

# HERPETOLOGICAL NOTES No. 5.

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(Plate xiv; two Text-figures.)

## 1. TAXONOMIC CHANGES IN THE GENUS RHYNCHOELAPS.

Recent investigation shows that *Rhynchoelaps bertholdi* belongs to an entirely different genus of snakes from other species generally placed in the same genus.

*R. bertholdi* has what may be described as typical elapine type head scalation, whilst other members of the group have a shovel-shaped snout, with a more or less oblique arrangement of head shields, naturally conforming to the disposition of the bones of the skull.

Only one member of the shovel-snouted group has a more or less normal type arrangement of shields, but it is quite distinct from *bertholdi*. This species is *fasciolata*, originally named *Rhinelaps fasciolatus* Gunther, but in this the nasal is widely separated from the preocular:

Jan, in *Rev. et Mag. Zool.*, p. 518, Dec. 1858, first mentioned *E. bertholdi* with *Rhynchoelaps* proposed as a subgenus, but there was no description. In the same magazine, 1859, 2, ii, p. 123 he uses the name *Simoselaps*, genotype *E. bertholdi* and gave a fairly full description; so it would appear that *Simoselaps* should be used; but because of common usage I propose at present to refer it to *Rhynchoelaps bertholdi*.

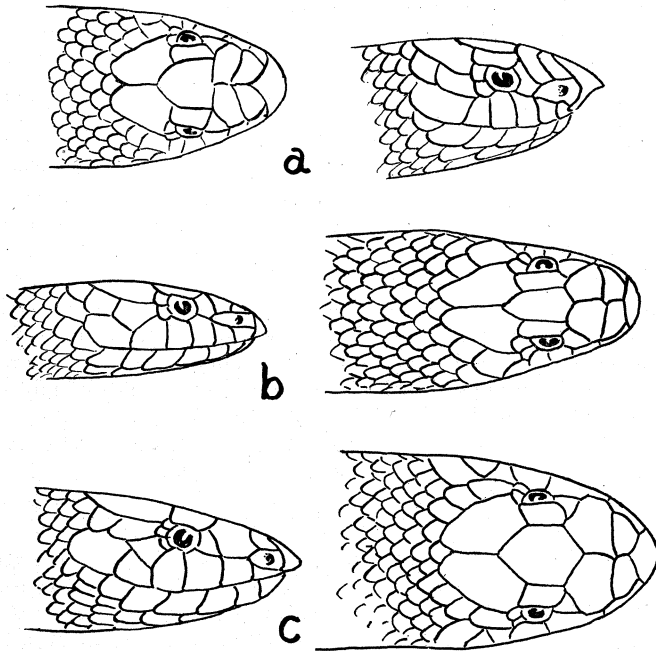


Figure 1.

a—*Brachyuropsis australis* Krefft. b—*Rhynchoelaps bertholdi* Jan. c—*Rhinelaps fasciolatus* Gunther.

Magnification approx. x 4.