

A New Australian Scincid Lizard, *Menetia concinna*, from the Alligator Rivers Region, Northern Territory

ROSS A. SADLIER

Australian Museum, P.O. Box A285, Sydney South, NSW 2000, Australia

ABSTRACT. Four species of the genus *Menetia* occur in the Alligator Rivers region of the Northern Territory. The new species *Menetia concinna* is described with an account of its distribution and that of its congeners in the region, *M. alanae* Rankin, *M. greyii* Gray and *M. maini* Storr.

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The genus *Menetia* was formerly regarded as monotypic with a nearly Australia-wide distribution. Recent studies by Storr (1976, 1978) described the new species *Menetia maini*, *M. surda* and *M. amauro* in Western Australia while Ingram (1977) described the new species *M. zynja* and *M. timlowi* from Queensland. Rankin (1979) revised the *Menetia* species occurring in the Northern Territory, describing the new species *Menetia alanae* and reviewing the status of *M. greyii* and *M. maini* in that area; he placed *M. zynja* in synonymy with *M. maini*.

In the course of reviewing *M. greyii*, Rankin (1979) tentatively identified as *M. greyii* a specimen from Cahills Crossing on the East Alligator River, while noting that it possibly represented a new species. Field work in the region of the Jabiluka uranium mining project area 19 km SW of Cahills Crossing has produced further specimens, confirming Rankin's suggestion of a new species from that area. In this paper I describe the new species, provide an account of the habitat and known distribution, furnish an updated key to the *Menetia* species of the Northern Territory and

report range extensions for the three other species known from the Northern Territory.

Taxonomy

The terms used here for the headshields bordering the rostral margin of the eye differ from those used by previous workers.

Rankin (1979) used the term *presuboculars* for those scales located below a diagonal line drawn between the posterior loreal and the subocular supralabial (giving 1 presubocular in *M. greyii*, and 2 in *M. alanae*). This usage was also adopted by Ingram (1977) and Storr (1978).

The scale definitions employed here follow Peters (1964). The two large scales immediately preceding the eye and abutting the posterior loreal are the *upper* and *lower preoculars*. The scales posterior to the lower preocular, and interposed between the orbit and the supralabials, are *suboculars* (= the second presubocular described by Rankin for *M. alanae*) (see Fig. 2).

Key to the Species of *Menetia* Occurring in the Northern Territory

1. Second supraciliary contacting prefrontal, preventing contact between the first supraciliary and first supraocular 2
 - Second supraciliary not contacting prefrontal, allowing contact between first supraciliary and first supraocular *M. maini*
2. Anterior subocular present 3
 - Anterior subocular absent *M. greyii*