blackish grey to greyish-brown colour, extending in similar form to the lower flank, where it rapidly transforms to the whitish ventral colour, with scattered darker spots extending below the general line, which is neither straight nor well defined.

Side of head is brownish, except for the upper labials which are whitish and with poorly defined grey etchings of the scales.

Infralabials and chin shields have scattered small grey spots of moderate definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise whitish-cream scale under the throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not central midline area.

The black mark on middle of the front of the snout only goes about halfway up the rostral scale.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is brown on the head and dorsum, with small, scattered irregular moderately well-defined irregularly shaped black spots or marks on head, neck and dorsum. There are widely scattered scales on the neck and dorsum that have lightened centres.

Colour of head is same as that of the body, while the upper surfaces of the tail is a different and slightly darker shade of brown to that of the upper body.

The side of the dorsolateral edge is formed into a well-defined light reddish-yellow stripe, which extends onto the original tail and widens to form a broad and ill-defined orange stripe running along the anterior half of the tail.

Side of head is brownish, including most of the upper labials which generally have tiny white patches near the lower edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.

Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is an even brown colour, this brown being slightly darker than that of the dorsum. It has numerous moderately well-defined evenly spaced whitish spots. This is effectively continuous to the latero-ventral edge, where the light whitish-cream ventral scales begin.

Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.

The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is readily separated from the two preceding species by having a strongly contrasting light brown colour on the dorsum and dark brownish black on the flanks. Upper surfaces of the limbs and most of the tail is reddish in colour with evenly spaced and well-defined whitish spots of moderate size.

Both anterior and posterior of the head have well-defined irregularly spaced black flecks and spots of moderate size. The line at the dorsolateral edge is whitish in colour with a slight reddish or yellowish tinge. Upper labials are generally blackish or grey, except for some minor light etchings.

White spots are on the lower flanks only. They are well spaced and irregularly spaced and of moderate size and reasonably well defined.

Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.

The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of

the way up the rostral scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. and *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* are both readily separated from the three preceding species by the fact that the black mark on the rostral extends to the top of the scale to touch the posterior scale.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a lizard with a brown dorsum and numerous well-defined, moderately sized irregularly shaped, but mainly triangular, black spots. Flank is dark brownish-black and without any spots or light patches or alternatively in some specimens only scattered ill-defined, irregularly spaced light spots on the lower parts of the flank. The line on the dorsolateral edge of the dorsum is light brown, with reddish patches, extending onto the tail where it breaks up into reddish spots which also expand in size. Upper labials are light brown, not white and not with any white spots or white etching. The upper surfaces of the limbs are slightly russet.
Venter is a strong yellow colour in many specimens.
H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* but is separated from that species by having white marks on the lower parts of the upper labials, no russet on the upper surfaces of the limbs and dark as well as light spots on the lower flank.
The five preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: It is a rainforest dwelling, egg-laying smooth-scaled skink (50 mm snout vent length in adults 120 mm total length with original tail) with small and short limbs which fail to touch or overlap when adpressed, parietal shields in contact between the interparietal, transparent palpebral disc in a movable lower eyelid, a divided frontoparietal, supranasals absent, rostral-frontonasal suture wider than the frontal, 7-8 supraciliaries (rarely 6 or 9), 22-26 midbody scale rows, 14-17 rough and undivided lamellae under the fourth toe, a light or whitish edge to the dorsolateral edge from above, this being black when viewed from the side, dark spotting of the scales under the neck, whitish to bright yellow underneath, a dark vertical mid-rostral scale dash at the tip of the snout and mid-dorsals have 3-5 striations (modified from Ingram and Ehman, 1981, Cogger 2014 and altered somewhat).
The holotype of *H. zia* is depicted (dead and preserved) online at:
https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/b22acb07-c729-4841-868f-51b7361d11cf#gallery
H. notacartula sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson (2022) on page 160 at bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235425018/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235421358/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, both photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/46186788452/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”
and
https://images.ala.org.au/image/viewer?imageId=a618f58f-919f-41c4-92f6-9a6dd5f1879d
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Braden McDonald.
H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is depicted in life in Swan *et al.* (2022) on page 170 and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/50704237266/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/51787377470/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by David “Moloch05”, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/152410663@N05/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Brenton von Takech, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/154630905@N06/26399127568/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nic Gambold.
H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 572 bottom, Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 339 bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/52588313555/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/pokerchampdaniel/3067286785/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Daniel O’Brien, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/25017572132/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/48840416382/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, both photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/14704572
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/260879613
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Alexander Dudley.
Distribution: *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* is a taxon found on the Dorrigo Plateau and adjacent New England National Park, generally south of Tyringham, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.2354 S., Longitude 152.4990 E.
Etymology: The species name *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* pronounced “en-ses-double-ewe-police-are-crooks” is a direct account and recognition of the majority of police officers employed by the New South Wales Police force and has been the case for decades.
This is not just an academic statement of fact.
The crime and corruption run by these taxpayer funded thugs has devastating impacts on Australian society and in this case in New South Wales, where police corruption is even notorious by Australian standards!
Innocent people are bashed, robbed, raped and pillaged, while drug dealers, pedophiles, rapists and other low-life scum are actively protected by the same crooked police.
By way of example, notorious dog rapist Adam Britton, one of the notorious Wolfgang Wüster gang, was actively protected by corrupt police across Australia for decades.
They allowed him to kidnap people’s pet dogs, anally rape them and put videos of his debased actions on the dark web for decades.
While Britton and the Wüster gang’s actions have been public knowledge for decades, their corrupt police protection allowed them to evade ever getting arrested or charged.
Britton eventually got charged and jailed only because he fell out with other members of the Wuster gang over the division of millions of dollars scammed in government grants frauds.
This falling out between Britton and NAME DELETED was over money of course, with a claim he had taken several million from NAME DELETED who was another gang member.
I have NAME DELETED’s full name and full details, but this is all suppressed by court order, for which a breach would be jail for an indefinite period.
This falling out led to the gang getting police to drop their protection and have Adam Britton charged with dozens of counts.
Britton pled guilty in court and was sentenced to 10 years and five months in prison in 2024, with an earliest possible release date of about 2028.
He is only one of over 400 other members of the Wolfgang Wüster gang who have publicly boasted of similar activity and continue to operate with protection of corrupt police in New South Wales, other Australian states and even in other countries.
By having an etymology of an otherwise insignificant reptile species making an important statement about police being law breaking crooks in New South Wales, it is hoped that by recognizing the problem of police corruption in New South Wales, that something may ultimately be done to fix this serious and life destroying problem. Further details can be found in Hoser (1993, 1994, 1996, 1999a-b, 2000a).

HARRISONIASCINCUS WELLSANDWELLINGTONORUM SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:4AD11A1A-1C1C-4C04-A1D6-9051BE5A9723

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.54619 collected from Marengo State Forest, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.116 S., Longitude 152.416 E.

This government owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Diagnosis: *Harrisoniascincus zia* (Ingram and Ehmann, 1981), was originally described as "*Leiolopisma zia*" and transferred to the monotypic genus *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985.

A molecular study of Chapple *et al.* (2023) found that this genus diverged from nearest relatives (*Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984) 22 MYA.

As a pair, these two genera diverged from next nearest relative 32.6 MYA.

This confirms the judgment of Wells and Wellington (1984 and 1985) as correct, although it took other Australian herpetologists 38 years to get to the same place.

While no one else has suggested that *Harrisoniascincus zia* as defined by Ingram and Ehmann (1981) is any more than a single species (*sensu* Cogger 2014), my own detailed studies and observations of the putative species have given rise to compelling evidence of at least 5 species involved, each allopatric and evolving separately and having diverged from one another at least 2 MYA.

The time divergence is based on the timeline of unsuitable habitats developing between the relevant populations.

This has obviously coincided with the increased aridification of environments and intervening habitat between extant populations at the commencement of the Pleistocene.

Harrisoniascincus zia is herein confined to the "Main Range", upland region of the New South Wales / Queensland border area, generally around the type locality of Mount Superbus State Forest in South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -28.13 S., Longitude 152.26 E. The extent of the range of this taxon is from Mistake Mountains, South-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -27.915075 S., Longitude 152.334415 E. as the north and westernmost area of the range and Old Bonalbo, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.643042 S., Longitude 152.597103 E. and Woodenbong, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -28.3889 S., Longitude 152.6126 E. as the south and south-east extremity in the range.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Lamington Plateau in the Lamington National Park, south-west of the Gold Coast, Queensland, bound in the southwest by Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is effectively confined to the Border Ranges National Park in far north New South Wales and immediately adjacent Queensland, generally south and west of Widgee Creek and the Oxley River.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a taxon found on the Dorrigo Plateau and adjacent New England National Park, generally south of Tyringham, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -30.2354 S., Longitude 152.4990 E.

H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is a taxon from around Mount Hyland in the south, extending northwest into the Guy Fawkes River National Park in New South Wales, Australia.

The five preceding species are separated from one another by the following combinations of characters.

H. zia is brown on the head and dorsum. Colour is slightly darker on top of the head and lighter on the tail, but of the same colour for the entire length of the tail. There is no obvious dark spotting on the upper surface of the head.

There are irregularly scattered pale and poorly defined spots on the back of head, neck, dorsum and tail. The spots are expanded and less distinct on the tail.

On the dorsum there is barely any lightening of colour towards the dorsolateral edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.

Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is a blackish grey to greyish-brown colour, extending in similar form to the lower flank, where it rapidly transforms to the whitish ventral colour, with scattered darker spots extending below the general line, which is neither straight nor well defined.

Side of head is brownish, except for the upper labials which are whitish and with poorly defined grey etchings of the scales.

Infralabials and chin shields have scattered small grey spots of moderate definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise whitish-cream scale under the throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not central midline area.

The black mark on middle of the front of the snout only goes about halfway up the rostral scale.

H. notacartula sp. nov. is brown on the head and dorsum, with small, scattered irregular moderately well-defined irregularly shaped black spots or marks on head, neck and dorsum. There are widely scattered scales on the neck and dorsum that have lightened centres. Colour of head is same as that of the body, while the upper surfaces of the tail is a different and slightly darker shade of brown to that of the upper body.

The side of the dorsolateral edge is formed into a well-defined light reddish-yellow stripe, which extends onto the original tail and widens to form a broad and ill-defined orange stripe running along the anterior half of the tail.

Side of head is brownish, including most of the upper labials which generally have tiny white patches near the lower edge.

On the lateral edge it is black at the top, there being a line on the interface with the dorsum.

Below this moderately well-defined line, most of the flank is an even brown colour, this brown being slightly darker than that of the dorsum. It has numerous moderately well-defined evenly spaced whitish spots. This is effectively continuous to the latero-ventral edge, where the light whitish-cream ventral scales begin.

Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.

The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is readily separated from the two preceding species by having a strongly contrasting light brown colour on the dorsum and dark brownish black on the flanks. Upper surfaces of the limbs and most of the tail is reddish in colour with evenly spaced and well-defined whitish spots of moderate size.

Both anterior and posterior of the head have well-defined irregularly spaced black flecks and spots of moderate size. The line at the dorsolateral edge is whitish in colour with a slight reddish or yellowish tinge. Upper labials are generally blackish or grey, except for some minor light etchings.

White spots are on the lower flanks only. They are well spaced and irregularly spaced and of moderate size and reasonably well defined.

Infralabials and chin shields have well-defined greyish-black spots of high definition. These are well defined and at the centre of each otherwise white scale under the chin and throat. Belly and under tail have off-white scales with semi-distinct and scattered greyish spots, mainly on the sides and not the central midline area.

The black mark on the front of the snout only goes about two thirds of the way up the rostral scale.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. and *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* are both readily separated from the three preceding species by the fact that the black mark on the rostral extends to the top of the scale to touch the posterior scale.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is a lizard with a brown dorsum and numerous well-defined, moderately sized irregularly shaped, but mainly triangular, black spots. Flank is dark brownish-black and without any spots or light patches or alternatively in some specimens only scattered ill-defined, irregularly spaced light spots on the lower parts of the flank. The line on the dorsolateral edge of the dorsum is light brown, with reddish patches, extending onto the tail where it breaks up into reddish spots which also expand in size. Upper labials are light brown, not white and not with any white spots or white etching. The upper surfaces of the limbs are slightly russet.

Venter is a strong yellow colour in many specimens.

H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov.* but is separated from that species by having white marks on the lower parts of the upper labials, no russet on the upper surfaces of the limbs and dark as well as light spots on the lower flank.

The five preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: It is a rainforest dwelling, egg-laying smooth-scaled skink (50 mm snout vent length in adults 120 mm total length with original tail) with small and short limbs which fail to touch or overlap when adpressed, parietal shields in contact between the interparietal, transparent palpebral disc in a movable lower eyelid, a divided frontoparietal, supranasals absent, rostral-frontonasal suture wider than the frontal,

7-8 supraciliaries (rarely 6 or 9), 22-26 midbody scale rows, 14-17 rough and undivided lamellae under the fourth toe, a light or whitish edge to the dorsolateral edge from above, this being black when viewed from the side, dark spotting of the scales under the neck, whitish to bright yellow underneath, a dark vertical mid-rostral scale dash at the tip of the snout and mid-dorsals have 3-5 striations (modified from Ingram and Ehman, 1981, Cogger 2014 and altered somewhat).

The holotype of *H. zia* is depicted (dead and preserved) online at:
https://bie.ala.org.au/species/https://biodiversity.org.au/afd/taxa/b22acb07-c729-4841-868f-51b7361d11cf#gallery

H. notacartula sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson (2022) on page 160 at bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235425018/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/26235421358/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, both photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/46186788452/
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by David "Moloch05"
and
https://images.ala.org.au/image/viewer?imageId=a618f58f-919f-41c4-92f6-9a6dd5f1879d
from Lamington National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Braden McDonald.

H. wildlifedepartmentscumorum sp. nov. is depicted in life in Swan *et al.* (2022) on page 170 and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/50704237266/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/51787377470/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by David "Moloch05", and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/152410663@N05/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Brenton von Takech, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/154630905@N06/26399127568/
from the Border Ranges, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nic Gambold.

H. nswpolicearecrooks sp. nov. is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 572 bottom, Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 339 bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/52588313555/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/pokerchampdaniel/3067286785/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Daniel O'Brien, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/25017572132/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/48840416382/
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, both photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/14704572
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/260879613
from Dorrigo, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Alexander Dudley.

Distribution: *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* is a taxon from around Mount Hyland in the south, extending northwest into the Guy Fawkes River National Park in New South Wales, Australia.

Etymology: *H. wellsandwellingtonorum sp. nov.* is named in honor of Richard Walter Wells and Cliff Ross Wellington, two eminent Australian herpetologists, originally from Sydney, New South Wales, but now living in northern New South Wales in recognition of their significant contributions to Australian herpetology.
See Hoser (2007) for details.

EROTICOSCINCUS SEXY SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:FD3A2EA4-2236-4657-B4D1-8597308D9283

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen number J80524 collected from Cedars Road, South Bingera, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -24.986667 S., Longitude 152.200278 E.
This government owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Three preserved specimens at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen numbers J74202, J74203 and J74204 all collected from 5.5 km southeast of One Tree Hill, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -25.283333 S., Longitude 151.916667 E.

Diagnosis: Until now the genus *Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984 has been treated by all publishing authors as being of a single species, namely *E. graciloides* (Lönnberg and Andersson, 1913).
This description effectively splits *E. graciloides* as currently known into two separate species.
Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov. being a taxon restricted to the Burnett River Valley in south-east Queensland (generally south-west of Bundaberg in Queensland) is readily separated from *E. graciloides* from the north side of the Brisbane River Valley to the Sunshine Coast, south-east Queensland by the following combination of characters:
Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov. is plain brown on top and without the characteristic tiny white spots on dorsum and flanks seen on *E. graciloides.*
Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov. dorsally has a dark brown snout at the front of the head before the eyes, is light reddish brown on the back of the head and anterior body, dark chocolate brown from the upper body to the base of the tail, where it then turns a yellowish-brown colour.
By contrast *E. graciloides* has a very dark, blackish brown head and neck and slightly lighter body and with a slightly russet tail.
Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov. has a neck between ear and front leg that is mainly whitish in colour, with scattered dark spots, versus mainly dark in colour and with scattered white spots in *E. graciloides.*
The sides of the tail of *Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov*. have a well broken dark line running along either side, versus one that is either continuous or with small breaks only in *E. graciloides*.
The two preceding species, constituting the entirety of the genus *Eroticoscincus* Wells and Wellington, 1984 are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:
A genus of small cryptozoic, thigmothermic, rainforest-inhabiting skinks confined to south-eastern Queensland, and distinguished by the following combination of characters: fingers four, toes five; alpha palate; moveable eylid with undivided palpebral disk; lacks prefrontals; nasals laterally placed; limbs fail to meet when adpressed; anals enlarged; loreal single; four supraoculars; labials excluded from orbital contact by suboculars; paravertebrals largest-; punctiform nasal; nasals laterally displaced by frontonasal; lacks frontonasal suture long and curved; frontal contacts first and second supraoculars; two infralabials contact mental; pair of nuchals border each parietal; one or two temporals border each parietal; two presuboculars; complete sub-ocular series; loreal single; ear opening about size of nostril, being quite small and lacking any lobules; mid-body scales 20-22 rows; sub-digital lamellae have paired callosities (12-15 under 4th toe); hemipenes unilobed with undivided sulcus that terminates apically; iris coppery bronze; oviparous." (taken from Wells and Wellington, 1984).
(PS - Thigmothermy involves heat conduction to the reptile body by direct contact with a relatively warm substratum).
The single putative taxon *E. graciloides* was originally named as "*Lygosoma graciloides*" but moved between several genera by various authors before Wells and Wellington (1984) assigned the species to a new monotypic genus.
A molecular study of Chapple *et al*. (2023) found that this genus diverged from nearest relatives being *Harrisoniascincus* Wells and Wellington, 1985, some 22 MYA.
As a pair, these two genera diverged from next nearest relative 32.6 MYA.
This confirms the taxonomic and nomenclatural judgments of Wells and Wellington (1984 and 1985) as correct, although it took many other Australian herpetologists about 38 years to get to the same

place.
My inspection of specimens from near Bundaberg, Queensland over decades, found them to be morphologically divergent from those further south, as in from the Sunshine Coast area south to north of the Brisbane River, this being the remainder of the range for the putative species.
In fact the northern populations from around Bundaberg have only been generally known to most herpetologists since about 1995, a date well after the taxonomy of the putative species *H. graciloides* was effectively "settled" including as a result of major papers by Czechura (1981) and then Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) who reassigned the genus for the putative species.
Schembri *et al*. (2025) published a paper on the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985.
That paper was dominantly a rehash of the findings of Hoser (2022) to the effect that there were several species in the genus *Anepischetosia* (as opposed to one as generally believed by herpetologists until 2022, except for Wells and Wellington, who had consistently asserted at least three since 1984/1985).
Yet quite scandalously Schembri *et al*. (2025) failed to cite the earlier Hoser (2022) paper in any way, shape or form, which was a serious breach of the Australian Copyright Act 1968, Section 195. They instead faked their findings of multiple species in *Anepischetosia* as their own original work and findings!
Significant in that paper of Schembri *et al*. (2025) were uncalibrated sequences for *H. graciloides* published in one of their figures, which I noted indicated a significant break in the populations of the species *H. graciloides* not in accordance with mere geographical distance between samples.
Samples across 100 km in a straight line were all closely matched while the Bundaberg sample, was widely divergent.
In other words, the genetic distance appeared to match the morphological basis for asserting that there were two species involved.
This distance also appeared to equate with similar divergences for identified *Anepischetosia* species that Schembri *et al*. (2025) had asserted (correctly and in line with Hoser 2022) were in the order of 2MYA or greater.
The two available names, "*Lygosoma graciloides*", with a type locality of Blackall Range, Queensland, Australia, and "*Lygosoma scharfii* Boulenger, 1915" with a type locality of "from One Tree Hill, near Brisbane" are both of the southern population and not the undescribed northern form, which is why it is named herein as new.
In terms of the location "One Tree Hill", there are several of these in South-east Queensland, but that Boulenger's specimen was of the southern form is made clear several ways.
The colour description from Boulenger (1915) of "*dark brown above, with lighter dots*" only matches specimens of the southern (nominate) form.
In addition Boulenger (1915) noted the specimen was "*collected by Dr. R. Scharff on his visit to Australia with the British Association and submitted to me for identification*,".
The relevant collection diaries are published on the internet at:
https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/australia-1914-baas-british-association-advancement-science-meeting-sydney-etc
and taken from the diaries of Henry BALFOUR (1863-1939), anthropologist and museum curator Australia, 1914, where speaks of his travels with "*Dr. R. Scharff* " and where he wrote:
"*Tues Sept 1*
Motored with Mr Brown, Miss Griffiths + Lander to top of One Tree Hill for the view over Brisbane which is very fine. Rather misty in distance, but could see from Ipswich on one side to Moreton Bay on the other with the whole of Brisbane + its winding river below."
This also places the "One Tree Hill" referred to by Boulenger, as being very close to the centre of Brisbane and nowhere near the "One Tree Hill" location of the paratypes for the species newly named herein (near Bundaberg in Queensland). One cannot see the view described in that diary from anywhere other than Brisbane and immediate environs and certainly not more than 100 km, 200 km or 300 km in a straight line to the north.
The view described by Henry BALFOUR matches exactly that seen at Mount Coot-tha, which was within walking distance of where I lived in 1987 at Taringa, Brisbane and a place I regularly visited.
Furthermore, Mount Coot-tha was previously known as One-Tree-Hill, confirming the collection location of Boulenger's specimen.

Distribution: *Eroticoscincus sexy sp. nov*. is a taxon apparently restricted to the Burnett River Valley in south-east Queensland (generally south-west of Bundaberg in Queensland).
E. graciloides is found from the north side of the Brisbane River Valley to the Sunshine Coast, south-east Queensland.
Etymology: In 2019, when telling Queensland herpetologist Paul Woolf of my finding of this new lizard species, he exclaimed "sexy" and hence the etymology.

NDURASCINCUS MERCEICAI SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:FBCE9857-3680-471E-B710-5623F85750B3

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen number J49747 collected from Kondalilla National Park, south-east Queensland, Australia, Latitude -25.3 S., Longitude 152.766667 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.
Paratypes: Two preserved specimens at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, being specimen number J27721 collected from Little Yabba Creek, via Kenilworth, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -26.6 S., Longitude 152.583333 E., and specimen number J35198 collected from Dundowran, via Hervey Bay, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -25.3 S., Longitude 152.766667 E.
Diagnosis: The putative species *Lampropholis adonis* Ingram, 1991 as described by Ingram (1991) was one of several species transferred to the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002.
The genus had a type species of *Lampropholis adonis* Ingram, 1981.
A recent phylogeny of the relevant species by Brandley *et al*. (2015) effectively confirmed a divergence of over 10 MYA from the main *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843 group (type species being *L. guichenoti* Duméril and Bibron, 1839), confirming the generic placement within *Ndurascincus* as correct.
Published gene sequences of the putative species (e.g. Brandley *et al*. 2015) indicated two species not one being the correct situation.
The northern (type) population occurs from Bowen in the north, along the Queensland coast and near hills and mountains to Marlborough in the south. The hitherto unnamed southern form, herein named as *Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov.* is found from Raglan in the north, along the Queensland coast and near hills and mountains to the Sunshine Coast, Queensland.
Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov. is separated from *Ndurascincus adonis* (Ingram, 1991) by the presence of light blackish speckling on the flank and only on the very anterior part of the dorsal edge of the (original) tail, versus heavy black speckling on the flanks and sides of the (original) tail, the speckling on the tail forming a thick black line for most of the length of the tail (on the sides of the tail) in *N. adonis*; limited and faint dark spotting on the top of the head in *N. merceicai sp. nov.*, versus obvious and prominent black spots on the top of the head in *N. adonis.*
There is a strong reddish orange colour on the anterior lower parts of the flanks of breeding adult male *N. merceicai sp. nov.* versus yellowish brown in *N. adonis.*
White spotting extends along the length of the (original) tail on top and sides in *N. merceicai sp. nov.* versus not so in *N. adonis.*
The two preceding species are readily separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: A robustly built small skink with a 50 mm snout-vent length in adults and original tail about 1.5 times longer. Scales are either smooth or occasionally with tiny striations. Interparietal fused with frontoparietals to form one scale, seven supralabials, seven supraciliaries, 4 supraoculars, 25-31 midbody rows; transparent disc of lower eyelid is much smaller than the eye; 19-25 smooth subdigital lamellae under the fourth toe; short hindlimbs; dorsum mainly brown with semidistinct light or dark flecks or spots and with darker upper lateral surface coloration grading evenly into a lighter lower lateral coloration. A midlateral light brown to white line or series of spots is never present. There are no vertebral lines or stripes.
Ndurascincus adonis is depicted in life in Wilson (2022) on page 163 left from Eungella, Queensland, and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/julesfarquhar/53358853036/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/julesfarquhar/53359311895/
from Clarke Range, Queensland, Australia, both photographs by taxonomic vandal Jules Farquhar, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/58349528@N02/53884332633/

from Clarke Range, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Jordan Mulder, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/32543189214/
from Eungella National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/53279339865/
from Airlie Beach, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Justin Wright, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/edwardevans/53697916348/
from Eungella National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Edward Evans.
Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 345 bottom from Yandina, Queensland, Australia and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/143696880@N06/53933118544/
from Kondalilla National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Alexander Dudley, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/53078885834/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/53079184283/
Maleny, Queensland, Australia, both photographs by Brenden Schembri, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/49106739756/
from Bulburin National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale.

Distribution: *Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov.* is found from Raglan in the north, along the Queensland coast and near hills and mountains to the Sunshine Coast, Queensland in the south.

Etymology: *N. merceicai sp. nov.* is named in honor of David Merceica, owner of Snakes Downunder Reptile Park and Zoo, 51 Lucketts Rd, Childers, Queensland, Australia, in recognition of his many contributions to herpetology in Australia.

NDURASCINCUS TIMHUDSONI SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:AEBFCEBB-73B0-4BFD-86B5-7EDCEFAD205D

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen number J62936 collected from the Mahogony Forest, Mount Moffat National Park, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -24.933333 S., Longitude 148.066667 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratype: A preserved specimen at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen number J62939 collected from the Mahogony Forest, Mount Moffat National Park, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -24.933333 S., Longitude 148.066667 E.

Diagnosis: Putative *Ndurascincus couperi* (Ingram, 1991), originally placed in the genus *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843, was transferred to the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 and has since been confirmed as a logical placement by more recently published phylogenies.
This includes that of Brandley *et al*. (2015), which indicates a divergence of the *Ndurascincus* group (type species: *Lampropholis adonis* Ingram, 1991), of more than 10 MYA from the *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843 group (type species being *L. guichenoti* Duméril and Bibron, 1839).
Putative *Ndurascincus couperi* as recognised to date is herein split into the three allopatric species.
These are the nominate form *N. couperi* (type locality Kondalilla National Park, Queensland, (Latitude -26.41 S., Longitude 152.52 E.) a taxon effectively confined to south-east Queensland south of the Burnett River and to the Brisbane River in the south including the area of the coast and near ranges.
N. timhudsoni sp. nov. is effectively restricted to the Canarvon Gorge area in central east Queensland, Australia.
N. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov. is found in scattered wetter locations north of the Burnett River and south of Marlborough, Queensland, Australia.
The three species are separated from one another as follows:
N. couperi has tiny but prominent black flecks on the dorsum, a brown dorsum with an obviously lighter head, sometimes yellowish in colour, widely scattered whitish flecks on the mainly dark flanks.
N. timhudsoni sp. nov. does not have prominent black flecks on the dorsum, a brown dorsum without an obviously lighter head, there only being a slight lightening around the snout, scattered distinct small black spots of irregular shape on the head and relatively dense whitish flecks on the mainly dark flanks.
N. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *N. timhudsoni sp. nov*. but with semidistinct dark flecks on the dorsum and the dark flecks on the head are not well defined or bold as seen in *N. timhudsoni sp. nov*..
The three preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:
A robustly built small skink with a 50 mm snout-vent length in adults and original tail about 1.5 times longer. Scales are either smooth or occasionally with tiny striations.
The dorsal scales are usually smooth, but occasionally with very tiny striations. Interparietal free, that is the interparietal is not fused with frontoparietals to form one scale (as seen in the morphologically similar species *Ndurascincus couperi* (Ingram, 1981) and *Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov.*); seven supralabials, seven supraciliaries, usually 7 supralabials; 4 supraoculars; 23-27 midbody scale rows.
Hindlimbs not long, 22-25 smooth subdigital lamellae under fourth toe .
Transparent disc of lower eyelid is much smaller than the eye.
Coloration is more-or-less uniform olive brown on top. Upper lateral surface when viewed from the side is more-or-less evenly black or blackish. Dorsum and outer edges of this area are a pale to dark brown, edged strongly in black below the light yellowish dorsolateral edge (as viewed from above).
The darker upper lateral surface coloration grades evenly into the lighter lower lateral coloration. A midlateral light brown to white line or series of spots is never present in these species.
N. timhudsoni sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson and Knowles (1988) on page 291 photo 503.
N. couperi is depicted in life in Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 349 second photo from top, from Mount Nebo, Queensland, Wilson, 2022 on page 165 middle left, also from Mount Nebo and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/171250498@N08/51106559581/
from Mount Glorious, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Wes Read, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/52302509570/
D'Aguilar National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/51109492445/
from Mount Glorious, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/23310651662/
from the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/euprepiosaur/16103752059/
from Mount Nebo, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Stephen Zozaya.

Distribution: *N. timhudsoni sp. nov*. is effectively restricted to the Canarvon Gorge area in central east Queensland, Australia.

Etymology: *S. timhudsoni sp. nov*. is named in honor of Timothy Hudson of Hudson's Snake Catching, at Gilston, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia in recognition of his services to wildlife conservation in Australia.

NDURASCINCUS CAITLANHUDSONAE SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:BD21590D-D845-4DF4-A5DE-69C32E1B6F89

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen number J40153 collected from Kroombit Tops, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -24.366667 S., Longitude 150.983333 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Two preserved specimens at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, specimen numbers J40154 and J40157 both collected from Kroombit Tops, Queensland, Australia, Latitude -24.366667 S., Longitude 150.983333 E.

Diagnosis: Putative *Ndurascincus* couperi (Ingram, 1991), originally placed in the genus *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843, was transferred to the genus *Ndurascincus* Wells, 2002 and has since been confirmed as a logical placement by more recently published phylogenies.
This includes that of Brandley *et al*. (2015), which indicates a divergence of the *Ndurascincus* group (type species: *Lampropholis adonis* Ingram, 1991), of more than 10 MYA from the *Lampropholis* Fitzinger, 1843 group (type species being *L. guichenoti* Duméril and Bibron, 1839).

Putative *Ndurascincus couperi* as recognised to date is herein split into the three allopatric species.

These are the nominate form *N. couperi* (type locality Kondalilla National Park, Queensland, (Latitude -26.41 S., Longitude 152.52 E.) a taxon effectively confined to south-east Queensland south of the Burnett River and to the Brisbane River in the south including the area of the coast and near ranges.

N. timhudsoni sp. nov. is effectively restricted to the Canarvon Gorge area in central east Queensland, Australia.

N. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov. is found in scattered wetter locations north of the Burnett River and south of Marlborough, Queensland, Australia.

The three preceding species are separated from one another as follows:

N. couperi has tiny but prominent black flecks on the dorsum, a brown dorsum with an obviously lighter head, sometimes yellowish in colour, widely scattered whitish flecks on the mainly dark flanks.

N. timhudsoni sp. nov. does not have prominent black flecks on the dorsum, a brown dorsum without an obviously lighter head, there only being a slight lightening around the snout, scattered distinct small black spots of irregular shape on the head and relatively dense whitish flecks on the mainly dark flanks.

N. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov. is similar in most respects to *N. timhudsoni sp. nov*. but with semidistinct dark flecks on the dorsum and the dark flecks on the head are not well defined or bold as seen in *N. timhudsoni sp. nov*..

The three preceding species are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

A robustly built small skink with a 50 mm snout-vent length in adults and original tail about 1.5 times longer. Scales are either smooth or occasionally with tiny striations.

The dorsal scales are usually smooth, but occasionally with very tiny striations. Interparietal free, that is the interparietal is not fused with frontoparietals to form one scale (as seen in the morphologically similar species *Ndurascincus couperi* (Ingram, 1981) and *Ndurascincus merceicai sp. nov.*); seven supralabials, seven supraciliaries, usually 7 supralabials; 4 supraoculars; 23-27 midbody scale rows.

Hindlimbs not long, 22-25 smooth subdigital lamellae under fourth toe .

Transparent disc of lower eyelid is much smaller than the eye.

Coloration is more-or-less uniform olive brown on top. Upper lateral surface when viewed from the side is more-or-less evenly black or blackish. Dorsum and outer edges of this area are a pale to dark brown, edged strongly in black below the light yellowish dorsolateral edge (as viewed from above).

The darker upper lateral surface coloration grades evenly into the lighter lower lateral coloration. A midlateral light brown to white line or series of spots is never present in these species.

N. timhudsoni sp. nov. is depicted in life in Wilson and Knowles (1988) on page 291 photo 503.

N. couperi is depicted in life in Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 349 second photo from top, from Mount Nebo, Queensland, Wilson, 2022 on page 165 middle left, also from Mount Nebo and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/171250498@N08/51106559581/
from Mount Glorious, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Wes Read, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/52302509570/
D'Aguilar National Park, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/51109492445/
from Mount Glorious, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/23310651662/
from the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Ryan Francis, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/euprepiosaur/16103752059/
from Mount Nebo, Queensland, Australia, photographed by Stephen Zozaya.

Distribution: *N. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov*. is found in scattered wetter locations north of the Burnett River and south of Marlborough, Queensland, Australia.

Etymology: *S. caitlanhudsonae sp. nov*. is named in honor of Caitlan Hudson of Hudson's Snake Catching, at Gilston, Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia in recognition of her services to wildlife conservation in Australia.

In 2024, Caitlan Hudson was in line to win a Gold Coast Council award under the Environmental Warriors category.

A police-protected criminal and rival snake catcher named Tony Harrison and/or his proxies trolled the internet and the real world to set upon the council with malicious attacks and false claims against the Hudson business to sabotage Caitlan Hudson being given the expected award.

This included at least one telephone threat of violence, the recording of which I have been given and played back several times. I note the police did not lay any charges in relation to the telephone threat, because Harrison and proxies are police-protected criminals.

Another of Harrison's proxies, Rene Cox, made dozens of telephone threats (all recorded), engaged in stalking and other illegal activities. She then boasted of doing all this to a global audience online. But as a police-protected criminal she too was never charged.

For further details of the preceding, including relevant recordings, copies of written threats and other materials refer to:
https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/news/special-features/women-of-the-year/nominees-for-gold-coast-bulletins-2024-woman-of-the-year-awards-presented-by-harvey-norman/news-story/3622de257d8cb9e1ec883c5fbfec1d85
and
https://www.snakeman.com.au/Renee-Cox-Queensland-Criminal-Threats-over-telephone.htm

ANEPISCHETOSIA SNAKEMANSBOGENSIS SP. NOV.
LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:F18846D6-32C0-4847-AD19-5C9A6035F325

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.167339 collected just south of Benandarah rest area at the Benandarah State Forest, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -35.65833 S., Longitude 150.233 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Four preserved specimens at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen numbers R.167340, R.167341, R.167342, and R.167343 all collected just south of Benandarah rest area at the Benandarah State Forest, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -35.65833 S., Longitude 150.233 E.

Diagnosis: The putative species *Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894, with a type locality of Ringwood, Victoria, was shuffled between various genera until 1984/1985 when Wells and Wellington (1985, 1985) published two monographs on the Australian herpetofauna.

Wells and Wellington erected the genus *Anepischetos* Wells and Wellington, 1984, but the name was already preoccupied by an insect genus.

Then *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985 was erected to accommodate the relevant species.

The putative species "*Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894" as a taxon is found from south of Sydney, along an arc of cooler locations in south-east mainland Australia to south-east South Australia, was prior to 1984 never considered to be a cluster of more than one species.

Anepischetos sharmani Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the most northern population from the Illawarra region of New South Wales.

Anepischetosia brindabellaensis Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the population from the Brindabella Ranges west of Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory.

Both were ignored by all other Australian herpetologists until 2022, when Hoser (2022) not only recognised all three species (*A. maccoyi*, *A. sharmani* and *A. brindabellaensis*), but further identified and named two additional populations as species from west Victoria.

These are *A. shireenhoserae* Hoser, 2022 for the Otway Ranges population and *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022 for the population in the Grampian Mountains, and far southwest Victoria, including nearby South Australia.

Schembri *et al*. (2025) provided a molecular basis to support all the five species identified by Hoser and in the face of robust morphological diagnoses of each species they failed to explicitly recognise any. Instead, they disparaged Wells and Wellington and in spite of obviously lifting material from Hoser (2022) failed to even cite the paper.

That was a serious breach of the Australian Copyright Act 1968, Section 195.

This is significant as the authors also trolled the internet in the previous three years disparaging the very paper of Hoser (2022).

Significantly, Schembri *et al*. (2025) not only confirmed the five preceding species, all with divergences in excess of 2 MYA, but they also effectively identified three other so far unnamed species.

The authors then made a point of failing to recognise any species in the complex beyond the single species *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894), claiming (falsely) that they were not morphologically separable.

As they are all morphologically separable and diagnosable, the three previously unnamed forms are formally named herein as new species.

Fortunately and in light of the three newly identified populations as new species, the relevant diagnoses for the other five species as spelt out in Hoser (2022) do not need amendment in any way, shape or form.

That is a result of good luck, as opposed to good management on my part.

I note that I recently had to amend diagnostic information for numerous blind snake taxa in a 2025 paper as compared to that in a paper from 2013 dealing with the same taxa and other newly described forms, so I note that as science progresses, my conclusions and statements are not always correct and must be changed as required.

Anepischetosia snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is a taxon from the Bateman's Bay region of the New South Wales south coast.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. is a taxon from the Snowy Mountains region of New South Wales, with a distribution extending into the highlands of eastern Victoria.

Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov. is apparently confined to the coast and near ranges from the New South Wales border with Victoria, extending south along the coast to nearby far north-east Victoria.

All three taxa are relatively range restricted as compared to most other species of small skink from south-east Australia. Specimens of those taxa were excluded from the diagnoses in Hoser (2022), which largely explains why the other five diagnoses can remain unaltered as the three new species have separate character combinations to the other five as spelt out in 2022.

The eight relevant species are separated from one another as follows:

A. shireenhoserae Hoser, 2022 is separated from all other species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022, *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894) from eastern Victoria, *A. sharmani* (Wells and Wellington, 1984) from the Illawarra Escarpment, *A. brindabellaensis* Wells and Wellington, 1985 from the Brindabella Ranges, west of Canberra on the border of the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and New South Wales (NSW), *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov*. from the Batemans Bay area of coastal New South Wales, *A. splinter sp. nov*. from far east Gippsland in Victoria and *A. grunt sp. nov*. from the Snowy Mountains in New South Wales and adjacent high country in north-east Victoria by the following unique suite of characters: Iris red; venter yellow; spots forming two longitudinal stripes, orange-red in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; about four alternating and obvious, well-defined dark greyish, and light whitish bands on the lower labials; anterior of snout is light brown (versus a darker body).

A. simonkortlangi Hoser, 2022 is readily separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Dull orange-yellow iris; a dorsum that is a light brownish-grey colour (as opposed to an obvious chocolate brown type of colour or dark greyish-brown in all other species); the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (lower flanks) being whitish in colour, this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of the head is unicolour, being the same lightish colour of the body or slightly darker with a grey hue, but no obvious peppering; upper surface of anterior tail, has two obvious rows of black dots running either side of the midline and two less well defined similar lines of black dots on the border of the upper surface and flank of the anterior tail; no distinct or indistinct white spots or flecks on the upper surface of the body; no red spots on the tail or body; upper labial region both in front of and behind the eye is a unicolour greyish.

A. maccoyi is now confined to a region following a general line from Ballarat, through the Macedon Ranges, across the hills north and east of Melbourne and through the hills to the east and south-east of Melbourne to the Wilsons Promontory area. It is separated from all other seven species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is yellow-orange, rarely darker; venter light orange; large joined spots forming two longitudinal stripes, greyish-black in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; any red or whitish spots or marks on tail, are not part of any longitudinal lines and are otherwise scattered; lower labials are mainly greyish with a number of ill-defined cream coloured spots or blotches or rarely barred; anterior of snout is heavily peppered grey.

A. sharmani is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is orange; venter variable in colour, but usually orange; except for a light yellow brown line running either side of the dorsum of the lower body onto the tail, there are no spots forming two longitudinal stripes that are different in colour than the rest of the upper surface of the tail; upper labials have two to four tiny white spots or bars, all fully encircled with dark brown, with the possible exception of the rear two, which sometimes extend under the chin; anterior of snout is dark brown with some peppering; the tail has irregularly scattered red spots, but these do not form longitudinal lines.

A. brindabellaensis is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Brownish iris; the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (the lower flanks) being brownish in colour this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of dorsum is peppered with tiny indistinct white spots.

A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: It is the only species in the complex with obvious low keels on scales on the back. The coloration of the back is a relatively light brown, with significant sections of dark pigment from the snout to neck on the dorsal surface. On the top of the flank is a thick sharp edged dark brown or black coloured line, just under a scale in width, evenly cutting across two rows of scales at the top and bottom edges. Dorsum and flanks are peppered with numerous more-or-less evenly spaced small off-white specks. Iris is light orangish brown to beige in colour. Original tail is grey on the sides, with some irregular dull blackish markings and brown on the top vertebral line.

Sides of head is whitish brown, heavily etched and/or spotted with off white. The dark stripe from snout runs along either side of the head, through the eye and along the neck, forming into the well-defined dark band on the lateral edge.

Chin scales are white with irregularly shaped off centre, dark brown spots. Neck scales (ventrally) are whitish anteriorly, also with dark brown spots, forming five rows of spots to form short lines, before the lower neck turns the deep yellow-orange colour of the belly, which is immaculate, but has scattered irregular and semi distinct darker markings. The underside of the tail is the same colour, but most scales have a single small irregularly shaped tiny red spot in each of the lateral rows, as well as the scales on the lower sides of the tail. The medial row of scales along the underside of the tail (longitudinally) lack those spots.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. and *A. splinter sp. nov.* are readily separated from all other 6 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex most easily by the fact that specimens have two rows of well-defined large red spots running down either side of the original tail, these spots being the raised centres of every second or third scale as one moves distally along the tail.

Both species have a thin black line at the dorsolateral edge when viewed from the side.

It is continuous to the rear of the body in *A. grunt sp. nov.* but fades in *A. splinter sp. nov.*. *A. grunt sp. nov.* has a deep yellow venter, versus orangish in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.

Iris of *A. grunt sp. nov.* is deep red, while the iris of *A. splinter sp. nov.* is orange.

Upper labials of *A. grunt sp. nov.* are white barred, versus white spotted in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.

The eight formally named species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. maccoyi*, *A. shireenhoserae*, *A. simonkortlangi*, *A. sharmani*, *A. brindabellaensis*, *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov.*, *A. grunt sp. nov.* and *A. splinter sp. nov.* which in total comprise the entirety of the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985, are readily separated from all other Australasian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: Moderate limbs that just fail to meet when adpressed; supranasals absent; nasals are small, undivided and separated; prefrontals usually absent; parietal shields in contact behind the interparietal; lower eyelid is movable with a small transparent disc; tiny ear opening that is punctiform and distinct; preanals enlarged; limbs pentadactyle (modified from Cogger 2014).

Anepischetosia maccoyi is depicted in life in Wilson and Swan (2021) on page 209, middle left, from Olinda, Dandenong Ranges, Victoria and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/54098276351/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/54098616254/
from Wilsons Promontory National Park, Victoria, Australia, both photographs by Ryan Francis,
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/zimny_anders/52518117941/
from Wilsons Promontory National Park, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Anders Zimny, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/13481253854/
from Kinglake, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Matt Clancy.

Anepischetosia sharmani is depicted in life in Wilson and Swan (1988) on page 288 bottom left, and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/45405522905/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/32446171078/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/45594911234/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/moloch05/31379327177/
all from Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia, all photographs by David “Moloch05”.

Anepischetosia brindabellaensis is depicted in life in Hoser (1989) on page 99 at top right, from Bulls Head, Australian Capital Territory, Australia, and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/189037423@N06/51600391601/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/189037423@N06/51600391596/
from the Brindabella Ranges, Australian Capital Territory, Australia, both photographs by Angus Cleary, and
https://canberra.naturemapr.org/sightings/2726679
from Uriarra, Australian Capital Territory, Australia, photographed by John Wombey, and
https://canberra.naturemapr.org/sightings/2727379
from Cotter River, Australian Capital Territory, Australia, photographed by John Wombey.

Anepischetosia shireenhoserae is depicted in life online at:
https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=584058896859698&set=pb.100057667771163.-2207520000&type=3
and the venter of the same gravid adult female is online at:
https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=584058760193045&set=pb.100057667771163.-2207520000&type=3
both from Apollo Bay, Victoria, Australia, both photographs by Raymond Hoser, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/shaneblackfnq/38322582352/
from Kennett River, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Shane Black.

Anepischetosia simonkortlangi is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128497936@N03/53927891956/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128497936@N03/53928239999/
from the Limestone Coast, South Australia, both photographs by Shawn Scott.

Anepischetosia snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://southcoast-nsw.naturemapr.org/sightings/4202506
from Depot Beach, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by “Andrew CB”, AND
https://canberra.naturemapr.org/sightings/4202356
and
https://canberra.naturemapr.org/sightings/4202354
from Monga, New South Wales, Australia, both photographed by “Andrew CB”.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gondwanareptileproductions/50403804956/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Rob Valentic, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/53532181091/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Justin Wright.
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/21242547969/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale.

Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/101315363
from Noorinbee North, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Owen Lishmund, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/28027975
from Nadgee, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter.

Distribution: *Anepischetosia snakemansbogensis sp. nov.* is a taxon from the Bateman’s Bay region of the New South Wales south coast, only known from within 50 km of that town.

Etymology: It was in 1990, when driving along the Pacific Highway south towards Victoria that I stropped at the type locality for this species at the Benandarah rest area at the Benandarah State Forest, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -35.65833 S., Longitude 150.233 E, just on the northern edge of Batemans Bay to have a much needed bowel movement, or as Australian people say “a bog”. So the etymology reflects what I did at the type locality and by its unusual name draws attention to a small skink that is in serious need of conservation attention and may otherwise remain overlooked by government officials, herpetologists and others alike.

ANEPISCHETOSIA GRUNT SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:7635CC15-6E70-40EB-9876-B71362BFA0E8

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.167311 collected 1.5 km east of the Tantangara Road turn off on the Snowy Mountains Highway, Snowy Mountains, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -35.93444 S., Longitude 148.62888 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.167312 collected 1.5 km east of the Tantangara Road turn off on the Snowy Mountains Highway, Snowy Mountains, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -35.93444 S., Longitude 148.62888 E.

Diagnosis: The putative species *Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894, with a type locality of Ringwood, Victoria, was shuffled between various genera until 1984/1985 when Wells and Wellington (1985, 1985) published to monographs on the Australian herpetofauna.
Wells and Wellington erected the genus *Anepischetos* Wells and Wellington, 1984, but the name was already preoccupied by an insect genus.
Then *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985 was erected to accommodate the relevant species.
The putative species “*Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894” as a taxon is found from south of Sydney, along an arc of cooler locations in south-east mainland Australia to south-east South Australia, was prior to 1984 never considered to be a cluster of more than one species.
Anepischetos sharmani Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the most northern population from the Illawarra region of New South Wales.
Anepischetosia brindabellaensis Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the population from the Brindabella Ranges west of Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory.
Both were ignored by all other Australian herpetologists until 2022, when Hoser (2022) not only recognised all three species (*A. maccoyi*, *A. sharmani* and *A. brindabellaensis*), but further identified and named two additional populations as species from west Victoria. These are *A. shireenhoserae* Hoser, 2022 for the Otway Ranges

population and *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022 for the population in the Grampian Mountains, and far southwest Victoria, including nearby South Australia.

Schembri *et al*. (2025) provided a molecular basis to support all the five species identified by Hoser and in the face of robust morphological diagnoses of each species they failed to explicitly recognise any. Instead, they disparaged Wells and Wellington and in spite of obviously lifting material from Hoser (2022) failed to even cite the paper, which was an illegal act under Section 195 of the Australian Copyright Act 1968.

This is significant as the same authors directly and/or by proxy also aggressively trolled the internet in the previous three years disparaging the very paper of Hoser (2022).

Significantly, Schembri *et al*. (2025) not only confirmed the five preceding species, all with divergences in excess of 2 MYA, but they also effectively identified three other so far unnamed species. The authors then made a point of failing to recognise any species in the complex beyond the single species *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894), by claiming (falsely) that they were not morphologically separable.

As all eight are all morphologically separable and diagnosable, the three previously unnamed ones are formally named herein as new species.

Fortunately and in light of the three newly identified populations as new species, the relevant diagnoses for the other five species as spelt out in Hoser (2022) do not need amendment in any way, shape or form.

That is a result of good luck, as opposed to good management on my part.

I note that I recently had to amend diagnostic information for numerous blind snake taxa in a 2025 paper as compared to that in a paper from 2013 dealing with the same taxa and other newly described forms, so I note that as science progresses, my conclusions and statements are not always correct and must be changed as required.

Anepischetosia snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is a taxon from the Bateman's Bay region of the New South Wales south coast.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. is a taxon from the Snowy Mountains region of New South Wales, with a distribution extending into the highlands of eastern Victoria.

Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov. is apparently confined to the coast and near ranges from the New South Wales border with Victoria, extending south along the coast to nearby far north-east Victoria.

All three taxa are relatively range restricted as compared to most other species of small skink from south-east Australia. Specimens of those taxa were excluded from the diagnoses in Hoser (2022), which largely explains why the other five diagnoses can remain unaltered as the three new species have separate character combinations to the other five as spelt out in 2022.

The eight relevant species are separated from one another as follows:

A. shireenhoserae Hoser, 2022 is separated from all other species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022, *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894) from eastern Victoria, *A. sharmani* (Wells and Wellington, 1984) from the Illawarra Escarpment, *A. brindabellaensis* Wells and Wellington, 1985 from the Brindabella Ranges, west of Canberra on the border of the ACT and NSW, *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov*. from the Batemans Bay area of coastal New South Wales, *A. splinter sp. nov*. from far east Gippsland in Victoria and *A. grunt sp. nov*. from the Snowy Mountains in New South Wales and adjacent high country in north-east Victoria by the following unique suite of characters: Iris red; venter yellow; spots forming two longitudinal stripes, orange-red in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; about four alternating and obvious, well-defined dark greyish, and light whitish bands on the lower labials; anterior of snout is light brown (versus a darker body).

A. simonkortlangi Hoser, 2022 is readily separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Dull orange-yellow iris; a dorsum that is a light brownish-grey colour (as opposed to an obvious chocolate brown type of colour or dark greyish-brown in all other species); the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (lower flanks) being whitish in colour, this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of the head is unicolour, being the same lightish colour of the body or slightly darker with a grey hue, but no obvious peppering; upper surface of anterior tail, has two obvious rows of black dots running either side of the midline and two less well defined similar lines of black dots on the border of the upper surface and flank of the anterior tail; no distinct or indistinct white spots or flecks on the upper surface of the body; no red spots on the tail or body; upper labial region both in front of and behind the eye is a unicolour greyish.

A. maccoyi is now confined to a region following a general line from Ballarat, through the Macedon Ranges, across the hills north and east of Melbourne and through the hills to the east and south-east of Melbourne to the Wilsons Promontory area. It is separated from all other seven species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is yellow-orange, rarely darker; venter light orange; large joined spots forming two longitudinal stripes, greyish-black in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; any red or whitish spots or marks on tail, are not part of any longitudinal lines and are otherwise scattered; lower labials are mainly greyish with a number of ill-defined cream coloured spots or blotches or rarely barred; anterior of snout is heavily peppered grey.

A. sharmani is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is orange; venter variable in colour, but usually orange; except for a light yellow brown line running either side of the dorsum of the lower body onto the tail, there are no spots forming two longitudinal stripes that are different in colour than the rest of the upper surface of the tail; upper labials have two to four tiny white spots or bars, all fully encircled with dark brown, with the possible exception of the rear two, which sometimes extend under the chin; anterior of snout is dark brown with some peppering; the tail has irregularly scattered red spots, but these do not form longitudinal lines.

A. brindabellaensis is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Brownish iris; the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (the lower flanks) being brownish in colour this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of dorsum is peppered with tiny indistinct white spots.

A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: It is the only species in the complex with obvious low keels on scales on the back. The coloration of the back is a relatively light brown, with significant sections of dark pigment from the snout to neck on the dorsal surface. On the top of the flank is a thick sharp edged dark brown or black coloured line, just under a scale in width, evenly cutting across two rows of scales at the top and bottom edges. Dorsum and flanks are peppered with numerous more-or-less evenly spaced small off-white specks. Iris is light orangish brown to beige in colour. Original tail is grey on the sides, with some irregular dull blackish markings and brown on the top vertebral line.

Sides of head is whitish brown, heavily etched and/or spotted with off white. The dark stripe from snout runs along either side of the head, through the eye and along the neck, forming into the well-defined dark band on the lateral edge.

Chin scales are white with irregularly shaped off centre, dark brown spots. Neck scales (ventrally) are whitish anteriorly, also with dark brown spots, forming five rows of spots to form short lines, before the lower neck turns the deep yellow-orange colour of the belly, which is immaculate, but has scattered irregular and semi distinct darker markings. The underside of the tail is the same colour, but most scales have a single small irregularly shaped tiny red spot in each of the lateral rows, as well as the scales on the lower sides of the tail. The medial row of scales along the underside of the tail (longitudinally) lack those spots.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. and *A. splinter sp. nov.* are readily separated from all other 6 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex most easily by the fact that specimens have two rows of well-defined large red spots running down either side of the original tail, these spots being the raised centres of every second or third scale as one moves distally along the tail.

Both species have a thin black line at the dorsolateral edge when

viewed from the side.
It is continuous to the rear of the body in *A. grunt sp. nov.* but fades in *A. splinter sp. nov.*. *A. grunt sp. nov.* has a deep yellow venter, versus orangish in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.
Iris of *A. grunt sp. nov.* is deep red, while the iris of *A. splinter sp. nov.* is orange.
Upper labials of *A. grunt sp. nov.* are white barred, versus white spotted in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.
The eight formally named species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. maccoyi*, *A. shireenhoserae*, *A. simonkortlangi*, *A. sharmani*, *A. brindabellaensis*, *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov.*, *A. grunt sp. nov.* and *A. splinter sp. nov.* which in total comprise the entirety of the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985, are readily separated from all other Australasian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: Moderate limbs that just fail to meet when adpressed; supranasals absent; nasals are small, undivided and separated; prefrontals usually absent; parietal shields in contact behind the interparietal; lower eyelid is movable with a small transparent disc; tiny ear opening that is punctiform and distinct; preanals enlarged; limbs pentadactyle (modified from Cogger 2014).
Locations from where one can access photos of the eight preceding taxa are given within the formal description of *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov.* which is also relied upon explicitly as part of this formal description.
However, *Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov.* is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gondwanareptileproductions/50403804956/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Rob Valentic, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/53532181091/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Justin Wright. and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/21242547969/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale.
The closely related species *Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov*. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/101315363
from Noorinbee North, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Owen Lishmund, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/28027975
from Nadgee, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter.
Distribution: *Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov.* is a taxon from the Snowy Mountains region of New South Wales, with a distribution extending into the highlands of eastern Victoria.
The western distributional limit of this taxon and the eastern limit of *A. maccoyi* are not known. A large gravid female specimen caught at Marysville in Victoria, (in the ranges east of the upper Yarra River Valley), had red on the tail in line with *Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov.* and may be of either that taxon or another.
Etymology: In the 1970's when on a school excursion in the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales, where this species occurs, myself and friends were straining ourselves to lift large rocks that these skinks hid under. I had a friend who was particularly strong and able to the biggest rocks up and he would grunt as he did it.
Hence the etymology.
ANEPISCHETOSIA SPLINTER SP. NOV.
LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:DD75E130-925F-4ACE-8C5A-402647B485DA
Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.167328 collected from 2 km south of the junction of Coast Road with Number 5 Road and Chinamans Creek Road, Bondi State Forest, in the State of Victoria, 2 km south of the New South Wales and Victoria border, Australia, Latitude -37.17666 S., Longitude 149.10027 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.
Paratypes: Three preserved specimens at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen numbers R.167329, R.167330 and R.167331 all collected from 2 km south of the junction of Coast Road with Number 5 Road and Chinamans Creek Road, Bondi State Forest, in the State of Victoria, 2 km south of the New South Wales and Victoria border, Australia, Latitude -37.17666 S., Longitude 149.10027 E.
Diagnosis: The putative species *Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894, with a type locality of Ringwood, Victoria, was shuffled between various genera until 1984/1985 when Wells and Wellington (1985, 1985) published to monographs on the Australian herpetofauna.
Wells and Wellington erected the genus *Anepischetos* Wells and Wellington, 1984, but the name was already preoccupied by an insect genus.
Then *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985 was erected to accommodate the relevant species.
The putative species "*Siaphos maccoyi* Lucas and Frost, 1894" as a taxon is found from south of Sydney, along an arc of cooler locations in south-east mainland Australia to south-east South Australia, was prior to 1984 never considered to be a cluster of more than one species.
Anepischetos sharmani Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the most northern population from the Illawarra region of New South Wales.
Anepischetosia brindabellaensis Wells and Wellington, 1984 was assigned to the population from the Brindabella Ranges west of Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory.
Both were ignored by all other Australian herpetologists until 2022, when Hoser (2022) not only recognised all three species (*A. maccoyi*, *A. sharmani* and *A. brindabellaensis*), but further identified and named two additional populations as species from west Victoria.
These are *A. shireenhoserae* Hoser, 2022 for the Otway Ranges population and *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022 for the population in the Grampian Mountains, and far southwest Victoria, including nearby South Australia.
Schembri *et al*. (2025) provided a molecular basis to support all the five species identified by Hoser and in the face of robust morphological diagnoses of each species they failed to explicitly recognise any. Instead, they disparaged Wells and Wellington and in spite of obviously lifting material from Hoser (2022) failed to even cite the paper.
That was a serious breach of S195 of the Australian Copyright Act 1968.
This is significant as the authors also trolled the internet directly and/or by proxy in the previous three years disparaging the very paper of Hoser (2022).
Significantly, Schembri *et al*. (2025) not only confirmed the five preceding species, all with divergences in excess of 2 MYA, but they also effectively identified three other so far unnamed species.
The authors then made a point of failing to recognise any species in the complex beyond the single species *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894), by claiming (falsely) that they were not morphologically separable.
As the eight species are all morphologically separable and diagnosable, the three unnamed forms are formally named herein as new species.
Fortunately and in light of the three newly identified populations as new species, the relevant diagnoses for the other five species as spelt out in Hoser (2022) do not need amendment in any way, shape or form.
That is a result of good luck, as opposed to good management on my part.
I note that I recently had to amend diagnostic information for numerous blind snake taxa in a 2025 paper as compared to that in a paper from 2013 dealing with the same taxa and other newly described forms, so I note that as science progresses, my conclusions and statements are not always correct and must be changed as required.
Anepischetosia snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is a taxon from the Bateman's Bay region of the New South Wales south coast.
Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. is a taxon from the Snowy Mountains region of New South Wales, with a distribution extending into the highlands of eastern Victoria.
Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov. is apparently confined to the coast and near ranges from the New South Wales border with Victoria, extending south along the coast to nearby far north-east Victoria.
All three taxa are relatively range restricted as compared to most other species of small skink from south-east Australia. Specimens of those taxa were excluded from the diagnoses in Hoser (2022), which largely explains why the other five diagnoses can remain unaltered as the three new species have separate character combinations to the other five as spelt out in 2022.

The eight relevant species are separated from one another as follows:

A. shireenhoserae Hoser, 2022 is separated from all other species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. simonkortlangi* Hoser, 2022, *A. maccoyi* (Lucas and Frost, 1894) from eastern Victoria, *A. sharmani* (Wells and Wellington, 1984) from the Illawarra Escarpment, *A. brindabellaensis* Wells and Wellington, 1985 from the Brindabella Ranges, west of Canberra on the border of the ACT and NSW, *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov*. from the Batemans Bay area of coastal New South Wales, *A. splinter sp. nov*. from far east Gippsland in Victoria and *A. grunt sp. nov*. from the Snowy Mountains in New South Wales and adjacent high country in north-east Victoria by the following unique suite of characters: Iris red; venter yellow; spots forming two longitudinal stripes, orange-red in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; about four alternating and obvious, well-defined dark greyish, and light whitish bands on the lower labials; anterior of snout is light brown (versus a darker body).

A. simonkortlangi Hoser, 2022 is readily separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Dull orange-yellow iris; a dorsum that is a light brownish-grey colour (as opposed to an obvious chocolate brown type of colour or dark greyish-brown in all other species); the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (lower flanks) being whitish in colour, this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of the head is unicolour, being the same lightish colour of the body or slightly darker with a grey hue, but no obvious peppering; upper surface of anterior tail, has two obvious rows of black dots running either side of the midline and two less well defined similar lines of black dots on the border of the upper surface and flank of the anterior tail; no distinct or indistinct white spots or flecks on the upper surface of the body; no red spots on the tail or body; upper labial region both in front of and behind the eye is a unicolour greyish.

A. maccoyi is now confined to a region following a general line from Ballarat, through the Macedon Ranges, across the hills north and east of Melbourne and through the hills to the east and south-east of Melbourne to the Wilsons Promontory area. It is separated from all other seven species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is yellow-orange, rarely darker; venter light orange; large joined spots forming two longitudinal stripes, greyish-black in colour on either side of the upper surface of the tail; any red or whitish spots or marks on tail, are not part of any longitudinal lines and are otherwise scattered; lower labials are mainly greyish with a number of ill-defined cream coloured spots or blotches or rarely barred; anterior of snout is heavily peppered grey.

A. sharmani is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Iris is orange; venter variable in colour, but usually orange; except for a light yellow brown line running either side of the dorsum of the lower body onto the tail, there are no spots forming two longitudinal stripes that are different in colour than the rest of the upper surface of the tail; upper labials have two to four tiny white spots or bars, all fully encircled with dark brown, with the possible exception of the rear two, which sometimes extend under the chin; anterior of snout is dark brown with some peppering; the tail has irregularly scattered red spots, but these do not form longitudinal lines.

A. brindabellaensis is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: Brownish iris; the upper lateral edge of the body has a well-defined black upper edge, against a dark brown dorsum, this dark edge usually covering the upper part of the lateral flank and the tail, and always forming at least a thick black line, with the surface below this (the lower flanks) being brownish in colour this not being the case in all other species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex; upper surface of dorsum is peppered with tiny indistinct white spots.

A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov. is separated from all other 7 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex by the following unique suite of characters: It is the only species in the complex with obvious low keels on scales on the back. The coloration of the back is a relatively light brown, with significant sections of dark pigment from the snout to neck on the dorsal surface. On the top of the flank is a thick sharp edged dark brown or black coloured line, just under a scale in width, evenly cutting across two rows of scales at the top and bottom edges. Dorsum and flanks are peppered with numerous more-or-less evenly spaced small off-white specks. Iris is light orangish brown to beige in colour. Original tail is grey on the sides, with some irregular dull blackish markings and brown on the top vertebral line.

Sides of head is whitish brown, heavily etched and/or spotted with off white. The dark stripe from snout runs along either side of the head, through the eye and along the neck, forming into the well-defined dark band on the lateral edge.

Chin scales are white with irregularly shaped off centre, dark brown spots. Neck scales (ventrally) are whitish anteriorly, also with dark brown spots, forming five rows of spots to form short lines, before the lower neck turns the deep yellow-orange colour of the belly, which is immaculate, but has scattered irregular and semi distinct darker markings. The underside of the tail is the same colour, but most scales have a single small irregularly shaped tiny red spot in each of the lateral rows, as well as the scales on the lower sides of the tail. The medial row of scales along the underside of the tail (longitudinally) lack those spots.

Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov. and *A. splinter sp. nov.* are readily separated from all other 6 species within the *A. maccoyi* species complex most easily by the fact that specimens have two rows of well-defined large red spots running down either side of the original tail, these spots being the raised centres of every second or third scale as one moves distally along the tail.

Both species have a thin black line at the dorsolateral edge when viewed from the side.

It is continuous to the rear of the body in *A. grunt sp. nov.* but fades in *A. splinter sp. nov.*. *A. grunt sp. nov.* has a deep yellow venter, versus orangish in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.

Iris of *A. grunt sp. nov.* is deep red, while the iris of *A. splinter sp. nov.* is orange.

Upper labials of *A. grunt sp. nov.* are white barred, versus white spotted in *A. splinter sp. nov.*.

The eight formally named species in the *A. maccoyi* species complex, including *A. maccoyi*, *A. shireenhoserae*, *A. simonkortlangi*, *A. sharmani*, *A. brindabellaensis*, *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov.*, *A. grunt sp. nov.* and *A. splinter sp. nov.* which in total comprise the entirety of the genus *Anepischetosia* Wells and Wellington, 1985, are readily separated from all other Australasian skinks by the following unique combination of characters: Moderate limbs that just fail to meet when adpressed; supranasals absent; nasals are small, undivided and separated; prefrontals usually absent; parietal shields in contact behind the interparietal; lower eyelid is movable with a small transparent disc; tiny ear opening that is punctiform and distinct; preanals enlarged; limbs pentadactyle (modified from Cogger 2014).

Locations from where one can access photos of the eight preceding taxa are given within the formal description of *A. snakemansbogensis sp. nov.* which is also relied upon explicitly as part of this formal description.

However, *Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov*. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/101315363
from Noorinbee North, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Owen Lishmund, and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/28027975
from Nadgee, New South Wales, Australia, photographed by Reiner Richter.

The closely related species *Anepischetosia grunt sp. nov.* is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gondwanareptileproductions/50403804956/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Rob Valentic, and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/53532181091/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Justin Wright. and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/21242547969/
from Mount Buller, Victoria, Australia, photographed by Nick Gale.

Distribution: *Anepischetosia splinter sp. nov.* is apparently confined to the coast and near ranges from the New South Wales border with Victoria, extending south along the coast to nearby far north-east Victoria.

Etymology: On the Melbourne Cup long weekend in early November 1996, I was with Rob Valentic and Clinton Logan (two

fellow herpetologists) searching for reptiles and frogs at the upper reaches of the Genoa River in far north-east Victoria, when we found specimens of this taxon (Hoser 2000) online at: http://www.smuggled.com/Aurea3.htm
When lifting a log I somehow put a massive splinter into my finger and hence the etymology.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

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