A NEW SPECIES OF DIPLOGLOSSUS (SAURIA: ANGUINAE) FROM HISPANIOLA

By Richard Thomas

Hispaniolan anguid lizards include members of the genus Diploglossus Wiegmann and the monotypic Weimorena Cochran. Structurally most specialized are the semifossorial, long-bodied, short-limbed forms: Weimorena baetiana Cochran and Diploglossus sepsoides (Gray). The latter was long considered to form another monotypic genus, Sauresia Gray. Underwood (1959) regarded Sauresia as not generically distinct from Diploglossus, and Schwartz (1964, 1970) has used the combination Diploglossus sepsoides.

In the summer of 1969, Robert K. Bobilin and I sampled a population of sepsoides-like galliwasps inhabiting the region of the isolated, zoologically little-known Sierre de Martín García in the southern Dominican Republic. Although obviously related to D. sepsoides, these lizards are in some respects more extreme morphologically and are set off from that form by several features.

The scutellation of the new Diploglossus is like that of D. sepsoides in details of arrangement (see Cochran, 1941: 257). In both the supraoculars form part of an incomplete circumorbital series, which I have counted beginning with the anteriormost supraocular (abutting on the prefrontal) and ending with the scale contacting the angular subocular dorsopteriorly. I have used the term "loreal series" for the scales between the nasal and the anterior margin of the eye (Figure 1).
The new galliwasp may be known as

**Diploglossus agasepoides** new species

**Holotype.**—USNM 166964, one of a series taken at Barreras, Provincia de Azua, República Dominicana, on 25 July 1968 by native collectors. Original number ASFS V21437.


**Diagnosis.**—A species related to *Diploglossus sepoïdes* but distinguished from that form in the following respects: fewer longitudinal scale rows (27-29 vs. 32-41); three, as opposed to four, scales in the loreal series (Figure 1); flattened, non-tuberculate subdigital scales; lower head-body ratio (Figure 2); smaller limbs (Figure 3); smaller size and more slender build; a more contrasting pattern consisting of a pale middorsal zone set off sharply from dark lateral zones; and modally fewer scales in the circum-orbital series (Table II).

![Figure 1. Head of holotype of *D. agasepoides* (USNM 166964); stippled scales indicate "loreal series"; crosshatched scale is angular subocular. Line represents 5 mm.](image)

![Figure 2. Scatter diagram of head length (snout to anterior border of ear opening) versus snout-vent length (SVL); circles represent values for *D. sepoïdes*; triangles, values for *D. agasepoides*.](image)

**Distribution.**—Known only from the region of the Sierra de Martín García in the southern Dominican Republic (Figure 4).

**Description of holotype.**—Snout-vent length 39 mm, tail 44 mm (regenerated); head length 7.1 mm, head width 5.5 mm; scales mental to vent 114, midbody scale rows 29, circumorbital 8/7, upper labials 7/7, angular subocular between labials 5 and 6 on both sides, scales in loreal series 3/3. Four digits on each limb; subdigital lamellae flattened, unkeeled, and non-tuberculate. Middorsal zone pale gray with scattered fleckings of dark pigment and sharply set off from dark brown sides along a dorsolateral line of juncture extending posteriorly from canthus rostralis along body and tail (sharpness of juncture obscured on regenerated portion); dorsum of head suffused with dark pigment somewhat obscuring line of juncture from eyes forward. Solid dark color of sides fades ventrally because of increased restriction of pigment to centers of scales, resulting in a finely lineate pattern ventrolaterally; midventralmost scales (3-4 rows) lightly flecked with dark pigment. Inferolabial and lateral gular regions transversely barred; limbs dark above, lighter below.

**Variation.**—Meristic variation in the type series is shown in Table I. Coloration of the paratypes is similar to that of holotype; some have more ex-

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Digital lamellae—tuberculare in _sepoideis_ and laminate in _agasepoideis_ with no suggestion of tuberculations or even keeling (the tubercules of _sepoideis_ are ontogenetically derived from keels). The separation of the parietal scales on the posterior border of the interparietal is typically greater in _agasepoideis_ than in _sepoideis_, in which the parietals are closer or in apical contact. The number of scales in the circumbital series of _sepoideis_ ranges from 8 to 11. Considering all circumbital series without regard to pairing, 8 scales are found in 1 series, 9 in 77, 10 in 167, 11 in 2, and 12 in 1. _D. agasepoideis_ has either 8 (23 series) or 9 (12 series) scales in the circumbital series. Thus 83 percent of the specimens of _D. agasepoideis_ have fewer scales in at least one circumbital series than do all but one specimen of _sepoideis_. However, 53 percent of _agasepoideis_ and 45 percent of _sepoideis_ have at least one circumbital series containing 9 scales. Differences in body proportions are less easily expressed, but indications of these differences are seen in Figures 2 and 3. Patterns in the two species are similar, but the darker pigmentation of the middorsal zone of _sepoideis_ obscures the pattern, whereas the contrasting coloring of the two zones in _agasepoideis_ accentuates it. Also, despite the overall darker dorsal pigmentation of _sepoideis_, the ventral is nearly immaculate (although there is some variation in amount of lateral encroachment of pigment). As noted, pigment extends well onto the middorsal surface in _agasepoideis_, although the intensity varies. Although contrastingly patterned, the coloration of _D. agasepoideis_ is composed of different intensities of gray, gray-brown, or tan. _D. sepoideis_ shows a greater chromatic range; it is characteristically reddish ventrally (pink, faintly orange, deep reddish orange, deep orange, or orange-red) including the underside of the tail. Dorsally, this species is life ranges from plain brown to bronz brown, coppery greenish, olive, or silvery gray; the sides are dark brown. Ventrally _D. agasepoideis_ may appear faintly reddish but it is difficult to tell whether the coloring is pigmented or vascular. Dorsally _agasepoideis_ was noted as being either pale tan or pale gray; the sides are darker brown.

Remarks.—_Diploglossus sepoideis_ is widespread in Hispaniola (Figure 4), although infrequently noted in abundance. The species has nearly always been collected in mesic habitats, but its occurrence is unpredictable: even in an apparently appropriate situation, one cannot be certain of finding it. This lizard's presence on xerophytic Ile Grande Cayemite is, in my experience, the major exception to the occurrence of the species in mesic situations. In all likelihood, however, Grande Cayemite has been rendered xerophytic by the activities of man and domestic animals; the adjacent mainland at Corail is mesic. _D. sepoideis_ occurs in an area near Juanillo, which is heavily wooded, although less mesic than seems typical for the species. Elevation records for _D. sepoideis_ range from sea level to 2,200 feet.

_Diploglossus sepoideis_ shows no trenchant geographic variation, although the specimens from the extreme western Tiburon Peninsula, at least those from the north slopes, have high midbody counts (Table I). In contrast, the two specimens from adjacent Ile Grande Cayemite are at the lower extreme for the species in midbody counts. Further collections will be necessary to clarify this situation.

_Diploglossus agasepoideis_ is to all appearances a geographical isolate in the Sierra de Martín García. This mountain range in the southern Dominican Republic is set off from the Cordillera Central to the north and the Sierra de Baoruco to the southwest. Although the Sierra de Martín García rises
to elevations of over 4,000 feet and supports mesic forest, the surrounding lowlands are xeric cactus scrub; thus the mountain range is an ecological island. It seems unlikely that either D. agapeoides or D. septoides occurs in the desert interposed between the Sierra de Martín Garcia and adjacent ranges. The type and paratypes of D. agapeoides came from within or near the town of Barreras, which sits on the lower slopes of the range. The surrounding region has been heavily cut for charcoal. Consequently, a low, dense, woody second growth presently predominates. Semiseric woods, which probably once characterized the lower slopes around Barreras, occur in nearby areas where charcoal manufacturers are now working. At higher elevations the semiseric woods grade into mesic forest. ASFS V21135 was taken in the second growth that surrounds Barreras; we obtained no D. agapeoides on a visit to the high elevations of the Sierra de Martín Garcia.

The Hispaniolan diploglossines form three divisions: (1) five relatively large, long-limbed species (although there are tendencies towards limb reduction) including Diploglossus sten minor Cope, D. costatus Cope, D. warreni Schwartz, D. darlingoni Cochran, and D. curtissi Grant; (2) two small, short-limbed, tetractylous species, D. septoides Gray and D. agapeoides Thomas; and (3) the long-bodied, short-limbed, tetractylous, earless Wettmorena baetiana Cochran. In the sequence listed, the divisions form a more or less graded series showing progressively greater adaptation to burrowing. The lack of ear openings in Wettmorena probably indicate greater burrowing specialization than in the other Hispaniolan diploglossines. However, although short limbed, Wettmorena is somewhat longer limbed than either D. septoides or D. agapeoides (Figure 3). One could reasonably argue that the genus Sarexia should be resurrected for septoides and agapeoides, but such action should be deferred until they have been studied in relation to all diploglossines, with the use of more characters than studies to date have employed.

Specimens examined.—DIPLOGLOSSUS SEPVOIDES. Sample 1, all from localities in República Dominicana. Prov. Valverde: ASFS V1239, 9 km N La Cruz de Guayacanes, 1,600'. Prov. Puerto Plata: ASFS V18102-05, 1 km N La Cumbre, 2,000'. Prov. Santiago: ASFS V18106-21, V18218-58, 1 km S La Cumbre, 2,000'; ASFS V18173, 4 km S La Cumbre, 1,700’. Prov. Espaillat: ASFS V1875-84, 2 km SW José Contreras, 2,000'; ASFS V1895, 8 km E Gaspar Hernandez; ASFS V1888, 2 km N Pueblo Grande, 2,200'. Prov. María Trinidad Sánchez: ASFS V4255, 4.8 km S Cabrera. Sample 2, all localities in República Dominicana. Prov. Sánchez Ramírez:

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ASFS V609-10, 12.3 km E Cotuí. Prov. María Trinidad Sánchez: ASFS V16077-79, 4 km N Azuey. Prov. San Cristóbal: ASFS V3137, 10 km NIE Gonzalo, 600'. Sample 3, all localities in República Dominicana. Prov. Samaná: ASFS V21933, ca. 5 km E Las Galeras; ASFS V21943, Samaná. Sample 4, all localities in República Dominicana. Prov. El Seibo: ASFS X9323, 1.4 mi SE Miches. Prov. La Romana: ASFS V944, 4.5 km W Higuey; ASFS V878, 4 mi SE San Rafael del Yuma. Sample 5, República Dominicana. Prov. La Altagracia: ASFS V21810, Juanillo. Sample 6, Haití, Dépt. de l'Ouest: ASFS V9661-62, est. 3.5 mi NW Trouin, 800'; ASFS V9818-20, ca. 1.5 mi S Trouin, 800'. Sample 7, all localities in Haití, Dépt. du Sud: ASFS V9342-47, ca. 5 km (airline) SE Marché Leon, 2,200'; ASFS V9495-13, ca. 7.5 km (airline) SSE Roseau, est. 2 km W La Bastille; ASFS V9520-24, ca. 3 km (airline) SW Coral; ASFS X2987, Camp Perrin, 750'. Sample 8, Haití, Dépt. du Sud: ASFS V9460-61, Ile Grande Cayemite, vicinity of Pointe Salé.

DIPLOGLOSSUS AGAPEOIDES. As recorded for holotype and paratypes.

WETMORENA HARTIANA MYLICA. ASFS V2870-93, V2009-10, V4414-15, V20480-83, all from the vicinity of the type locality in the eastern Sierra de Barúco.

Acknowledgments

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Literature Cited

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