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Coming out of hiding … A long overdue five-way split of the Australian skink genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843, with two genera named for the first time as well as the formal description of nine new species.

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RAYMOND T. HOSER
LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:author:F9D74EB5-CFB5-49A0-8C7C-9F993B8504AE

488 Park Road, Park Orchards, Victoria, 3134, Australia.
***Phone*: +61 3 9812 3322 *Fax*: 9812 3355 *E-mail*: snakeman (at) snakeman.com.au**
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ABSTRACT

The Australian skink genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 has been subject of considerable scrutiny by prominent Australian herpetologists.

In the last 60 years, Glen Storr of Western Australia (1976), Glenn Shea of New South Wales (1995 and Shea and Miller, 1995) and Richard Wells of New South Wales (Wells 2007) have all done major revisionary works on the genus which in turn has ultimately led to a seriously debased opinion of the genus in Cogger (2014) which is mirrored in other contemporary texts.

There is an unscientific cohort including child sex offenders, drug traffickers, animal abusers, wildlife smugglers, killers and fake scientists, known as the Wolfgang Wüster gang.

This gang includes notorious individuals like Adam Britton (now jailed for bestiality and child sex offences in the Northern Territory in 2024), Caleb Ott (likely to be charged with similar offences in Queensland in 2024), David John Williams (convicted of wildlife trafficking and animal cruelty in Queensland, Australia), Jamie Benbow (convicted of commercial drug trafficking and violence related crimes), Don Broadley and Bill Branch who procured young black boys in Africa for anal sex and others in the same cohort as listed by name in Wüster *et al*. (2021).

This gang have unlawfully threatened, attacked and harassed numerous publishing herpetologists including Harold Cogger to make them refuse to recognise taxonomic and nomenclatural reality as published by Wells (2007), which has been by far the best taxonomy of the group published prior to end 2024.

Notwithstanding this, various more recently published studies in the previous decade, post-dating Wells (2007) have flagged that the putative genus as presently recognized in Cogger (2014) should be further split (beyond that of Wells 2007) based on phylogeny and morphological divergences.

Furthermore, recognized putative species within the group that have allopatric distributions across well-known biogeographic barriers are genetically and morphologically divergent and should also be recognized as separate taxa.

As a result of the preceding, and in the face of ongoing unlawful ongoing threats from the Wolfgang Wüster gang, *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 is split five ways, with two genera formally named as new for the first time according to the rules of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999).

In addition, nine new species are also formally named for the first time.

This is a critically important first step towards the management and conservation of these taxa and it is important that illegal unscientific edicts of the Wolfgang Wüster gang not be allowed to impede wildlife conservation.

Keywords: Australia; skink; taxonomy; nomenclature; *Cyclodomorphus*; *Zeusius*; *Omolepida*; *Hemisphaeriodon*; new genus; *Scored*; *Obscurescincus*; new species; *hoserae*; *wellingtoni*; *lit*; *cashcow*; *wellsi*; *one*; *another*; *yetanother*; *aniceone*.

INTRODUCTION

The iconic Australian burrowing skinks of the genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* type species *Cyclodus casuarinae* Duméril and Bibron, 1839 are familiar to herpetologists in Australia.

Species are found within or close to the environs of most of the major population centres in Australia (Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane) and are regularly caught by herpetologists searching in the field for specimens.

In cooler weather they gravitate to sheets of tin and other man-made litter.

These potential hiding spots are targeted by herpetologists and are regularly inspected by reptile collectors.

Throughout much of mainland Australia, they are regularly caught in pit-fall traps laid by wildlife surveyors. These surveys are being done in increasing numbers as part of the mandatory legal requirements (so called "Green Tape") before the construction of major infrastructure projects across Australia.

In other words, *Cyclodomorphus* species are well-known here in Australia.

Storr (1976) published a major revision of the Western Australian members of the putative genus, describing a number of widespread and relevant forms that had until then been overlooked.

He used the genus name *Omolepida* Gray, 1845 type species *Cyclodus casuarine* Duméril and Bibron, 1839 by original designation for the group, but more recent publishing authors have tended to place all relevant species within the genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 with the same type species.

Under the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999) as amended (ICZN 2012) the earlier name has priority and this rule underpins scientific nomenclature.

Wells and Wellington (1985) in their monumental work on Australian reptiles, deferred doing any major changes to the group pending work by Glenn Shea and Shea's own impending publications on the genus.

A decade later Shea (1995) and Shea and Miller (1995) did a detailed review of the group and named further forms.

Wells (2007) picked up where the other authors including Shea in both papers, had left off and named further species and subspecies and divided the genus *Cyclodomorphus* three ways.

This they did by confining *Cyclodomorphus* type species *Cyclodus casuarinae* Duméril and Bibron, 1839 to a cohort of south-east Australian species, being the so-called Sheoak skinks.

They removed the quite divergent and significantly larger Pink Tongued Skinks from the genus and used the available name *Hemisphaeridon* Peters, 1867 with the type species of *Hinulia gerrardii* Gray, 1845.

In a first ever move, Wells put the rest into the genus:

"*Zeusius gen. nov*. [Type Species: *Omolepida maxima* Storr, 1976 - *Rec. West. Aust. Mus*., 4: 163-170]."

The taxonomic actions of Wells (2007) were largely based on the earlier cited works and were logical and obvious extensions of those works and the taxonomy within.

In terms of the thrust of the paper, there was absolutely nothing wrong at all with the detailed taxonomic work of Wells (2007) and his underlying taxonomic position.

Notwithstanding the statements of the obvious by Wells (2007), Wüster (2012), later rebadged as Kaiser *et al*. (2013) was used as a weapon against other publishing herpetologists to not adopt or use the eminently sensible taxonomic proposals made by Wells (2007).

Kaiser *et al*. (2013) was an anti-science rant by an unscientific cohort including child sex offenders, drug traffickers, animal abusers and pseudoscientists known as the Wolfgang Wüster gang.

This group includes notorious individuals like Adam Britton (now jailed for bestiality and child sex offences in the Northern Territory in 2024), Caleb Ott (likely to be charged with similar offences in Queensland in 2024), David John Williams (convicted of wildlife trafficking and animal cruelty in Queensland, Australia), Jamie Benbow (convicted of commercial drug trafficking and violence related crimes), Don Broadley and Bill Branch who procured young black boys in Africa for anal sex and others in the same cohort as listed by name in Wüster *et al*. (2021).

They have aggressively harassed publishing herpetologists, including Harrold G. Cogger to refuse to recognise taxonomic and nomenclatural reality as published by Wells (2007), which has been the best taxonomy of the group published to date.

Significantly and relevant to the ultimate taxonomy and nomenclature adopted and used in this paper, the taxonomy of Wells (2007) was explicitly supported by the data in the paper of Brennan *et al*. (2024) and so is agreed as correct herein, save for the differences outlined herein.

In short, the recognition of the species recognized by Wells (2007) is taken as correct.

Only at issue is whether or not some or all of his described subspecies should be treated as subspecies or species, noting that Wells (2007) made determinations for each form recognized and based on his prior taxonomic determinations on Australian reptiles is probably correct on all.

If I were to deviate from his conclusions, it would probably be that some of his named subspecies should be treated as full species.

I have only deferred from making the amendments to the status of those particular taxa on the basis that molecular data is likely within a few short years.

That should settle whether or not those named forms should be treated as subspecies or species.

The relevant name to be used was already settled by Wells (2007), who has properly spelt out, which names are available for what.

Wells (2007) clearly missed some taxa worthy of formal recognition, including two species within *Cyclodomorphus* from Victoria and others from other states which are formally named herein.

In terms of the Wells (2007) genus *Zeusius* the molecular phylogeny of Brennan *et al*. (2024) (at Supplementary Fig. 2) shows a 15.65 MYA divergence from the *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 type species and associated south-east Australian taxa.

Brennan *et al*. (2024) (at Supplementary Fig. 2) showed a 9.8 MYA divergence of *Hemisphaeridon gerrardii* (Gray, 1845) from the *Cyclodomorphus* type species and associated south-east Australian taxa, which is also sufficient grounds to recognize this morphologically divergent group as a separate genus.

The three putative species *H. gerrardi* (Gray, 1845), *H. picta* (Macleay, 1885) and *H. longicauda* (De Vis, 1888) are all recognized herein as valid, which is a contrasting position to many authors who only recognize the single species *H. gerrardi*.

In case it has been missed previously, the holotype of Gray (1845) is of the southernmost (Sydney and/or south of Hunter Valley form) of the genus.

Brennan *et al*. (2024) (at Supplementary Fig. 2) also showed significant divergences between the *Cyclodomorphus* type species and associated south-east Australian taxa as opposed to three obvious species groups within putative *Zeusius*.

With divergences of 16 MYA (group 1 versus groups 2-3) and 14.9 MYA (group 2 versus group 3) between the three groups, it is self-evident that on divergence alone, three genera need to be formally recognized.

Two new genera are formally named for the first time according to the rules of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999) based on divergence and consistent morphological differences.

These are *Scored gen. nov*. and *Obscurescincus gen. nov*..

Nine new species overlooked by earlier authors are also identified and named for the first time.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Specimens of all species within the putative genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as recognised by Cogger (2014) and Wilson and Swan (2021) were inspected from all parts of their known distributions. They were checked for morphological divergences and/or obvious biogeographical barriers separating the populations, including those flagged in papers such as those listed above and below.

Specimens inspected included dead and live specimens as well as images with good locality data.

To make it clear, many specimens were inspected in the field, as in *in situ* by me when conducting fieldwork throughout the relevant areas of distribution of the genus and over more than 50 years.

Molecular studies involving species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* and other similarly distributed reptiles and frogs from across continental Australia were also reviewed to flag likely speciation points for wider-ranging putative taxa.

Published references and taxonomic treatments relevant to the preceding taxa were reviewed and those relevant to the taxonomic

and nomenclatural conclusions in this paper included Abraham (1980), Boulenger (1885, 1898), Brennan *et al.* (2014), Cogger (2014), Cogger, *et al.* (1983), De Vis (1888), Dubois *et al.* (2019), Duméril and Bibron (1839), Fitzinger, (1843), Ford (1963), Frost and Lucas (1894), Glauert (1960), Gomard (2015), Gray (1845, 1867), Günther (1867), Hauschild (1988), Hawkeswood (2021), Herrmann (1997), Horner (1991), Hoser (1989, 2000, 2007, 2017, 2018, 2019a-b, 2020a-b, 2021a-b, 2022, 2024a-b), ICZN (1991, 2001, 2012, 2021), Longley (1938), Longman (1915), Lucas and Frost (1896), Macleay (1885), Maryan *et al*. (2024), Matz (1973), Mebs (1974), Mitchell (1950), Murphy (1994), Oudemans (1984), Osborne and Green (1995), Pepper *et al.* (2018), Peters (1867, 1874, 1878), Procter (1923), Pyron *et al.* (2013), Rankin (1973), Rawlinson (1969), Ride *et al.* (1999), Shea (1982, 1990, 1995), Shea and Miller (1995), Shea and Sadlier (1999), Shea and Wells (1984), Skinner *et al.* (2013), Smith (1937), Stark (2022), Sternfeld (1919, 1925), Storr (1976), Storr, Smith and Johnstone (1999), Sumner *et al.* (2021), Swan *et al*. (2017, 2022), Timms (1977), Wells (2007), Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985), Werner (1910), Wilhoft (1960), Wilson (2015, 2022), Wilson and Booth (1998), Wilson and Knowles (2018), Wilson and Swan (2017, 2021) and sources cited therein.

RESULTS

The molecular results of Brennan *et al.* (2014) laid out quite clearly the likely taxonomy of the *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* group of species giving rise to the new genus-level taxonomy flagged herein already.

In spite of this, the paper of Brennan *et al.* (2014), being the most recent full treatise of the group at the genus-level failed to act on the results obtained.

It appears that in line with the previous practice of the group of authors, being associated with the Wolfgang Wüster gang of thieves (identified by name in Wüster *et al.* 2021), they did not want to use any taxonomy or nomenclature that forced them to recognise the findings, works and names of Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) or Wells (2007), in any way, as per the doctrine of Wüster (2012), rebadged as Kaiser *et al*. (2013), Rhodin *et al*. (2015), Wüster *et al.* (2021) and later incarnations of the same mantra (see below).

By way of example, in spite of confirmation that the putative genus *Zeusius* Wells (2007) had a 15.65 MYA divergence from the *Cyclodomorphus* type species and associated south-east Australian taxa, Brennan *et al.* (2014) ignored this wholly.

In breach of the *Australian Copyright Act* 1968, Section 195, as well as relevant provisions of the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al.* 1999), Brennan *et al.* (2014) did not even cite any works of Wells or the relevant works of Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) at all!

In terms of divergences of putative species analysed by Brennan *et al.* (2014), most were separated from one another by several millions of years, indicating likelihood of further forms not sampled being separate species.

This fact of deep divergences, in effect corroborated the taxonomy and nomenclature of Wells (2007), explaining why it is largely adopted herein as correct.

Another recent paper, being that of Sumner *et al.* (2021) wrote in relation to putative *Cyclodomorphus praealtus* that:

"*Populations of* C. praealtus *in NSW and Victoria are reciprocally monophyletic at the mtDNA ND4 loci, with a 4.28% net sequence divergence between regions, and it was recommended that they be treated as separate evolutionarily significant units (Koumoundouros et al., 2009).*"

These populations are also morphologically divergent and therefore in line with an estimated separation of over 2 MYA based on the "*4.28% net sequence divergence*" the previously unnamed Victorian form is herein formally named as *C. hoserae sp. nov.*.

Wells and Wellington (1985) recognized the population of putative *C. casuarinae* (Duméril and Bibron, 1839) from far north-east Victoria and far south-east New South Wales as a species distinct from their *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984 and *C. casuarinae* referring it to the putative species *C. nigricans* (Peters, 1874).

However, Shea (1995) correctly confirmed that the holotype of *C. nigricans* was a Tasmanian animal and therefore the name *C. nigricans* was not available for the taxon identified as distinct by Wells and Wellington (1985).

In spite of this correction by Shea in 1995, all publishing authors have since treated the relevant population erroneously as *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984 a taxon geographically separated and with a type locality of Mount Victoria, being about 118 km by road west of the Sydney CBD.

The population of putative *C. casuarinae* (Duméril and Bibron, 1839), more recently assigned to *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984 by more recent authors, including Shea (1995) of north-east Victoria and far south-east New South Wales is herein formally named as a new species *C. wellingtoni.*

Two divergent and little-known New England Tableland populations, also until now treated as populations of *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984 are also formally named as new species being *Cyclodomorphus lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.*.

In terms of *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, the following is noted:

"*Zeusius gen. nov*. [Type Species: *Omolepida maxima* Storr, 1976 - *Rec. West. Aust. Mus*., 4: 163-170]."

as defined by Wells 2007 is retained for that species group only, being only putative *Z. maxima* and a newly named species, *Z. wellsi sp. nov*. from the same general region in north-west Western Australia.

Scored gen. nov. type species *Scored one sp. nov*. has a 14.9 MYA divergence from the two genera *Zeusius* and *Cyclodomorphus.*

Within this genus are included the better-known species until now generally known as "*Cyclodomorphus celatus* Shea and Miller, 1995", "*C. venustus* Shea and Miller, 1995", "*C. melanops* (Stirling and Zietz, 1893)", *"Zeusius. sternfeldi* Wells, 2007" and other lesser-known taxa including *Scored one sp. nov*. (type species), *S. another sp. nov*., *S. yetanother sp. nov*., "*Cyclodomorphus melanops elongatus* (Werner, 1910)" and "*Cyclodomorphus melanops siticulosus* (Shea and Miller, 1995)" the latter two as a full species based on the phylogeny of Brennan *et al*. (2024).

Various subspecies formally named by Wells (2007), not listed herein, may ultimately prove to be best regarded as full species after their genetics are properly studied.

They all represent discrete local populations and based on the site fidelity of specimens in the genus, it is a safe bet that those named as subspecies will ultimately be recognized as full species based on molecular divergence.

The relevant taxa identified by Wells (2007) are *Zeusius melanops gillami* Wells, 2007, *Zeusius melanops swani* Wells, 2007, *Zeusius melanops gastrostigma* (Boulenger, 1898), *Zeusius melanops petersi* (Sternfeld, 1919) and *Zeusius melanops woodjonesii (*Procter, 1923).

Based on his own extensive field and lab work on the relevant taxa spanning more than 50 years, it is prudent to accept the relevant five subspecies designations as such until proven otherwise.

One population of putative *Z. melanops* missed by all previous describing authors and that is very divergent is that from southwest New South Wales and the adjacent parts of Murrayland, South Australia..

It is separated from major populations west in most of South Australia, central and western Australia by being to the east of the biological barrier formed by the lower Flinders Ranges in South Australia, including foothills, which are in effect combined as a biogeographic barrier with the Barrier and Grey Ranges in far west New South Wales.

Evidence cited by Hoser (2020b) for the Mallee Dragon Complex *Ctenophorus* (*Phthanodon*) *fordi* (Storr, 1965) *sensu lato*, splitting that species group into two species (both previously named) and naming four subspecies for the first time, indicated a divergence of 1.75 MYA for the relevant east and west populations.

These were constrained by the same habitat requirements as *Z. melanops sensu lato*, meaning that the relevant unnamed population of *Z. melanops sensu lato* is also a separate species based on divergence caused by the same environmental changes in the relevant part of Australia over the past 2 Million years.

This taxon is formally named herein as *Scored aniceone sp. nov.*.

Scored one sp. nov. (type species for the genus) and *S. another sp. nov*. have until now been treated as northern populations of putative "*Cyclodomorphus celatus* Shea and Miller, 1995".

S. yetanother sp. nov. has until now been treated as a central South Australian population of "*C. venustus* Shea and Miller, 1995".

"Zeusius. sternfeldi Wells, 2007" (type locality of Chunky Creek near Tibooburra, far northwest New South Wales), formerly and until now treated as a northern population of "*C. venustus* Shea and Miller, 1995", with a type locality of Port Germain, South Australia, by all publishing authors to date is both an indictment of Australian

herpetology and science as well as a show of strength for the evil and nefarious Wolfgang Wüster gang.

Even a cursory look by an untrained 5-year-old child of average intellect will probably recognize that *"Zeusius. sternfeldi* Wells, 2007" and "*C. venustus* Shea and Miller, 1995" are radically different in all materially relevant ways and cannot be of one and the same species! See for example the comparative photos in Cogger (2014) at page 537 at top left and right, both as "*C. venustus*".

Alternatively, photo sharing websites like "Inaturalist" and "Flickr" have dozens of images of the relevant taxa for free viewing (currently, end 2024 all listed and identified foolishly as *C. venustus*).

Obscurescincus gen. nov. type species *Hinulia branchialis* Günther, 1867 is for the various species and/or subspecies associated with that taxon (alive and/or extinct), which according to Brennan *et al*. (2014) diverged from all other putative *Cyclodomorphus* and *Zeusius* 16 MYA. It is treated herein as monotypic and range restricted in south-west Western Australia.

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 3 January 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.

Note that there is ordinarily some sexual dimorphism between adults of species within the relevant genera.

References to tails are of original 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 is repeated to ensure each fully complies with the *International Code of Zoological Nomenclature* (Ride *et al*. 1999) and the 2012 amendments (ICZN 2012).

In the unlikely event any "first reviser" seeks to merge two or more newly named taxa into one, then the name to be retained is that which is first by page priority as listed in the abstract keywords.

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.

CONSERVATION

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 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 (see for example Shine 1987), all of which were discredited long ago as outlined by Ceriaco *et al*. (2023), Cogger (2014), Cotton (2014), Dubois *et al*. (2019), Hawkeswood (2021), Hołyński (1994, 2020), Hoser, (2001a, 2007a-b, 2009, 2012a-b, 2013, 2015a-f, 2019a, 2019b, 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.

If the Australian government persists with its "Big Australia Policy", (see for example Saunders 2019 or Zaczek 2019), that being a long-term aim to increase the human population in Australia to over 100 million people by year 2150 (from the 25 million as of 2019), all sorts of unforeseen threats to the survival of these species may emerge.

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 to the effect that Wells and Wellington (1984, 1985) or Wells names published more recently (post year 2000) are unavailable for zoological nomenclature are patently false and the making of these false claims is seriously counter to wildlife conservation (Hoser, 2007 2019a, 2019b, Ceriaco *et al*. 2023, Cogger 2014, Cotton 2014, and so on).

CYCLODOMORPHUS HOSERAE SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:A224F766-A95E-4EA6-AC4C-EA271AEF6A24

Holotype: A preserved adult female specimen at the Museums Victoria Herpetology Collection, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, specimen number D39194 collected from Mount Hotham, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -36.98 S., Longitude 147.13 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Three preserved specimens at the Museums Victoria Herpetology Collection, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, specimen number D8937, D39195 and D56467 all collected from the Mount Hotham Ski Resort area, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -36.98 S., Longitude 147.13 E.

Diagnosis: Until now, *Cyclodomorphus hoserae sp. nov.* a taxon effectively confined to the region of the Bogong High Plains in Victoria, has been treated as a southern population of *C. praealtus* Shea, 1995, type locality Kiandra, NSW, a taxon herein confined to the Snowy Mountains of far south New South Wales.

These inhabitants of alpine meadow habitat are separated from one another by low lying areas in the upper Murray basin.

Sumner *et al.* (2021) and Koumoundouros *et. al*. (2009), both papers available online, found much the same, when the latter authors said: "*that Populations of* C. praealtus *in NSW and Victoria are reciprocally monophyletic at the mtDNA ND4 loci, with a 4.28% net sequence divergence between regions, and it was recommended that they be treated as separate evolutionarily significant units*".

Using the conventional vertebrate mtDNA clock calibration of 2% sequence divergence per million years (Avise, 2004), this suggests divergence between the two populations herein is estimated at more than 2 MYA and without known introgression.

While adult female *C. hoserae sp. nov.* are morphologically similar to adult female *C. praealtus,* adult female *C. hoserae sp. nov.* are separated from adult female *C. praealtus* by having a strongly orange-brown dorsum, versus weakly orange, to grey-brown on the dorsum in *C. praealtus*, as well as having side flecks of white and black in combination, where the white areas are larger than black, versus the reverse in *C. praealtus.*

Adult female *C. hoserae sp. nov.* have reasonably well-defined whitish-grey longitudinal lines running down the original tail, versus poorly defined and darker in colour in *C. praealtus.*

Both *C. hoserae sp. nov.* and *C. praealtus* are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024) by not having a post narial groove, two

infralabial scales contacting the postmental scale on each side and less than 65 subcaudal scales on the original tail, meaning they have relatively shorter tails than other species in the same genus (*sensu lato* as per next paragraph).

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on or in their resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

C. hoserae sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/52663827701/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/julesfarquhar/51247027252/

C. praealtus is depicted in life in Swan, Sadlier and Shea (2022) on page 152, and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/199464355@N06/54161326017/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/52836153545/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/171250498@N08/54126619781/

It is important to note that donating money to the dysfunctional government-owned business "Zoos Victoria" as per their website at:
https://www.zoo.org.au/donate/donate-today/
will NOT do anything useful for the conservation of this particular species as alleged by them.

Distribution: *Cyclodomorphus hoserae sp. nov.* is a taxon effectively confined to the region of the Bogong High Plains in Victoria and immediately adjacent similar habitat in far northeast Victoria and is best known from the ski resorts of Mount Hotham and Falls creek, where they have a liking for hiding under man-made hard rubbish on the ground.

It is separated from *C. praealtus* Shea, 1995, type locality Kiandra, NSW, a taxon herein confined to the Snowy Mountains of far south New South Wales by the lowlands of the upper Murray River basin.

Etymology: *Cyclodomorphus hoserae sp. nov.* is named in honour of my long-suffering wife, Shireen Hoser, now of Park Orchards, Melbourne, Victoria in recognition of her many contributions to herpetology in Australia and elsewhere as well and specifically with reference to services to herpetological fieldwork by myself and my children in the Mount Hotham and Falls Creek areas over more than a decade.

CYCLODOMORPHUS WELLINGTONI SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:288110D2-6D2C-48EE-B94A-B4A4AE36192B

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Museums Victoria Herpetology Collection, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, specimen number D33721 collected from Wroxham, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.35 S., Longitude 149.48 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Nine preserved specimens at the Museums Victoria Herpetology Collection, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, being specimen numbers D33722 and D33723 both collected from Wroxham, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.35 S., Longitude 149.48 E., specimen numbers D39129 and D39127 both collected from Genoa, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.47 S., Longitude 149.6 E., Specimen number D70974, collected from Shipwreck Creek, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.58 S., Longitude 149.67 E., specimen number D57447 collected from 10.5 km south southwest of Wangarabell, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.58 S., Longitude 149.67 E., specimen number D39146 collected from Gypsy Point, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.48 S., Longitude 149.68 E., specimen number D66126 collected from Stony Creek track, 1 km East of Nash Camp Track, East Gippsland, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.4502 S., Longitude 149.6 E., specimen number D57466 collected from 21.8 km East of Mount Kaye, Victoria, Australia, Latitude -37.4005 S., Longitude 149.489 E.

Diagnosis: Until now, *Cyclodomorphus lit sp. nov*., *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. have been treated as divergent populations of *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984, with a type locality of Mount Victoria, New South Wales.

C. michaeli is herein regarded as a taxon of the central coast region of New South Wales only in an area generally from Newcastle to Nowra and the nearby hilly hinterland, south of the Hunter Valley, including the New South Wales Southern Highlands and the Blue Mountains.

The divergent taxon *C. cashcow sp. nov.* is known only from the Barrington Tops area of the coastal ranges, north of the Hunter Valley in New South Wales.

C. lit sp. nov. is only known from the upper New England Tablelands Region of New South Wales, around the town of Ben Lomond, New South Wales (the type locality).

C. cashcow sp. nov. and *C. lit sp. nov*. are exclusively high-altitude species.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is found only in far north-east Victoria and immediately adjacent south-east New South Wales, generally at low altitude, in a relatively confined region, but where it is abundant and easily found by collectors.

In line with congeners, specimens are commonly found in numbers under sheets of metal around human habitation.

In November 1996 (Melbourne Cup weekend), Rob Valentic and myself found several specimens hiding under sheets of tin on a property at Genoa, immediately next to the flooded Genoa River on a relatively cold and rainy, overcast day.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is separated from *C. michaeli*, *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .by having an adult ground colour that is olive-brown on the dorsum rather than brownish orange on the dorsum in *C. michaeli* or greyish dorsally in *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .

In turn *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* are separated from both *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. by having a dorsum in adults where the black markings not only coalesce to form semi-distinct longitudinal lines, but also as semi-distinct crossbands, especially anteriorly.

This is sometimes called the "gill-like" markings.

Both *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* tend to be greyish dorsally, rather than brownish dorsally in both *C. michaeli* (orange brown) and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. (olive brown).

C. lit sp. nov. has a subcaudal count (on original tails) below 85, versus over 92 for each of *C. cashcow sp. nov.*, *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

C. lit sp. nov. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* average 2.6 nuchal scales and 8 infralabials as a rule, versus 3.2 and 7 in *C. michaeli*, versus 6 or 7 infralabials in *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

The four species *C. michaeli*, *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*., *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. lit sp. nov*. are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by not having a post narial groove, two infralabial scales contacting the postmental scale on each side, more than 65 subcaudal scales on the original tail and a dorsum that is not greyish in general colour with a complex pattern of brown, black, grey and white and having flanks with thin black bars and sometimes white interspaces as is seen in adult *C. casuarinae* (Duméril and Bibron, 1839).

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

C. michaeli is depicted in life in Hoser (1989) on page 107 at top right, Swan, Sadlier and Shea (2022) on page 151 both images and

online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mattsummerville/16923057122/
C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/8397228981/
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/60174058
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/42556271
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/18534072
C. cashcow sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/shaneblackfnq/29846456055/
The type form of *C. casuarinae* is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/akashsherping/54163133578/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/31688785195/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/93733769@N03/9299532013/

Distribution: *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. is found only in far north-east Victoria and immediately adjacent south-east New South Wales, in a relatively confined near coastal region of low altitude, but where it is abundant and easily found by collectors.

Etymology: *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. is named in honour of one of Australia's leading herpetologists, Cliff Ross Wellington, AKA Ross Wellington, currently of Ramornie in northern New South Wales, Australia, in recognition of a lifetime's achievements in herpetology.

CYCLODOMORPHUS CASHCOW SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:7D4E683B-1DB9-4526-BE75-D8B0803DF93B

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.16085 collected from Barrington Tops, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.033 S., Longitude 151.4 E.

Paratypes: 1/ Two preserved specimens at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen numbers R.139127 and R.146088 collected from East of Mount Allyn on Mount Allyn Road, Chichester State Forest, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.12693 S., Longitude 151.43416 E., 2/ A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.18961 collected from Upper Allyn River, Barrington Tops, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.133 S., Longitude 151.466 S.

Diagnosis: Until now, *Cyclodomorphus lit sp. nov*., *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. have been treated as divergent populations of *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984, with a type locality of Mount Victoria, New South Wales.

C. michaeli is herein regarded as a taxon of the central coast region of New South Wales only in an area generally from Newcastle to Nowra and the nearby hilly hinterland, south of the Hunter Valley, including the New South Wales Southern Highlands and the Blue Mountains.

The divergent taxon *C. cashcow sp. nov.* is known only from the Barrington Tops area of the coastal ranges, north of the Hunter Valley in New South Wales.

C. lit sp. nov. is only known from the upper New England Tablelands Region of New South Wales, around the town of Ben Lomond, New South Wales (the type locality).

C. cashcow sp. nov. and *C. lit sp. nov*. are exclusively high-altitude species.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is found only in far north-east Victoria and immediately adjacent south-east New South Wales, generally at low altitude, in a relatively confined region, but where it is abundant and easily found by collectors.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is separated from *C. michaeli*, *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .by having an adult ground colour that is olive-brown on the dorsum rather than brownish orange on the dorsum in *C. michaeli* or greyish dorsally in *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .

In turn *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* are separated from both *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. by having a dorsum in adults where the black markings not only coalesce to form semi-distinct longitudinal lines, but also as semi-distinct crossbands, especially anteriorly.

This is sometimes called the "gill-like" markings.

Both *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* tend to be greyish dorsally, rather than brownish dorsally in both *C. michaeli* (orange brown) and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. (olive brown).

C. lit sp. nov. has a subcaudal count (on original tails) below 85, versus over 92 for each of *C. cashcow sp. nov.*, *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

C. lit sp. nov. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* average 2.6 nuchal scales and 8 infralabials as a rule, versus 3.2 and 7 in *C. michaeli*, versus 6 or 7 infralabials in *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

The four species *C. michaeli*, *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*., *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. lit sp. nov*. are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by not having a post narial groove, two infralabial scales contacting the postmental scale on each side, more than 65 subcaudal scales on the original tail and a dorsum that is not greyish in general colour with a complex pattern of brown, black, grey and white and having flanks with thin black bars and sometimes white interspaces as is seen in adult *C. casuarinae* (Duméril and Bibron, 1839).

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on or in their daytime resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

C. michaeli is depicted in life in Hoser (1989) on page 107 at top right, Swan, Sadlier and Shea (2022) on page 151 both images and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mattsummerville/16923057122/
C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/8397228981/
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/60174058
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/42556271
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/18534072
C. cashcow sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/shaneblackfnq/29846456055/
The type form of *C. casuarinae* is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/akashsherping/54163133578/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/31688785195/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/93733769@N03/9299532013/

Distribution: The divergent taxon *C. cashcow sp. nov.* is a high-altitude species known only from the Barrington Tops area of the coastal ranges, north of the Hunter Valley in New South Wales, Australia in an area with a maximum elevation of about 1,586 meters.

There are less than 20 specimens currently lodged with Australian Museums, and none are known to be in captivity as of early 2025.

It should be listed as a vulnerable or threatened species pending a more detailed and proper assessment (see etymology below).

Etymology: In Australia relatively rare and endangered species often become an excuse for unscrupulous operators to make money from them.

Dysfunctional and corrupt government-owned zoos and their staff use them for "captive breeding and recovery programs" with the aim to be not to breed the species.

The idea is to monopolize the species as an endangered one that needs money to survive and to keep scamming grants to "breed the animals" out of endangerment.

Of course that is an outcome that cannot be allowed to happen, as if a zoo has to offload excess stock to another zoo, or worse still a

non-government entity or person, then they lose their monopoly on the species and the ability to use it as a so-called cash cow to make money out of it.

Whether it is to scam grants to breed the animals (or pretend to, by grabbing gravid specimens from the bush), money for cage building projects, allowing of course much of the cash to be siphoned off for personal gain via contactors, kick-backs, consulting fees and the like, or even just to monopolize photographic and filming rights, rare species in Australia are always a so called cash cow.

With species within the genus *Cyclodomorphus sensu stricto* perceived as rare, localized, in potential decline and ruthlessly banned from private herpetoculture in any way, all named species have already been turned into cash cows by dysfunctional government-owned zoos (e.g. Zoos Victoria), wildlife bureaucrats and their closest mates who have invariably moved from the public service bureaucracy into the so-called "private sector".

As already inferred, these mates are invariably usually ex-employees of the very same government departments who splash cash to supposedly "save" and "protect" the relevant species.

These rare and endangered species only linger on in spite of government policies and actions and not as a result of any benefit derived from them.

In Victoria, New South Wales and Federally, billions of dollars of taxpayer's funds are spent on "species recovery plans" and similar fake conservation programs.

The so-called "species recovery plans" are jumbled up fake woke nonsense, full of gratuitous statements about aboriginal collaboration and culture.

For native Australian Aboriginals, the daily reality is about being robbed and bashed by the British invaders and their militarized police.

They are forcibly barred from their so-called traditional lands, that the fake woke nonsense describes them as custodians of.

In terms of the area that *C. hoserae sp. nov*. occurs, it is a strictly contained area with police at all entry points, numerous CCTV cameras filming all who come and go and everyone entering these "resort" areas are charged an entry fee of about $100 per car per day (average), which is a fee way too prohibitive for any native Australian Aboriginals to ever afford.

Seriously, when did anyone see a native Australian Aboriginal paying $200 a day for a ski lift ticket (the approximate cost in 2024-2025) and doing laps on the ski runs at Hotham?

So, to masquerade a fake narrative that native Australian Aboriginals are in the present day and age doing anything in terms of studying or "managing" an obscure small skink in an area they were expelled from more than 200 years ago is complete and utter nonsense!

Wildlife bureaucrats in Australia use the words "collaborate", "stakeholders" and "citizen science" a lot in their propaganda.

But the reality is that as a group, government bureaucrats in Australia would never collaborate with anyone bar themselves!

As a rule, they are wholly dishonest and corrupt.

"Citizen scientists" AKA anyone not on the government's public service payroll, are the government bureaucrats enemy, as God forbid if they actually discover anything, then the government bureaucrats look like idiots for not doing so earlier!

The Australian government bureaucrats do as a rule, act like fascists and terrorists of the worst possible kind!

In terms of the animals themselves the "*species recovery plans*" and "*action plans*" are more in the form of a false narrative designed to extract money from government and business to be funnelled to those who have appointed themselves as gatekeepers for the cash cow animals.

These are the self-appointed "experts" on the relevant species and who control where the taxpayer funds are diverted to.

The very expensive to produce, Australian Federal Government document cited below exactly fits the profile just given.

Titled as follows:

"*Australian Government*

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Conservation Advice for ***Cyclodomorphus praealtus*** *(alpine she-oak skink)*

In effect under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 from 20 August 2024.

This document guides conservation action and planning."

The document can be found at:

https://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/pubs/64721-conservation-advice-20082024.pdf

Significantly it has a lovely image of *C. hoserae sp. nov*. on the front cover misidentified as *C. praealtus*, even though there are 2 million years of reasons to question why that species (*C. hoserae sp. nov*.) was not formally named prior to this paper being published in year 2025!

So that no one gets misled about what "important" information is in this expensively produced government document ostensibly about the conservation of the relevant lizard species, I quote the main part of it unedited:

"*Cultural and community significance*

The cultural, customary and spiritual significance of animals, plants and ecological communities are diverse and varied for Indigenous Australians and their stewardship of Country. This section describes some examples of this significance but is not intended to be comprehensive or applicable to, or speak for, Indigenous Australians. Such knowledge may be held by Indigenous Australians who are the custodians of this knowledge and have the rights to decide how this knowledge is shared and used.

It is evident that lizards, including skinks, hold immense significance to Indigenous Australians through their prominent role in ceremony, lore, mythology, totems, art, and kinship. They are deeply tied to the Dreaming as totemic Creation beings that have shaped Country over millennia.

Lizards are often represented as guardians and teachers, and their Creation stories offer arnings or lessons about lore, morals, and kinship. These reptiles are inherently linked to the Indigenous stewardship of Country, in particular fire management practices. Lizards are also a critically important food and medicine source to many Indigenous Australians.

Significance specific to the alpine she-oak skink

The geographic range of the alpine she-oak skink is known to occur on the Traditional lands of many Indigenous groups and encompasses areas that have local Cultural Knowledge custodians and land rights holders. These Indigenous groups (and organisations) include:

- Traditional Cultural and Language groups:

o Bidawal, Bidwell, Dhudhuroa, Gunaikurnai, Jaithmathang, Kurnai, Mitambuta, Monero-Ngarigo, Ngarigu-Currawong, Taungurung, Waywurru, Wurundjeri and Yuin.

- NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils:

o Bega, Brungle/Tumut, Eden, Merrimans, and Wagonga.

- Registered Native Title Determinations and Prescribed Bodies Corporate: Gunaikurnai.

- Indigenous Land Use Agreements with Native Title Claimants:

o Gunaikurnai and Taungurung

While there is limited publicly available information on the cultural significance of alpine sheoak skinks to Indigenous Australians, areas within the species' geographical range are culturally significant. For example, generations of Indigenous Australians have visited "Kunama Namadgi" (Mount Kosciuszko), reflected in the area's extensive system of archaeological sites and artefacts (Environment and Recreation 2007). 'Ku' means 'snow', '-nama' means 'making and having the quality of snow', 'Nama' means 'breasts', and '-dgi' means 'having' (Troy 2020). Many Indigenous Australians used to travel to the mountains surrounding "Kunama Namadgi" to roast and feast on the millions of Agrotis infusa (Bogong moth) that annually migrate to the mountains (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2006).

Members of the Kosciuszko Aboriginal Working Group describe Kosciuszko National Park as "our Mother.

She is our beginning, giving us our identity and culture. The mountains are very old, and an ongoing life force that strengthens the ancestral link of our people. We have a living, spiritual connection with the mountains. We retain family stories and memories of the mountains, which makes them spiritually and culturally significant to us.

Our Traditional Knowledge and cultural practices still exist and need to be maintained. There are places of spiritual and physical significance to our people, and we are committed to working in partnership with others to protect, maintain, and manage these places" (NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2006).

Throughout the year, though especially during spring and summer, Traditional Owner groups would come to the Victorian section of the Australian Alps to meet with the tribes of the mountains for intertribal ceremonies and feast on bogong moths. Of this, Aboriginal historian Eddie Kneebone said 'Many ceremonies would have taken place, initiations, marriages, trading, settling of disputes, renewing alliances and friendships… When this was over one last ceremony had to take place before the trek to the alps and the Bogong Moth Feast would begin.

This ceremony was receiving of permission to travel over someone else's territory. As mentioned, the Yiatmathong controlled the Kiewa and Mitta Mitta Valleys, they also had control of the Alpine region on the Vic side.

Their southernmost boundary extended to Hotham and ran along the highest ridge line of the Alps in an east-west direction.'(Kneebone 2004).

The Jaimathang people are involved in the conservation of alpine she-oak skink. Herpetologists working to research and conserve the species have liaised with the Jaimathang people, have been invited by them to work on their Country (known as 'Bimble' in Jaimathang), and have shown them sites and the species (N Clemann 2023. pers comm 30 Jan - 2 March)."

and

"The Australian Government acting through Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has exercised due care and skill in preparing and compiling the information and data in this publication. Notwithstanding, the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, its employees and advisers disclaim all liability, including liability for negligence and for any loss, damage, injury, expense or cost incurred by any person as a result of accessing, using or relying on any of the information or data in this publication to the maximum extent permitted by law."

and

"*Stakeholder engagement/community engagement • Support programs that engage Traditional Custodians in management, including knowledge sharing and the implementation of survey, research, monitoring and management actions. • Identify and engage all managers and Traditional Custodians to ensure they support the long-term, ongoing and effective monitoring programs for the* ***Guthega skink*** *and its threats across the species' range.*"

Guthega skink?

Oops!

That is a completely different species!

So, what we are getting for all our taxes paid is a bunch of scammers in government and their mates in so-called private enterprise, getting these cashed up jobs by way of nepotism.

They are then cutting and pasting the text from the last "*Conservation Advice*" they wrote on another "cash cow" species (the ***Guthega* skink**) and without even bothering to fix the text to match the new species when publishing the next "conservation advice".

Obviously it is a "one size fits all" caper!

Maybe they should try using a global "word change" on their word processor next time to do a better "cut and paste job" to scam the cash for their next private real estate investrment property!

Yes, these government-employed and contracted scammers are being paid to create another rambling fake woke text and collecting the cash for doing so!

And how much does each of these useless "*Conservation Advice*" rambles cost to produce?

As of 2023, more than $80 million each!

We know this from the annual reports published from the Victorian Government, New South Wales Government and Federal Government wildlife departments.

Now that is one heck of a cash cow!

And hence the etymology for this species.

PS – No disrespect to Aboriginals, but none of this taxpayer funded fake woke rubbish is of any benefit to any Aboriginals in Australia.

It has not stopped corrupt police from bashing up and killing countless aboriginals in an ongoing war against them.

Nor has it stopped the cocaine addicted judges and magistrates from incarcerating them as a first option when instructed to do so by the racist police. See for example Hoser (2020c) at page 45.

This fake woke rubbish will NOT save a single species either!

CYCLODOMORPHUS LIT SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:41253E8E-2B5C-43AC-972A-A84E1F431472

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.51692 collected from 6 miles north-west of Ben Lomond, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -29.966 S., Longitude 151.633 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Diagnosis: Until now, *Cyclodomorphus lit sp. nov.*, *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. have been treated as divergent populations of *C. michaeli* Wells and Wellington, 1984, with a type locality of Mount Victoria, New South Wales.

C. michaeli is herein regarded as a taxon of the central coast region of New South Wales only in an area generally from Newcastle to Nowra and the nearby hilly hinterland, south of the Hunter Valley, including the New South Wales Southern Highlands and the Blue Mountains.

The divergent taxon *C. cashcow sp. nov.* is known only from the Barrington Tops area of the coastal ranges, north of the Hunter Valley in New South Wales in high altitude areas.

C. lit sp. nov. is only known from the upper New England Tablelands Region of New South Wales, around the town of Ben Lomond, New South Wales (the type locality).

C. cashcow sp. nov. and *C. lit sp. nov*. are exclusively high-altitude species.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is found only in far north-east Victoria and immediately adjacent south-east New South Wales, generally at low altitude, in a relatively confined region, but where it is abundant and easily found by collectors.

C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is separated from *C. michaeli*, *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .by having an adult ground colour that is olive-brown on the dorsum rather than brownish orange on the dorsum in *C. michaeli* or greyish dorsally in *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* .

In turn *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* are separated from both *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. by having a dorsum in adults where the black markings not only coalesce to form semi-distinct longitudinal lines, but also as semi-distinct crossbands, especially anteriorly.

This is sometimes called the "gill-like" markings.

Both *C. lit sp. nov*. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* tend to be greyish dorsally, rather than brownish dorsally in both *C. michaeli* (orange brown) and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*. (olive brown).

C. lit sp. nov. has a subcaudal count (on original tails) below 85, versus over 92 for each of *C. cashcow sp. nov.*, *C. michaeli* and *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

C. lit sp. nov. and *C. cashcow sp. nov.* average 2.6 nuchal scales and 8 infralabials as a rule, versus 3.2 and 7 in *C. michaeli*, versus 6 or 7 infralabials in *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*..

The four species *C. michaeli*, *C. wellingtoni sp. nov*., *C. cashcow sp. nov.* and *C. lit sp. nov*. are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by not having a post narial groove, two infralabial scales contacting the postmental scale on each side, more than 65 subcaudal scales on the original tail and a dorsum that is not greyish in general colour with a complex pattern of brown, black, grey and white and having flanks with thin black bars and sometimes white interspaces as is seen in adult *C. casuarinae* (Duméril and Bibron, 1839).

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

C. michaeli is depicted in life in Hoser (1989) on page 107 at top

right, Swan, Sadlier and Shea (2022) on page 151 both images and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mattsummerville/16923057122/
C. wellingtoni sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/88708273@N03/8397228981/
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/60174058
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/42556271
and
https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/18534072
C. cashcow sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/shaneblackfnq/29846456055/
The type form of *C. casuarinae* is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/akashsherping/54163133578/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/ryanfrancis/31688785195/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/93733769@N03/9299532013/
Distribution: *C. lit sp. nov*. is only known from the New England Tablelands Region of New South Wales, from the type locality of Ben Lomond, New South Wales. It should be listed as a vulnerable or threatened species, pending an urgent assessment of population/s of the taxon (but see the etymology for *C. cashcow sp. nov*.).
Etymology: In Australia in year 2024, the word "*lit*" means "*something is exciting, intense, or fun*". E.g. Finding a new species is "lit".
Hence the etymology for the species.
ZEUSIUS WELLSI SP. NOV.
LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:6D1AA495-0F0A-4FE4-B083-550E2E4AEED2
Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Western Australian Museum, Perth, Western Australia, Australia, specimen number R145141 collected from beneath a sandstone rock at Mount Bomford, Kimberley District, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -15.755 S., Longitude -15.755 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.
Diagnosis: Until now, *Zeusius wellsi sp. nov*. has been treated as a divergent southern population of *Z. maxima* (Storr, 1976) by all other publishing authors.
Zeusius wellsi sp. nov. appears to be restricted to the general area around Barnett River and nearby Mount Bomford in the Kimberley District of Western Australia.
Z. maxima with a type locality of Kalumburu, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -14.18 S. Longitude 126.38 E. is a north Kimberley endemic.
Specimens from the coastal West Kimberley are also tentatively assigned to *Z. maxima* on the basis of similar adult colouration and scalation.
Z. wellsi sp. nov. is most easily separated from *Z. maxima* in life by colouration.
Z. wellsi sp. nov. is a dark grey brown with purple tinge above and with unmarked bluey-grey on the flanks of the body. Tail is slightly lighter above but consists of a semi distinct pattern of light bluish grey alternating with darker purple brown.
By contrast *Z. maxima* is an obviously yellowish-orange-brown lizard above and on the flanks. The colour change from dorsum to flank, just below the lateral edge is not abrupt in *Z. maxima*, but is in *Z. wellsi sp. nov.*.
The whitish spotting on the posterior half of the dorsum and anterior upper tail is invariably distinct and well defined in adult *Z. wellsi sp. nov.* but not always so in *Z. maxima* where the spotting is dull yellow or orangish as opposed to white or whitish grey in *Z. wellsi sp. nov.*.
Shea and Miller (1995) also noted that specimens herein assigned to *Z. wellsi sp. nov.* are further separated from *Z. maxima* by having: "*significantly fewer lower palpebrals (x's = 10.3 vs 11.6, t14 = 3.16), paravertebral scales (x's = 63.0 vs 65.3, t17 = 3.58) and subdigitallamellae (x's = 14.5 vs 15.9, t32 = 4.86), and a higher proportion of parietals contacting caudal to the interparietal (7:0 vs 2:8; Fisher Exact Probability Test, p<0.05)*"
than in *Z. maxima*.
Both *Z. wellsi sp. nov.* and *Z. maxima*, herein now defined as the entirety of the genus *Zeusius* Wells, 2007 are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024) including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by the following unique suite of characters:
Post narial groove is present; other than spotting (small to tiny spots that are numerous) on the rear of the dorsum and anterior upper surface of tail, there is no body pattern on the sides of the neck and the body is more-or less uniform in colour, save for a moderately or poorly defined colour change just below the dorsolateral edge of the body; maximum snout-vent length is above 20 cm.
Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:
Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on or in their daytime resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).
Z. wellsi sp. nov. is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 534 at top right.
Z. maxima is depicted in life in Wilson and Knowles (1988) on page 297 in image 431 and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/49564796397/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/54876436@N08/30409608556/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/52145412441/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/27354695522/
Distribution: *Zeusius wellsi sp. nov*. appears to be restricted to the general area around Barnett River and nearby Mount Bomford in the Kimberley District of Western Australia.
Etymology: *C. wellsi sp. nov*. is named in honour of one of Australia's leading herpetologists, Richard Walter Wells, currently of Drake in northern New South Wales, Australia, in recognition of a lifetime's achievements in herpetology.
As one who punched well above his weight from an early age, others in positions of power have been in a state of war against him to metaphorically shoot him down. This has been to attempt to limit his achievements in the hope this may further their own so-called careers in herpetology.
That is to remove a person they see as a competitor.
This ongoing war has spanned more than 4 decades and is wholly the fault of those who have improperly attacked Richard Wells.
It has had seriously negative wildlife conservation impacts (see Hoser 2007, 2019a, 2019b for details).
SCORED GEN. NOV.
LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:92619079-C5C1-470F-A019-2BFEBED605F0
Type species: *Scored one sp. nov.* (this paper).
Diagnosis: Until now *Scored gen nov*. included a group of species placed by most publishing herpetologists within the genus *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843, *sensu* Cogger (2014).
Exceptional to this has been Wells (2007) who erected the genus *Zeusius* type species *Omolepida maxima* Storr, 1976 for all but the *Cyclodus casuarinae* Duméril and Bibron, 1839 species group, which remained in *Cyclodomorphus.*
While the action of Wells (2007) made sense, including his resurrection of the genus *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 for the *Hinulia gerrardii* Gray, 1845 group of species, the phylogeny produced by Brennan *et al.* (2024) showed that two divergent species groups within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843, *sensu* Cogger (2014) remained unnamed.
One of these unnamed species groups is *Scored gen. nov*. and the other is *Obscurescincus gen. nov*..
Species within *Scored gen. nov.* are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*,

Zeusius Wells, 2007 and *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 by the following unique combination of characters:
Post narial groove present; and one or other of the following two-character combinations:
1/ Distinctive black patches or bars on the side of the neck and/or shoulder region, less than 55 subcaudals on the original tail; an agglomeration of black scales on the side of the neck extending over the shoulder region, sometimes halfway along the body and sometimes being concentrated as irregular vertical patches or bars, or:
2/ Body pattern including sides of neck and forebody uniform or more-or-less uniform in colour, except possibly in some juveniles; snout vent length maximum is under 15 cm.
The preceding diagnosis is modified from Cogger (2014).
Species within the other newly named genus *Obscurescincus gen. nov*. type species *Hinulia branchialis* Günther, 1867 are separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Scored gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007 and *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 by the following unique combination of characters:
Post narial groove present; distinctive black patches or bars on the side of the neck and/or shoulder region, more than 55 subcaudals on the original tail; three large patches of large vertical black patches on either side of the neck and shoulder region (modified from Cogger 2014).
Distribution: Species within *Scored gen. nov.* occur within most of the western two thirds of the Australian mainland, except for the wetter parts of the tropics and coolest parts of the south.
Etymology: When I became aware of yet another unnamed genus of Australian reptile, I told my wife I had scored another one, to which my wife replied, why not make that the etymology.
My kids wanted me to name another genus in honour of our dog, but I squashed that suggestion on the basis of previous complaints when I have done this previously (see for example Naish 2013 as amended).
In view of complaints by non-scientists and even scientists that scientific names are often difficult to pronounce, long in name, hard for lay people to pronounce, or generally difficult to remember (AKA "word monsters"), I thought the etymology for "scored" made sense!
Content: *Scored one sp. nov*. (type species); *S. aniceone sp. nov*.; *S. another sp. nov*.; *S. celatus* (Shea and Miller, 1995); *S. elongatus* (Werner, 1910); *S. melanops* (Stirling and Zeitz, 1893); *S. siticulosus* (Shea and Miller, 1995); *S. sternfeldi* (Wells, 2007); *S. venustus* Shea and Miller (1995); *S. yetanother sp. nov*..

SCORED ONE SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:A7F94055-8CA3-4159-BE81-A2D84FDE18FB

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.134357 collected from 3 km north of Gnarloo Homestead, via Gnarloo Bay Track, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -23.783 S., Longitude 113.516 E.
This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.
Paratypes: 1/ Two preserved specimens at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.134358 and R.134359 both collected from 3 km north of Gnarloo Homestead, via Gnarloo Bay Track, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -23.783 S., Longitude 113.516 E.
2/ A preserved specimen at the Western Australian Museum, Perth, Western Australia, Australia, specimen number R76762 collected from 1 km south "Gnaraloo Homestead, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -23.816667 S., Longitude 113.516667 E.
3/ A preserved specimen at the Western Australian Museum, Perth, Western Australia, Australia, specimen number R76888 collected from half a km south "Gnaraloo Homestead, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -23.816667 S., Longitude 113.533333 E.
Diagnosis: Until now, both species *Scored one sp. nov*. from the Shark Bay area of coastal Western Australia and *Scored another sp. nov*. from the Yuna area of near coastal Western Australia (between Geraldton and Kalbarri), have been treated as northern populations of "*Cyclodomorphus celatus* Shea and Miller, 1995", now transferred to *Scored gen. nov.* with a type locality of Ledge Point, Western Australia and a taxon herein confined to the coastal plains from Perth and north of there to about Lancelin in Western Australia.
The three preceding species are all widely allopatric of one another and are most readily separated from one another by colouration as detailed below:
The type form of S. *celatus* (Shea and Miller, 1995) is a light yellowish brownish orange colour above with numerous tiny rectangular dark grey flecks in the centre of numerous dorsal scales, particularly on the posterior parts of the upper body. On the tail these flecks become more faded and irregular in shape.
Juveniles are yellowish to red brown above with a darker grey-brown head, white spots on body and tail scales, vertical bars on sides of neck are weak and usually with dark streaks dorsally and laterally.
S. one sp. nov. by contrast have a darker dorsal ground colour and broader cream-edged dark streaks on top giving a darker and very mottled appearance. The flanks are whitish grey in colour with numerous scattered dark brown rectangular spots. Sides of neck may be strongly dark barred in adults, ranging down to pale with rows of dark brown spots. Juveniles are of similar colour to adults, but sometimes more faded in overall colour and pattern.
The venter is whitish to cream yellow with pale centres to many scales.
S. another sp. nov. is a distinctive grey to brown above, with reduced spotting or streaking on the upper surfaces making the lizard particularly plain in appearance.
The head, nape and throat lack markings of any sort. On the flanks, spotting is slightly more prominent than above but is still somewhat faded.
Juveniles of are mid brown dorsally and without dark flecking. There is a small white spot in the centre of each body scale. They have a distinctive dark grey head colour on the upper surface and bars of the same colour on the otherwise lighter sides of the neck.
The three species *Scored one sp. nov*., *S. another sp. nov*. and *S. celatus* are otherwise separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by the following unique combination of characters:
Post narial groove present; body pattern including sides of neck and forebody uniform or more-or-less uniform in colour, except possibly in some juveniles; maximum snout vent length is under 15 cm; eye opening is very small and slit like; 20-22 midbody scale rows.
Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:
Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).
S. one sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/540987415 41/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/54014648645/
S. celatus is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 533 top right and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128497936@N03/49113422333/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/akashsherping/43223492042/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mattsummerville/45009491395/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/jaricornelis/52461685522/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128203159@N06/45476395584
Distribution: *Scored one sp. nov*. is a range-restricted taxon confined to the coastal part of the Shark Bay area of coastal Western Australia.
Etymology: After my kids became aware of the newly identified species, my eldest daughter exclaimed "scored one!" and hence the etymology.

SCORED ANOTHER SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:41323D69-7A41-45E3-ACB2-C2115B920BE3

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.105626 collected from 23.7 km north-north-east by road of Yuna, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -28.25 E., Longitude 115.25 S.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: Ten preserved specimens at the Western Australian Museum, Perth, Western Australia, Australia, specimen numbers R26496, R47524, R47526, R47535, R47536, R47537, R47538, R47539, R47542 and R47545 all collected from 32 km north-east of Yuna, Western Australia, Australia, Latitude -28.116667 E., Longitude 115.216667 E.

Diagnosis: Until now, both species *Scored one sp. nov*. from the Shark Bay area of coastal Western Australia and *Scored another sp. nov*. from the Yuna area of near coastal Western Australia, between Geraldton and Kalbarri (generally inland), have been treated as northern populations of "*Cyclodomorphus celatus* Shea and Miller, 1995", now transferred to *Scored gen. nov.* with a type locality of Ledge Point, Western Australia and a taxon herein confined to the coastal plains from Perth and north of there to about Lancelin in Western Australia.

The three preceding species are all widely allopatric of one another and are most readily separated from one another by colouration as detailed below:

The type form of S. *celatus* (Shea and Miller, 1995) is a light yellowish brownish orange colour above with numerous tiny rectangular dark grey flecks in the centre of numerous dorsal scales, particularly on the posterior parts of the upper body. On the tail these flecks become more faded and irregular in shape.

Juveniles are yellowish to red brown above with a darker grey-brown head, white spots on body and tail scales, vertical bars on sides of neck are weak and usually with dark streaks dorsally and laterally.

S. one sp. nov. by contrast have a darker dorsal ground colour and broader cream-edged dark streaks on top giving a darker and very mottled appearance.

The flanks are whitish grey in colour with numerous scattered dark brown rectangular spots. Sides of neck may be strongly dark barred in adults, ranging down to pale with rows of dark brown spots.

Juveniles are of similar colour to adults, but sometimes more faded in overall colour and pattern.

The venter is whitish to cream yellow with pale centres to many scales.

S. another sp. nov. is a distinctive grey to brown above, with reduced spotting or streaking on the upper surfaces making the lizard particularly plain in appearance.

The head, nape and throat lack markings of any sort. On the flanks, spotting is slightly more prominent than above but is still somewhat faded.

Juveniles of are mid brown dorsally and without dark flecking. There is a small white spot in the centre of each body scale. They have a distinctive dark grey head colour on the upper surface and bars of the same colour on the otherwise lighter sides of the neck.

The three species *Scored one sp. nov*., *S. another sp. nov*. and *S. celatus* are otherwise separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by the following unique combination of characters:

Post narial groove present; body pattern including sides of neck and forebody uniform or more-or-less uniform in colour, except possibly in some juveniles; maximum snout vent length is under 15 cm; eye opening is very small, slit like and there are 20-22 midbody scale rows.

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on or in their resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

S. one sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/114192916@N07/54098741541/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/54014648645/

S. celatus is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 533 top right and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128497936@N03/49113422333/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/akashsherping/43223492042/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/mattsummerville/45009491395/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/jaricornelis/52461685522/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/128203159@N06/45476395584

Distribution: *Scored another sp. nov*. appears to be a range-restricted taxon confined to the Yuna area of near coastal Western Australia, between Geraldton and Kalbarri (generally inland).

Etymology: My kids became aware of another newly identified species, and my eldest daughter exclaimed "scored one" in relation to the taxon now carrying that name. In relation to this taxon, my younger daughter at the same time then said "scored another!" and hence the etymology for this taxon.

SCORED YETANOTHER SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:9D4B334A-C6F5-4037-BE22-2C4A2F60F2B7

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the South Australian Museum herpetology collection, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, specimen number R21024 collected from 28 km north of Billa Kalina, South Australia, Australia, Latitude - 29.9145 S., Longitude 136.3625 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: 1/ A preserved specimen at the South Australian Museum herpetology collection, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, specimen number R24415 collected from Wilpena Pound, South Australia, Australia, Latitude -31.5590 S., Longitude: 138.5740 E. and:

2/ A preserved specimen at the South Australian Museum herpetology collection, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, specimen number R24519 collected from Blinman, South Australia, Australia, Latitude -31.72 S., Longitude: 138.4122 E.

Diagnosis: Until now, most publishing Australian herpetologists have treated the concept of "*Cyclodomorphus venustus*" as originally proposed by Shea and Miller, 1995, with a type locality of Port Germein, South Australia, Australia, Lat. -33.01 S., Long. 138.00 E. That is a species found throughout south and east central Australia. Wells (2007) transferred the taxon to his newly erected genus *Zeusius* Wells, 2007 and split the putative northern population off as a new species, namely "Z. *sternfeldi* Wells, 2007" as foreshadowed by Shea and Miller (1995).

That was a population with a centre of distribution around the Channel Country of south-west Queensland and adjacent parts of northern New South Wales and far northeast South Australia.

These two and thitherto unnamed third species are herein transferred to the genus *Scored gen. nov*..

The type form from the Spencer Gulf and Eyre Peninsula region, remains as *Scored venustus*, while the disjunct and morphologically divergent population found in the central parts of South Australia are herein described as the new species *Scored yetanother sp. nov*..

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

S. venustus is characterised by a strong orange colour on the dorsum and flanks, strongly flecked black and light grey above. The flanks have well developed black markings, etched white on the edges, giving the sides a distinctive gill-like pattern, that is prominent on the neck and forebody and usually extends quite prominently along the entire length of the flank on the body.

Old and faded specimens become brownish on top and orange on the sides and retain some form of gill type markings on the flanks, even if sometimes reduced to mainly white markings, instead of black etched with white.

By contrast *S. yetanother sp. nov.* is plain bright orange-red-brown

on top, with each scale lightly etched grey only and strongly reduced gill type markings, being reduced on the neck and around the axilla of the forelimb, but otherwise wholly absent from the flanks in any form. The scales that are whitish on the sides of *S. venustus* are in this species greatly reduced in number, so as to be very scattered at best as well as reduced in intensity so as to be barely differentiated from the surrounding orange scales.

S. sternfeldi is very different to the two preceding taxa in that the gill-type markings are reduced to be nothing more than a black smudge or patch generally above the axilla of the front leg, but not in a gill-type appearance as seen in particular in *S. venustus.*

Dorsally *S. sternfeldi* is a light yellowish brown coloured lizard as opposed to reddish brown or orange as seen in particular in *S. yetanother sp. nov.*.

S. venustus is a much darker coloured lizard than *S. yetanother sp. nov.*.

There are no black or white scales, or otherwise lighter scales at all on the flanks of *S. sternfeldi.*

S. venustus has extensive and heavy blackish spotting on the (original) tail, the individual spots being quite large and obvious but irregularly shaped and while arranged longitudinally does not give the appearance of caudal lines. *S. yetanother sp. nov*. has scattered tiny round, well-defined black spots on the (original) tail that are arranged longitudinally.

S. sternfeldi has no spotting on the (original) tail.

Shea and Miller (1995) give scalation and other differences between the three taxa described herein, those authors treating each as populations of *S. venustus*.

The three species *S. venustus*, *S. sternfeldi* and *S. yetanother sp. nov*. are otherwise separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* (as defined in Cogger 2024), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by the following unique combination of characters:

Post narial groove present; distinctive black patches or bars on the side of the neck and/or shoulder region; less than 55 subcaudals on the original tail; an agglomeration of black scales on the side of the neck extending over the shoulder region, sometimes halfway along the body and sometimes being concentrated as irregular vertical patches or bars.

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

S. yetanother sp. nov. is depicted in life online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/103027574@N04/11581598845

The type form of *S. venustus* is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 537 at top left and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/58349528@N02/32260993745/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/reptileshots/20456373806/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/49220288462/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/127392361@N04/50704696053/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gondwanareptileproductions/53350260598/

S. sternfeldi is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 537 at top right and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/euprepiosaur/10063237276/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/euprepiosaur/10063170794/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/euprepiosaur/10063171494/

Distribution: *S. yetanother sp. nov*. is a taxon found in the central and northern parts of South Australia, mainly west of Lake Eyre.

Etymology: After my wife noted it was “yetanother” species needing to be named the relevant etymology stuck.

SCORED ANICEONE SP. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:9A1E8EE7-FC45-4F45-894E-6D4C4E540429

Holotype: A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.161100 collected from Renmark, South Australia, Australia, Latitude -34.1754 S., S, Longitude 140.7455 E.

This government-owned facility allows access to its holdings.

Paratypes: 1/ A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.130982 collected from 12.4 miles north of Coombah Roadhouse via Silver City Highway, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.816 S., Longitude 141.616 E. 2/ A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.130983 collected from 8.4 miles north of Coombah Roadhouse via Silver City Highway, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.883 S., Longitude 141.616 E. 3/ Two preserved specimens at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen numbers R.105443 and R.105446, both collected from 12.5 km north of “Coombah”, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude - 32.866 S., Longitude 141.616 E. 4/ A preserved specimen at the Australian Museum, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, specimen number R.121029 collected from 166 km north of Wentworth, New South Wales, Australia, Latitude -32.8 S., Longitude 141.616 E. 5/ A preserved specimen at the South Australian Museum, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia, specimen number R15988 collected from Dangalli Conservation Park, South Australia, Australia, Latitude -33.5 S., Longitude 140.7 E.

Diagnosis: The species *Scored aniceone sp. nov.*, has until now been treated as an East Australian population of the species *Scored melanops* (Stirling and Zeitz, 1893), better known as “*Cyclodomorphus melanops*” or alternatively as an eastern population of the subspecies *Cyclodomorphus melanops elongatus* (Werner, 1910). It is neither.

Scored aniceone sp. nov. is a taxon from south-west New South Wales and immediately adjacent south-east South Australia, generally near the lower Murray River basin.

It is readily separated from all other forms of putative *S. melanops* from other parts of Australia by the following unique combination of characters:

A complete absence of any barring or etching of the upper labials or if present so faint as to be barely noticeable. There is faint black etching between scales on the dorsum of the head, but otherwise the upper surface of the head is an immaculate brown in colour (not greyish in any way). Dorsum is a medium brown, becoming yellowish on the flanks or alternatively similar but chocolate or dark brown, each scale on the body dully etched darker on the posterior edge. The light of the chin scales enters and includes most of the upper labials, which darken to the dorsal colour at the upper edge.

Iris is orange.

Immaculate venter and less than 75 subcaudals.

All other forms of *S. melanops* and associated species have obvious dark bars or dark etching on the upper labials, as well as prominent dark etching of the scales on the upper body and flanks, which are either similar on the tail or become black or dark spotting, and/or have a greyish upper surface of the head in contrast to the otherwise generally brown dorsal body colour.

See for example the images in Shea and Miller (1995) at Fig. 15 (and others to Fig. 32), on page 279 bottom left of Wilson and Knowles (1988), Cogger (2014) on page 535 bottom, Horner (1992) on page 77 at middle right or Wilson and Swan 2021 on page 311, bottom three images.

By contrast, images of *Scored aniceone sp. nov*. in life can be found in Swan *et al.* (2022) and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/gondwanareptileproductions/52543088929/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/julesfarquhar/33120940525/

Scored aniceone sp. nov. and all other species and subspecies

in the *S. melanops* group (by subspecies names), as defined by Wells (2007) are separated from all other species *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. by the following unique combination of characters:

Postnarial groove present; paravertebral scales noticeably broader than adjoining lateral dorsal scales; snout-vent length up to 130 mm; interparietal only a little smaller than the frontal; side of neck without solid dark ovoid markings; 58-87 subcaudal scales; 24-29 midbody scale rows; ear open, usually with a single lobule on the rostral margin; sides of neck are immaculate or with scattered black spots (but not any streaks).

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

Distribution: *Scored aniceone sp. nov*. is a taxon from south-west New South Wales and immediately adjacent south-east South Australia, generally near the lower Murray River basin.

Etymology: In 2010 when collecting specimens near the roadside outside Renmark in South Australia, I was intercepted at gunpoint by State police.

They were convinced I was some kind of anti-government terrorist. Their computer had flagged me as a terrorist and according to the South Australian Police, there was no way known their computer could have possibly got it wrong.

I produced my identification documents and relevant wildlife license documents to account for the car load of reptiles I had on board.

After some time convincing the police that I was not any serious threat to Australian civilization, they decided to follow me around the "tin spot" looking for reptiles to catch and photograph.

They even grabbed skinks for me, but stupidly knocked off their tails when grabbing them.

The police had decided that this was better entertainment than driving along deserted roads to harass stray motorists or shoot native Aboriginals.

One of the male police officers grabbed a specimen of a *Scored aniceone sp. nov*. hiding under a sheet of tin.

He was clearly pleased he hadn't amputated the tail when grabbing it. He showed me the lizard and with a smile on his face said "*scored a nice one*" and hence the etymology for the species.

OBSCURESCINCUS GEN. NOV.

LSIDurn:lsid:zoobank.org:act:5F6D47DF-8DD7-4A5C-8D5D-E951C3C9C2A0

Type species: *Hinulia branchialis* Günther, 1867.

Diagnosis: The genus *Obscurescincus gen. nov.* monotypic for the type species, is separated from all other species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Post narial groove present; distinctive black patches or bars on the side of the neck and/or shoulder region; more than 55 subcaudals on original tails; three large black vertical patches on each side of the neck and shoulder region.

Species within *Cyclodomorphus* Fitzinger, 1843 *sensu lato* as defined by Cogger (2014), including the genera *Obscurescincus gen. nov.*, *Zeusius* Wells, 2007, *Hemisphaeriodon* Peters, 1867 and *Scored gen. nov*. are separated from all other Australian skinks by the following unique combination of characters:

Medium-sized smooth-scaled skinks, with slender heads, necks and bodies, generally elongate in form. Anterior ear lobules usually present; subequal scales; no supranasals or divided nasal scales; a scaly movable lower eyelid; parietal scales not in contact behind the third interparietal; third and fourth toes not equal or the third toe at least slightly longer than the fourth; undivided subdigital lamellae; original tail long and slender and usually at least as long as the body. Live bearing. Strongly crepuscular unless forced to move by day due to excess heat on resting place (modified from Cogger, 2014).

The sole member of the genus *Obscurescincus gen. nov.* is depicted in life in Cogger (2014) on page 532 at bottom and online at:
https://www.flickr.com/photos/27897324@N07/48917221762/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/129822827@N07/52394145012/
and
https://www.flickr.com/photos/brian_busho/14275717337/

Distribution: The sole species is found in a relatively restricted area in south-west Western Australia between the Murchison and Irwin Rivers.

Etymology: *Obscurescincus* is fitting for what is in the scheme of things an obscure but divergent genus of skinks.

Content: *Obscurescincus branchialis* (Günther, 1867) (monotypic).

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.