A Division of the Patch-nosed Snakes, genus *Salvadora* Baird and Girard, 1853 (Serpentes: Colubridae: Colubrinae).

Raymond T. Hoser

488 Park Road, Park Orchards, Victoria, 3134, Australia.

Phone: +61 3 9812 3322 Fax: 9812 3355 E-mail: viper007@live.com.au

Received 15 March 2012, Accepted 4 May 2012, Published 30 June 2012.

**ABSTRACT**

The Patch-nosed Snakes placed within the genus *Salvadora* Baird and Girard, 1853 have had a stable taxonomic history at the genus level since the genus was first named in 1853. However the division of the genus into two distinctive lineages has been well known for many years (Smith, 1938). A review of these snakes yields a need to divide the genus.


A new genus *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. is erected to contain the species *Salvadora lemniscata* (Cope, 1895) and *Salvadora mexicana* (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854) according to the Zoological Code.

The latter genus is most easily separated from the former by its higher subcaudal count (121-139 versus 82-103), one preocular (versus two or more) and an unenlarged rostral (versus one that usually is).

**Keywords:** Patch-nosed Snake; Taxonomy; *Aiselfakharius*; *Salvadora*; new genus.

**GENUS AISELFAKHARIUS GEN. NOV.**

**Type species:** *Zamenis mexicanus* Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854

**Diagnosis:** Wright and Wright (1957) give an excellent diagnosis of the genus Salvadora as recognized to date. This is provided herein, slightly altered as part of the diagnosis for the new genus *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov.

The snakes of the genus *Salvadora* as recognized to date are medium in size, up to 120 cm long, with a long slender body that tapers and with a tail that is 18 to 34 percent of the total length (see below), the head is elongate and distinct. Cephalic plates are normal except for the rostr al which is usually thickened, widened, triangular and curved back over the snout in all forms except for those now placed in the genus *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. Loreal is single or divided, one pre-ocular or *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. versus 2 or more in *Salvadora*. Postoculars 2-3, suboculars sometimes present, supralabials usually 8-10, infralabials usually 8-12; with anywhere from none to 3 contacting the eye (see below). The second pair of chin shields are in contact or separated by as many as 3 small scales, eye is large with a round pupil above labials 4-7, scales are smooth without bifurcation, with apical calyces, single sulcus and long basal spines.

The genus *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. is easily separated from *Salvadora* by the following characters: one preocular (instead of two or more), the tail is 30 per cent of the total length or more (versus less than 30 per cent in *Salvadora*), 121-139 subcaudals (versus 82-103 in *Salvadora*), 3 supralabials enter the eye (versus no more than two entering the eye in *Salvadora*), the rostral is not greatly enlarged (as is the case in *Salvadora*).

The dorsal body pattern in *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. may be either striped or speckled (usually striped) and if there is speckling it is typically on the anterior third of the body.

**Distribution:** Mexico and the region south including Guatemala.

**Etymology:** *Aiselfakharius* gen. nov. is named in recognition of the Akram Elafhaki of Northcote, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, known to his friends and family as “Ace”. The scientific name has been deliberately spelt in a manner in order to sound the same as he is known, but spelt so as to be naturally said as spelt and without difficulty by those unaware of the intention of the name. Ace is herein recognized for numerous services to the Victorian Taxi Industry and for extremely brave efforts in fighting corruption within the Victorian Taxi Directorate (VTD) and predecessor Vicroads in the 1980’s and 1990’s including against corrupt VTD lawyers Terry O’Keefe, David Robby and John Connell, and their army of corrupt and dishonest “enforcement officers”, better described as violent thugs, who broke every conceivable rule, including George Olsen, Roger Bowman, John Brentnall, John Perry, Len Hodgens, Gordon Alliston, Geoffrey Goodson, Derry Ashton, Andrew Pingo and Arnold Howard (see Hosker 1995 and Hosker 1999 for details).

**Content of Aiselfakharius gen. nov.**

*Aiselfakharius mexicana* (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854)(Type species).

*Aiselfakharius lemnciscata* (Cope, 1895).

**Content of Salvadora Baird and Girard, 1853**

*Salvadora grahamiae* Baird and Girard, 1853 (Type species).

*Salvadora bairdi* Jan, 1860.

*Salvadora hexalepis* (Cope, 1867).

*Salvadora deserticola* Schmidt, 1940.

*Salvadora intermedia* Hartweg, 1940.

**REFERENCES CITED**


