

A NEW SNAKE FROM TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE
ISLAND.

By C. W. Bruzenor, Mammalogist, National Museum of Victoria.

Fig. 1.

(Received for publication July 7, 1947).

Mr. R. Clarke, of Melbourne, Victoria, brought to the Museum a number of reptiles collected during his war service on Bougainville, Solomon Islands. Amongst them are three snakes, belonging to the genus *Denisonia*, which do not fit the descriptions of either of the species previously described from that area. They are therefore recorded as

Denisonia furva sp. nov.

Eye two-thirds as long as its distance from the mouth. Rostral much broader than deep; well visible from above. Internasals about two-thirds the length of the prefrontals, which are broader than long. Frontal a little longer than broad; more than twice as broad as the superoculars; one-and-a-half times as long as the prefrontals, and three-quarters the length of the parietals. Nasal a single scale, but showing a fold above the nostril; in contact with a single preocular. One postocular. Temporals 1 + 1. Six upper labials, the third and fourth entering the eye and the fifth largest. Six lower labials, four in contact with the anterior chin shields which are about as long as the posterior. Anal divided. Scales in 15 rows; ventrals 164; subcaudals 32, all paired.

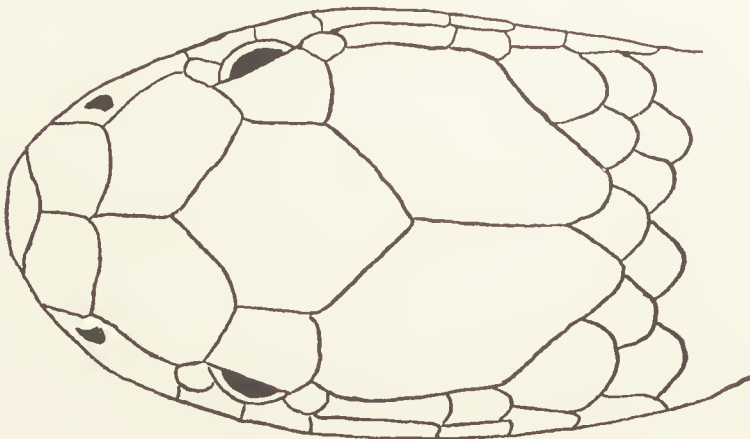
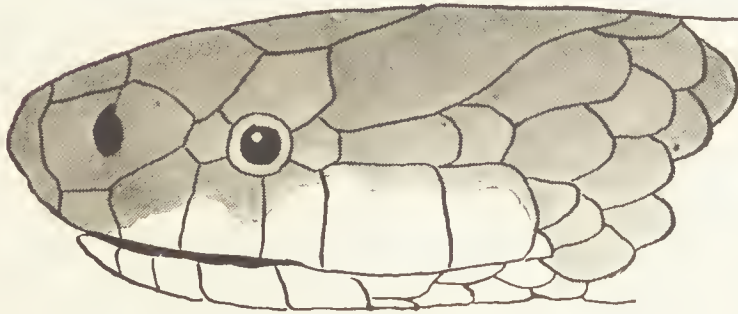
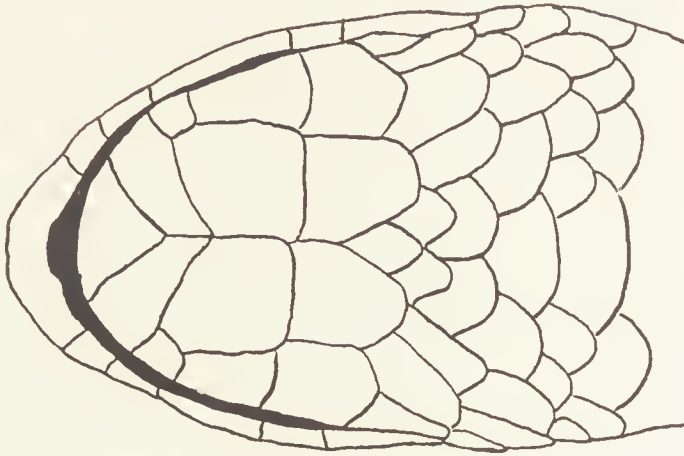
Dorsal colour "deep slaty-brown" (Ridgway, L., 69 ' ' ', K), lighter and warmer on the sides of the body where each scale has a paler edge. Head as back but the parietals very slightly paler, giving the effect of a faint V-shaped bar on the crown; a whitish patch on the cheek reaching from the second labial along the lower border of the orbit to well behind the opening of the mouth. Lower parts creamy white, the basal half of each ventral scale barred for the whole of its width with pale, purplish-brown. Subcaudals barred with much colder pale grey

Total length 431mm.; tail 44mm.

Locality, Torokina, Bougainville Island, November 12, 1944.

Type in the National Museum of Victoria, No. D. 7738.

The three specimens are remarkably uniform both in scalation and colour. The head scales are identical and the body counts close.



Specimen B.

Scales in 15 rows; ventrals 169; subcaudals 33 pairs.
Total length 466mm.; tail 49mm.

Specimen C.

Scales in 15 rows; ventrals 167; subcaudals 31 pairs.
Total length 421mm.; tail 39mm.

The head of this specimen was removed for examination of skull.

Boulenger described three species of *Denisonia* from the Solomons, namely *D. par.* (1), *D. woodfordii* (2), and *D. melanura* (3). Subsequently Kinghorn (3), and later Burt (5) showed that *par* and *melanura* are synonymous, the former name taking priority. There is considerable variation within these species both in scalation and coloration, but the present specimens are quite distinct. Mr. Clarke notes that he saw numbers of this snake, and that the specimens secured are of average size and are full grown.

The new species is smaller than *par* or *woodfordii*; it has a single postocular; it has an undivided nasal; it has fewer subcaudal scales. It further differs from *par* in having paired subcaudals, and from *woodfordii* in being darker and more uniform in colour.

REFERENCES.

- (1) Boulenger G. A., Pro. Zoo. Soc. Lond., p. 210, 1884.
- (2) Boulenger G. A., Pro. Zoo. Soc. Lond., p. 89, 1888.
- (3) Boulenger, G. A., Pro. Zoo. Soc. Lond., p. 88, 1888.
- (4) Kinghorn, J. R., Rec. Aust. Mus., XVI, p. 148, 1928.
- (5) Burt, C. E., Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., LXIII, p. 568, 1932.