

A NEW VARANUS FROM COQUET ISLAND, QUEENSLAND.

By

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(Plates xvii-xviii.)

VARANUS BOULENGERI *sp. nov.*

Varanus sp. De Vis. Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W. (2), i, 1887, p. 1137.

Varanus sp. nov. Boulenger. Zool. Record, 1887 (Reptilia), p. 11.

Teeth obtuse, inclined to be conical. Snout broad, as long as the distance from the anterior angle of the orbit to the anterior angle of the ear orifice. Canthus rostralis obtuse, indistinct. Nostril broadly oval, almost circular, situated nearer the tip of the snout than the eye. The distance from the eye to the centre of nostril is 9.5 mm, and from the nostril to the snout 8 mm. Ear opening oblique, about as large as the eye. Scales of head, including supraoculars, flat, smooth, irregular in shape and size, the larger ones being situated round about the central line. Scales on occipital regions smaller than those on fore part of head, but larger than the temporals. Lower eyelid scaly, the scales of the central horizontal line being largest and dark coloured. Scales of dorsal surface smallest on neck, largest towards the tail; they are broadly oval in shape, smooth, and more or less flattened, though those on the neck are strongly convex. Lower labial and chin scales largest on the outside, becoming gradually smaller towards the mental groove, and larger again towards the nuchal fold where they are smallest. Abdominal scales large, rectangular, longer than broad, disposed in 74 rows from nuchal fold to groin. These scales are, here and there, incompletely separated, giving the under surface the appearance of having transverse folds of the skin, each fold bearing many incomplete grooves. Feet slender, third and fourth fingers subequal, the fourth not as long as the distance from the eye to the snout. Tail cylindrical and somewhat depressed at base, but becoming laterally compressed and keeled towards the tip. Scales of dorsal surface of tail more or less flattened at base, like those on body, but keeled towards the tip. Scales of ventral surface of tail similar at the base to those of the abdomen, but becoming more elongate and strongly keeled posteriorly.

Colour (in spirits).—Limbs and dorsal surface light grey, covered with dark, almost black blotches, which here and there tend to form irregular transverse bars. The upper surface of the head is suffused with a brownish tinge. Under surface yellowish, crossed here and there by indistinct, pale grey cross bars. Chin, throat, and sides of neck spotted. Tail marked at the base much the same as the body, but becoming more uniformly coloured towards the tip.