PLATE 4 *Young Reef Herons in nest on Bare Sand Island (P. Ryan)*

Bare Sand Island is an interesting locality for beach-combing as a good variety of shells and the tests of large sand dollars are plentiful along the shore. Inland the partially fossilised tests of heart urchins and shells are abundant in the craters along the western coast. The area including Bare Sand Island is presently under the Kenbi Land Claim by the Larrakeyah people. What ever the outcome it is hoped that access to the island will not be denied by either the traditional owners or leaseholder.

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Notes on Reproduction in the Skink *Sphenomorphus darwiniensis*

Sphenomorphus darwiniensis, a skink endemic to the Top End of the Northern Territory and the northern Kimberley of Western Australia (see Storr 1967 and Storr *et al.*, 1981) has been inferred to be reproductively active during the Wet Season, and quiescent during the Dry (James & Shine 1985, as *S. crassicaudus*). This inference was based on seven adult males and five adult females. However, only one female was actually reproductively active; it measured 52 mm in snout-vent length (SVL), had a clutch size of five and was collected in January (James 1983, as *S. crassicaudus*). The mode of reproduction was implied ("clutch size"),

but was not stated to be oviparous. The recent discovery of four gravid females in the collections of the Queensland Museum (QM J34827-29, 34866) provides additional information on reproduction, and reinforces the original inferences as to the seasonality and mode of reproduction in the species.

The four females each carried three shelled oviducal eggs (two in the right oviduct and one in the left), and were collected on 27 and 30 December 1978 at Beatrice Hill, NT. The summary statistics for these four females plus the one previously reported are: SVL 42-52 mm (*mean* = 46, *sd* = 4.7) and clutch size 3-5 (*mean* = 3.4, *sd* = 0.9).

These observations taken in conjunction with the earlier one suggests that female *S. darwiniensis* are sexually mature at a SVL of at least 42 mm, are oviparous with a variable clutch size of at least 3-5, and are reproductively active with oviducal eggs during the early to mid Wet Season (Dec - Jan).

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A Note on Diving Behaviour in the Northern Sand Goanna *Varanus panoptes*

The Northern Sand Goanna *Varanus panoptes* is a large species which is common in a variety of woodland and grassland habitats across northern Australia (Wilson & Knowles 1988). Little information has been published on the habitat requirements of this species, but it is frequently encountered along small watercourses in the Top End. The following observations were made on an individual of this species during the course of a fish population study at a small creek near Nabarlek, in western Arnhem Land.

At approximately 2.00 pm on 9 May 1990, a small (0.5 m total length) *V. panoptes* appeared at the edge of the creek, about ten metres downstream of my position. As I was at that time sitting quietly by the bank in a grassy area, I was confident that the goanna was unaware of my presence. The creek was about seven metres wide and 0.6 m deep, and was exceptionally clear, with a sandy bottom. The goanna slid into the creek, swam to the bottom, then crawled upstream along the bottom for about ten metres, to a point opposite my location. There, it stopped, and remained motionless on the bottom. During this time, I noticed that the goanna's eyes were closed.

Exactly ten minutes after submerging, the goanna slowly crawled up the bank and surfaced. It was still apparently unaware of my presence. After a couple of