

A NEW ELAPINE SNAKE FROM QUEENSLAND

BY ERIC WORRELL.

In February 1952 I received from Mr. H. Mellor a small Elapine snake he collected in the Gayndah district. Obvious characteristics indicated that this snake was different from any previously described species. I kept this snake alive for a short period and on its death loaned it to the Australian Museum for examination, but unfortunately the shrivelled condition of the specimen and its small size made it difficult for an adequate morphological examination. Subsequently, Messrs. J. and K. Dwyer obtained for me a larger well preserved snake of the same species collected 250 miles from Gayndah by Mr. William Dunmall at Glenmorgan in January 1954. It is proposed to describe these snakes as a new species which I have pleasure in naming after Mr. Dunmall, collector of the specimen selected as the type and lodged in the private collection of Messrs. J. and K. Dwyer. The allotype is in the author's possession and will be donated to the Australian Museum.

Family ELAPIDAE.

Genus GLYPHODON, Gunther.

Seven grooved teeth following fangs. Two species—*G. tristis*, Gunther; *G. barnardi*, Kinghorn.

Glyphodon dunmalli, sp. nov.

Maxillary barely extends as far forward as the palatine: ectopterygoid about as long as the lower aspect of the maxillary bone, and the suture of the maxillo-ectopterygoid is moderately long and diagonal. A pair of large straight grooved fangs are followed by nine to ten small stout recurved teeth with feeble grooves, beginning on the posterior half of the maxillary arch a little anterior of the beginning of the ectopterygoid. No grooves were detected on the mandibular teeth. The first two, which are small, are followed by two enlarged teeth leaning outwards, an interspace, then about 23 small, stout, slightly recurved teeth. (About 13 teeth follow the large anterior ones in *Glyphodon tristis*.)

The frontal is prevented from entering the orbital periphery by the union in a narrow suture of the prefrontal and postfrontal bones. The type and allotype agree in all these characters, except that in the type nine teeth follow the fangs on both sides, whereas in the allotype ten teeth follow the fangs on the left-hand side and on the right-hand side part of the maxilla has been lost in dissection and only six teeth are left.

In general appearance the head is large, depressed and distinct from the neck. No canthus rostralis. Eye smaller than its distance to mouth, pupil elliptical. Body cylindrical, scales smooth in 21 rows; ventrals rounded.

Scalation: Rostral broader than deep, barely visible dorsally; nasal divided by large nostril; internasals considerably smaller than enlarged prefrontals which extend to labials; single preocular does not contact frontal or nasal; frontal acute posteriorly, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ times as long as broad and as long as its distance to the snout, over twice as broad and twice as long as supraoculars; parietals elongate; two postoculars; 6 supralabials, deep, 3rd and 4th enter eye; 7 infralabials; two pairs of chinshields of similar size, each pair in contact; 1st to 4th infralabials contact anterior chinshields, 4th infralabial also contacts posterior chinshields.

The headshields of both type and allotype agree except that in the type the temporals are irregularly broken and in the allotype temporals are $2 + 2$.

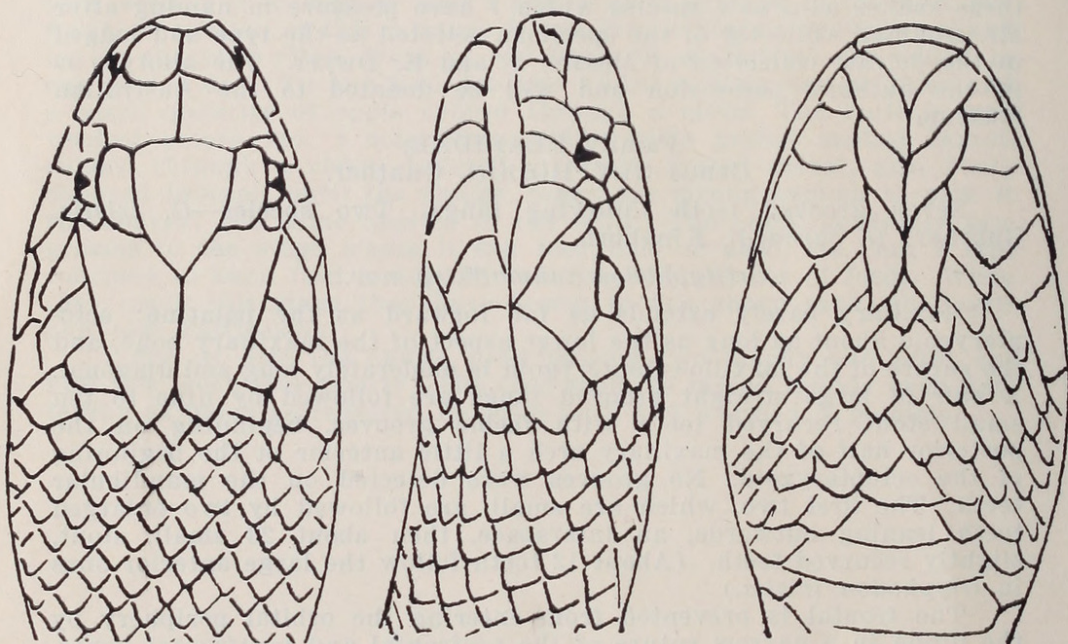
GLENMORGAN Type ♀ : 21 scale rows; Ventrals 186; Anal 2; Subcaudals 39 pairs.

GAYNDAH Allotype ♂ : 21 scale rows; Ventrals 175; Anal 2, Subcaudals 48 pairs.

Colour: The head and body is dark slatey brown with inconspicuous lighter markings on the neck and lips. Tongue pink. Belly white.

Measurements (Type): Length 750mm. or $29\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Tail 88mm. or $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Body diameter about 14mm. or $\frac{9}{16}$ inches. Head 31mm. long, 18mm. wide, 13mm. deep. Between eyes 11mm., eye to mouth 4mm., eye to snout 8mm., eye to nostril 5mm., gape to snout 22mm. Eye diameter 2mm. Length of fang almost 3mm., longest mandibular tooth 1.5mm.

The allotype measures 297mm. or $12\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Its shrivelled condition makes critical measurement impossible.



Head of *Glyphodon dunmalli* Worrell (type).

DISCUSSION

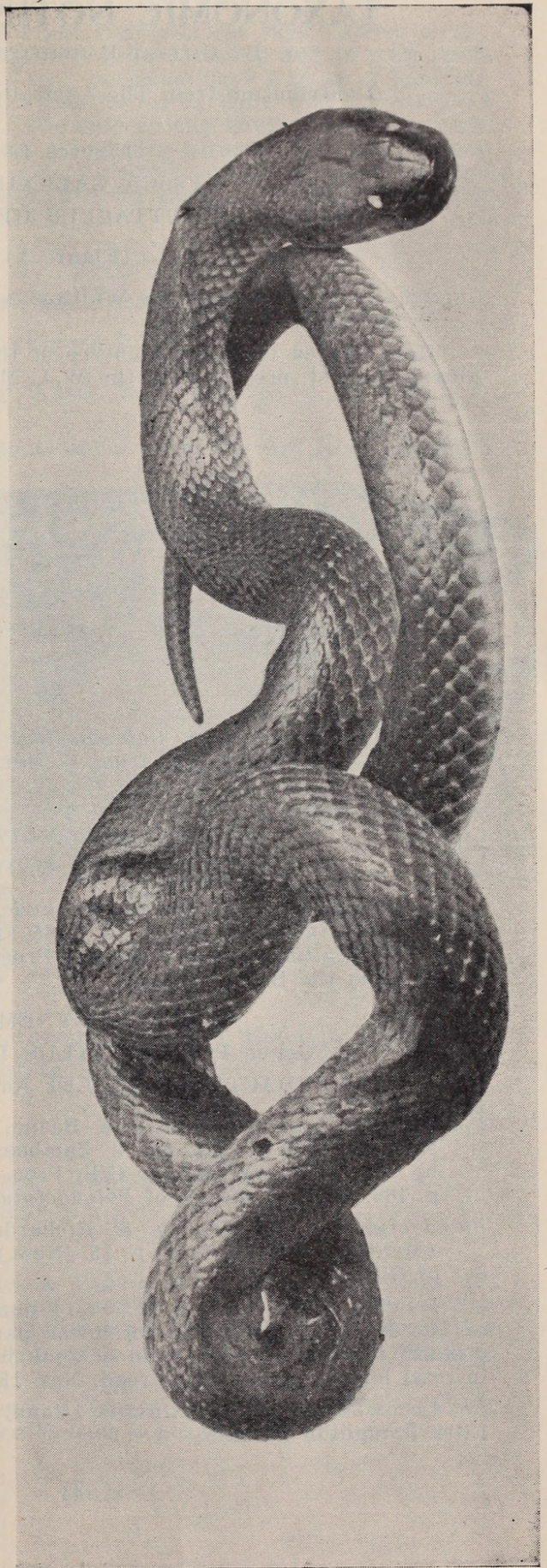
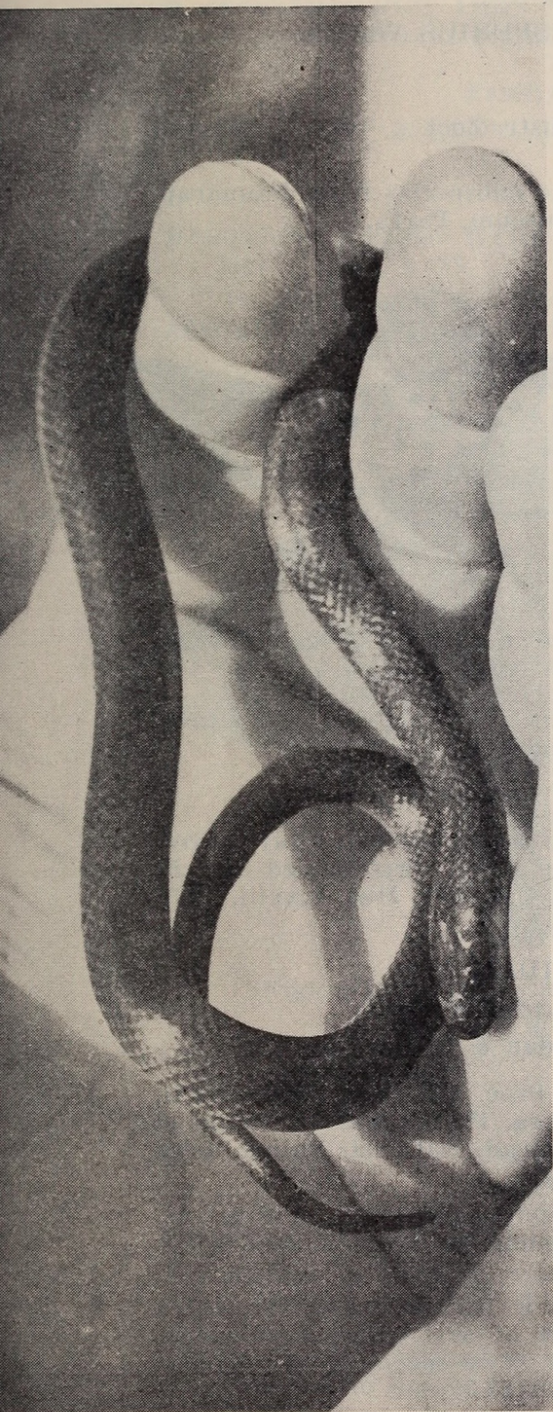
During the short period I kept the Gayndah specimen alive it displayed no aggressive tendencies and proved to be entirely nocturnal. *Glyphodon dunmalli* most nearly resembles *Glyphodon tristis* but is immediately separated by the larger number of maxillary and mandibular teeth. The following synopsis separates the three species of *Glyphodon* described to date: *tristis*—17 scale rows, *barnardi*—15 scale rows, *dunmalli*—21 scale rows.

The following abridgment of the description discounts the likelihood of confusion with any hitherto described Australian snake: *Glyphodon dunmalli*—no canthus rostralis; prefrontal contacting labial; scales in 21 rows; ventrals rounded; anal and subcaudals paired.

I am indebted to Mr. C. Brazenor of the National Museum, Melbourne, for his kind assistance with the preparation of this paper.

REFERENCES

- Boulenger, G. A. (1896) Cat. Snakes Brit. Mus. Vol. III, pp. 313-5.
Kinghorn, R. J. (1939) Rec. Aust. Mus Vol. XX, No. 4, pp. 257-9.



Glyphodon dunmalli Worrell. Upper: allotype male alive; lower: spirit specimen holotype female.

—Photo E. Worrell.



Worrell, Eric. 1955. "A new elapine snake from Queensland." *Proceedings of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales* 1953-54, 41-43.

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