

REDISCOVERY OF THE GENUS PSEUDOGEEKKO WITH DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

WALTER C. BROWN¹ and VASCO M. TANNER²

Taylor (1915, p. 96) described *Luperosaurus compresicorpus* on the basis of a single female specimen from Batan Province, Luzon Island in the Philippines, noting at the time that he was not sure of its generic position. Later (1922, p. 103), he made this species the type of the genus *Pseudogekko* and suggested a possible relationship with *Thecadactylus*. The genus is very distinct and we are also somewhat in doubt as to its true affinities. However, comparison of this single specimen from the Solomon Islands with a paratype of *Luperosaurus macgregori* and the description of the genera *Thecadactylus* and *Pseudothecadactylus* based on Brongersma's detailed consideration of their differences (1934, pp. 176-179, and 1936, p. 136) we are inclined to believe that it is probably more closely related to the genus *Luperosaurus*.

The type of *Pseudogekko compresicorpus* was deposited in the collections of the Philippine Bureau of Science, No. 1781, (Taylor, 1944, p. 148). This and probably two embryos mentioned by Taylor (1922, p. 105) are to the best of our knowledge no longer extant due to the loss of the collections of the Philippine Bureau of Science during the second World War; and these were, as far as we were able to find in the literature, the only known specimens of the genus.

Our assigning of the present species to this genus is based on general similarities which are much greater than the apparent differences in the nature of the claw sheath as shown in Taylor's drawing (fig. 12 c, 1922, p. 104) and our own figure 1 which follows. Taylor's drawing suggests that the ventral portion of the claw sheath is formed by the two halves of the terminal lamella. In the present species as well as in *Luperosaurus macgregori* the ventral portion of the claw sheath is a pointed median plate which is frequently indistinguishable from the claw except in a lateral view. We venture that the same ventral sheath structure was present in the specimen of *P. compresicorpus* but passed unobserved. The fact that the terminal lamella in the present species is actually undivided is paralleled by the conditions in *Lepido-*

¹ Of the Natural History Museum, Stanford University.

² Professor of Zoology and Entomology, Brigham Young University. Contribution No. 117.

dactylus, being divided in some species., as *L. lugubris* for example, and undivided in others, as *L. guppyi*.

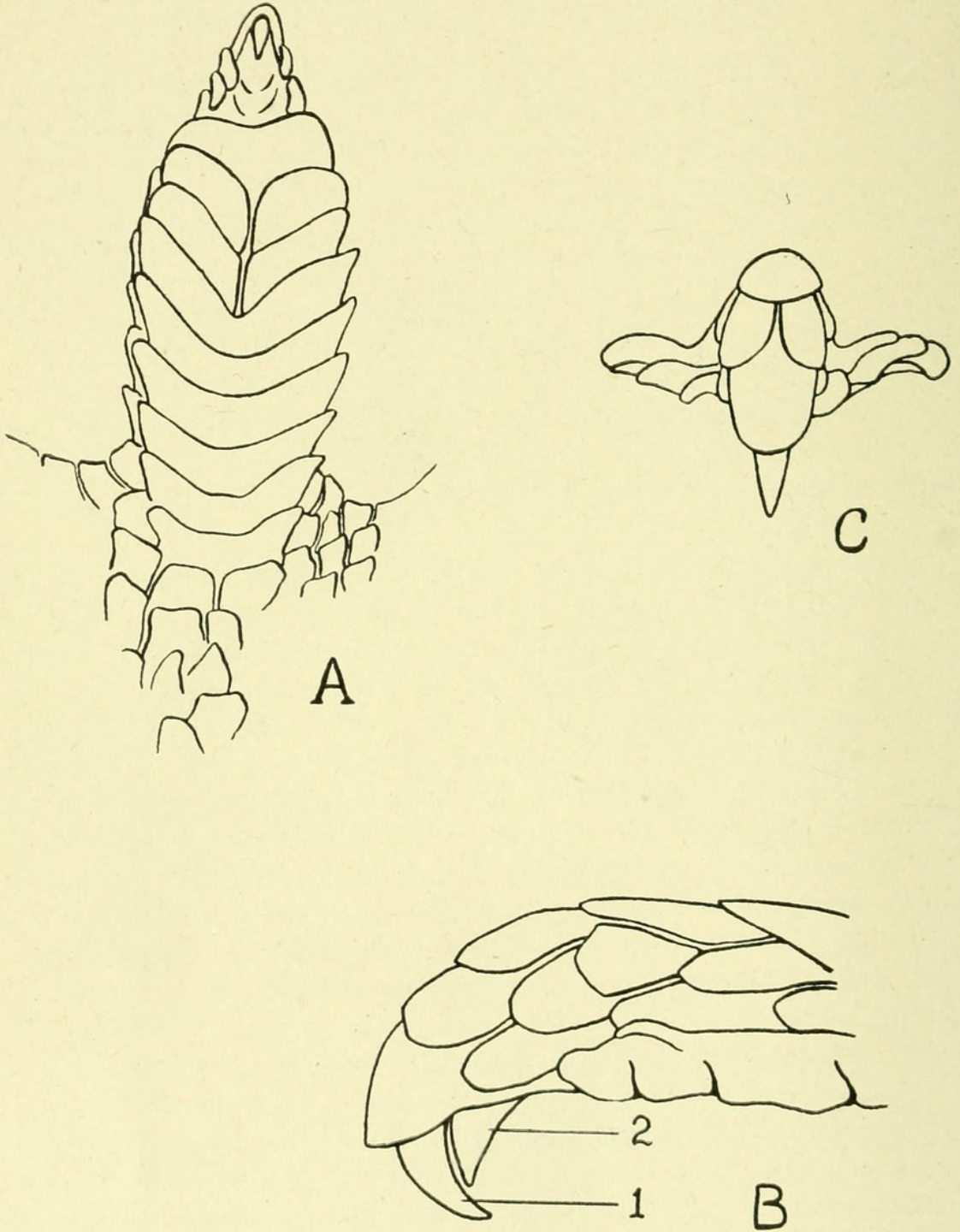


Fig. 1. Inferior view of second toe of *Pseudogekko shebae* (A); lateral view of toe (B), 1. Claw, 2. inferior portion of claw sheath; end view of toe (C).

Pseudogekko shebae Brown and Tanner, new species

Holotype: Brigham Young University No. 7002, collected in the lower Lunga River area on Guadalcanal Island, May 31, 1944, by John Chattin and presented at that time to D. Elden Beck who later deposited the specimen in the herpetological collections at Brigham Young University.

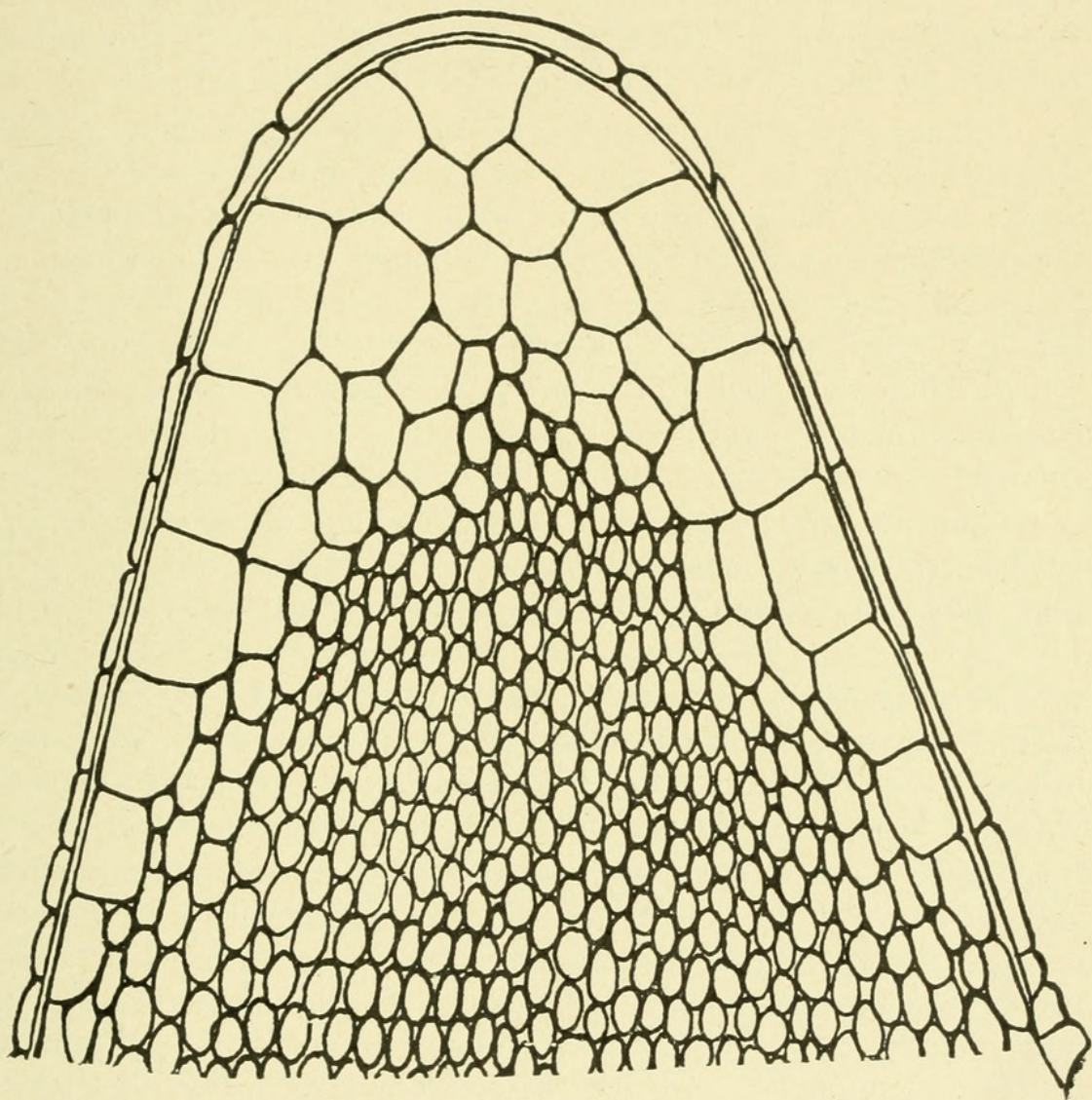


Fig. 2. Ventral view of head of *Pseudogekko shebae*.

Definition: A *Pseudogekko* differing primarily from *P. compresicorpus* in the much lower number of labials (10 upper, as compared to 19 or 20 in *P. compresicorpus*; and 9 lower, as compared to 16), the presence of enlarged chin shields, and the undivided condition of the terminal lamella.

Description of Holotype: Body very slender; head about $1\frac{1}{2}$

times as long as broad and more broad than the body; snout slightly longer than the distance from the eye to the ear; eye large with vertical pupil; ear small, oval; upper labials 10/10, lower labials 9/9; rostral more than twice as broad as long with a broadly rounded median notch dorsally; nostril between the rostral, the first labial and three supranasals; the anterior supranasals separated from each other by three large, flat granules, the median one much the largest and resting in the broad depression in the rostral; mental somewhat pentagonal, only slightly longer than the first lower labials; two rows of chin shields followed by two rows of slightly enlarged scales (fig. 2).

Dorsum covered with small granules, those of the snout largest; laterally merging into the larger, moderately imbricate scales of the venter and the limbs; those of the venter tending to be hexagonal on the posterior part of the body (The fact that they are imbricate can best be observed when viewed laterally.); the ventral scale rows falling in 16 longitudinal rows between the angles of the hindlimbs; tail round, slender, covered with squarish imbricated scales as in *Bavayia*; 30 preanal and femoral pores in a continuous series, followed by the enlarged preanal scales; postanal slits and ossicles present.

Limbs moderately developed; the digits long, rather uniformly dilated except for the most distal part which tapers gradually to the compressed claw sheath which encloses the terminal, recurved, retractile claw (fig. 1); inner finger and inner toe clawless (This unique specimen has lost the claws from all but three of the toes but they remain on the fingers.); lamellae beneath the fingers and toes moderately broad and wide with only the 2 or 3 adjacent to the terminal one divided, 11 beneath the fourth toe; fingers and toes $1/4$ to $1/3$ webbed.

Color: Dorsum (in preservative) reddish-brown (almost "chestnut," Maerz and Paul, 1930, pp. 36-37), mottled with light blotches on the lower lateral surfaces; margin of the lips yellowish tan; a narrow broken dark brown line from beneath the eye to the region of the neck posterior to the ear; a series of 3 or 4 small dark brown blotches between the limbs (more distinct on the left side), and a dorsolateral series of three small dark brown blotches on either side extending from the neck to a point about $1/4$ of the distance between the axilla and the groin; the tail marked by 4 somewhat indistinct lighter transverse bands on the dorsal surface.

Measurements (in millimeters): Length of head and body 36, length of head (to posterior edge of tympanum) 9, breadth of head 6, snout $3\frac{1}{2}$, diameter of eye 2.75, eye to ear 3, length of forelimb 9+, length of hind limb 12+, length of tail 29. (The measurements of the

limbs are given as + figures because of the difficulty of straightening them completely without doing damage.)

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