lizards since 1887. Structural changes bearing on phylogeny and classification were discussed. Several genera were abandoned. I believe that when dealing with this unwieldy genus of perhaps 300 species, new genera should be erected and old ones retained whenever possible. *Hemiergis*, which is a purely Australian genus, well differentiated and capable of being defined, should I think be retained.

Barbour (1943: 56) gives notes on two interesting photographs of defence postures of *Varanus gouldii* standing at bay on its hind legs. The photographs were taken by W. E. Schevill at Yandil in Western Australia.

Roberts (1941) describes the finding of two small unnamed lizards entangled in the web of a Red-backed Spider (*Latrodectus hasseltii*). Spots of blood indicated that the spider was able to puncture the lizards' skin and feed on blood. I have seen adult specimens of *Leiolepisma guichenoti* dead in the webs of *Latrodectus hasseltii* in Kangaroo Valley. On another occasion at Emerald, Queensland, I chased two geckoes (*Heteronota binoei*) among boards and rubbish. A centipede which was also disturbed seized the two lizards in turn behind the neck. Both geckoes at once collapsed and became limp. They were unconscious when picked up and put in a tin. I looked in the tin half an hour later and the lizards had completely recovered and were running about actively.

Stokely in 1947 studied the post-cranial skeleton of *Aprasia repens* Fry, using a cleared specimen with the bones and calcified cartilage stained with alizarin sulfonate of sodium. He compared it with other burrowing lizards with vestigial limb girdles.

Pratt (1948) analyses the morphology of the nasal organs of *Sphenodon* and other lizards, including the Australian genera *Amphibolurus*, *Physignathus*, *Trachysaurus*, *Lialis*, *Lygosoma* and *Ablepharus* from the viewpoint of function.

Snyder (1952), in an interesting summary of locomotion in lizards, concluded that hind leg and body action of *Amphibolurus* during bipedal progression indicated a more efficient locomotor cycle than in bipedal iguanids.

An unusual problem arises in the relationship between lizards and mosquitoes and certain other blood-sucking flies. Attempts are being made by D. J. Lee and other workers engaged in research on mosquitoes capable of spreading myxomatosis to prove that lizards—the water-loving *Sphenomorphus quoyii*—are in fact the major source of blood for some of the more obscure mosquito species. Should it be possible to prove this point, then such mosquitoes will be regarded as of no importance in the transmission of diseases of man, other mammals or birds. On the other hand, a useful lead will be given to those wishing to study the life cycles of some of the reptilian blood parasites.

Procter in 1924 described as new and gave a coloured plate of *Hyla blandsuttoni*, allied to *H. aurea* common about Sydney. The two species had probably long been confused.

D. Fleay has published a number of notes on lizards, snakes and frogs, including the Green Python, Black Snakes and Blue-tongued Lizards. An interesting note in 1935 deals with Golden Bell Frogs (*Hyla aurea*) swallowing small Tiger and other snakes. Two of the frogs were photographed eating the same young Tiger Snake from opposite ends.

L. Harrison discussed Western Australian frogs in 1927. He concluded that *Crinia michaelseni* Werner was synonymous with *C. leai* Fletcher, and described as new *C. rosea* from Pemberton, and *Pseudophryne nichollsi* from Pemberton and Nornalup.

Two important papers published in the one year by E. R. Dunn and M. M. Metcalf in the *American Naturalist*, on the origin and distribution of amphibians, cannot be neglected by any student of the origin and dispersal of these animals. Special emphasis is placed on phylogeny.

Buxton deals in an interesting manner with the habits of *Hyla rubella*, *Limnodynastes ornatus*, *Heleioporus pictus* and *Cyclorana platycephalus*, and describes their methods of withstanding long periods of drought and of taking advantage of short periods of rainfall to reproduce and survive. Unlike the others, *Hyla rubella* does not burrow and therefore dies when its waterhole dries up. It depends for its existence on

very rapid and prolific breeding, which enables recolonization after heavy rain of areas where it has died out in previous dry weather.

Alden B. Dawson (1948) touches an almost virgin field as far as Australia is concerned when he deals with histology and genetics of the frog *Cyclorana* (*Chiroleptes*) *alboguttatus* (Günther) and suggests ecological implications. The specimen on which the paper was mainly based was collected in the Cox's River Valley, New South Wales. Dawson says: "The renal nuclear phenomena were quite unexpected and the picture is equally as complicated as that found in the mammalian liver. . . . Whether or not exposure to periodic desiccation is in any way related to the nuclear phenomena in the kidney cannot be determined. . . . In addition to large cells with very large single nuclei an exceptionally large number of binucleate, trinucleate and quadrinucleate cells were found in the proximal convoluted segments of one specimen of *alboguttatus*. . . . It is suggested that these variations in nuclear number, in size, in kidney cells, as in mammalian liver cells, are primarily the result of varying degrees of failure of the mitotic process, possibly complicated by the occurrence of amitosis, nuclear fusion or even cell fusion. . . ." Dawson says that both species of *Cyclorana* he deals with make permanent burrows, store up water and aestivate during periods of drought.

Caziot has described the finding of a living *Moloch horridus* by a bather at Nice on May 14, 1924. The lizard was identified by de Witte and was believed to be one of the reptiles released by Armand Janet, who was experimenting in acclimatization well before the 1914 war. The writer expressed surprise that the lizard had been able to live so long in surroundings so different from its original habitat. The finding of the lizard poses a problem. *Moloch horridus* is notoriously hard to keep in captivity because its only food in the wild state is small ants. It is difficult to believe that it could have found a substitute in Europe for more than ten years, and I would like to suggest that the lizard had only been released shortly before its capture by a sailor who had visited Australia. Myers has reported the capture of two skinks believed to be Australian *Tiliqua scincoides* near San Mateo in California. It is not known how the animals came to be there.

Oliver notes the killing of a 12¼-inch specimen of the Australian *Pygopus lepidopodus* in Taranaki Street, Wellington, on May 10, 1921. It was probably carried unintentionally to New Zealand in a cargo ship.

Australia has not been without its sea serpent. A. H. E. Mattingley reported in the *Victorian Naturalist* that four men in two launches had seen a huge animal about 60 feet long with a head like a turtle, near Townsville. The men said that the head was carried eight feet out of the water and that the animal had scales the size of saucers. A queer feature was that similar reports were received from Mourilyan Harbour, Bowen and Mackay about the same time in August, 1934.

E. C. Chisholm in five papers gave us faunal lists for the Comboyne Plateau and the Marrangaroo and Katoomba districts. These locality lists are common in America and elsewhere overseas but rare in Australia. Their scarcity hampers zoogeographical work.

Alexander in 1922 listed three snakes, 19 lizards and two frogs from Houtman's Abrolhos, although Helms in 1903 had given a total of four frogs.

Teichert concluded that the land fauna reached the Houtman's Abrolhos when they were connected with the mainland. An interesting fact is that the two land mammals found on the islands are now only represented in the cooler and therefore more southern parts of the mainland. This would indicate that the islands were colonized when the climate was cooler, i.e., during a glacial period in the Pleistocene when the sea level was low allowing connection with the mainland. Teichert criticizes Dakin's suggestion that the Abrolhos Islands have been separated from the mainland by river erosion on several grounds. He concludes that the vertebrates must have been long established on the islands and that they reached them "on dry foot".

Consett Davis in 1941, and again with D. J. Lee in 1944, published short papers on taxonomic categories and the type concept in taxonomy, which are of interest to herpetologists. Davis, with M. F. Day and D. F. Waterhouse, brought out their first and

basic paper on the terrestrial ecology of the Five Islands, off Wollongong (inhabited by at least four species of lizards) and it is to be regretted that this painstakingly compiled foundation has not been built on.

A. Musgrave's "Bibliography of Australian Entomology" has perhaps a forbidding title for a herpetologist, but its range is much more than its specialized title indicates. It is packed with information about authors, collectors and expeditions (such as the early French ones) between 1775 and 1930. It should be in the hands of all Australian zoologists.

Professor J. A. Moore, the American authority on the distribution of frogs and their life histories, is at present working in Australia. He is concentrating on the collection of all forms of frogs occurring in eastern New South Wales, descriptions of life histories, breeding habits and dispersal. His results when published will include keys, diagnoses, descriptions of tadpoles and distributional maps. He has already dealt with at least one member of each genus. About 20 hybridization experiments have shown that Western Australian and New South Wales *Crinia signifera* when crossed behave almost like full species. This also applies to *Hyla aurea.*

The present author's ambition is to make as many comprehensive studies of Australian species as possible, dealing with them one at a time. It is felt that only when a large proportion of our reptiles are treated fairly fully from the systematic and zoogeographical aspects can a solid basis be formed, on which a superstructure of ecological, developmental and allied studies can be added.

Examination of type specimens at the Macleay Museum has shown that *Hinulia pardalis* Macleay and *Mocoa nigricaudis* Macleay are distinct species. *Hinulia pardalis* is identical with *Lygosoma atromaculatum* Garman, which must now be known as *Sphenomorphus pardalis pardalis* (Macleay). This means that lizards previously referred to as *Sphenomorphus pardalis pardalis* should be known as *Sphenomorphus nigricaudis nigricaudis. Lygosoma* (*Hinulia*) *elegantulum* Peters and Doria is conspecific with *S. nigricaudis*, but is a distinct race. *S. n. nigricaudis* (Macleay) should be used for the lizards with blackish tails and *S. n. elegantulus* (Peters and Doria) for the more uniformly coloured brownish lizards with more or less developed narrow dark bars.

Lygosoma dorsale Boulenger (1887) was shown to be synonymous with a third of Macleay's species *Sphenomorphus spaldingi* (1877). A lectotype was selected and with the three paratypes was compared with other specimens from Queensland, the Northern Territory and Torres Straits. The lizard *Hemiergis decresiensis* (Fitzinger) hitherto believed to be very rare was shown to be quite common in restricted localities between New England and South Australia, and was divided into four races.

A revision of Australian members of the genus *Ablepharus* was begun. I believed that the species had all been described and that the revision would be at the subspecies level, but two of the first three papers published had to be devoted to descriptions of new species—*Ablepharus kinghorni* from western New South Wales and *A. davisi* from the Kimberleys. *Ablepharus burnetti* Oudemans has been analysed and shown to consist of three races, including a new one from near Sydney. A short paper was prepared on the reptiles occurring above the winter snowline at Mt. Kosciusko. The rare lizard *Lygosoma truncatum* (Peters), previously known only from islands in Moreton Bay, was collected on the mainand for the first time and described as a new subspecies. The anatomical part of this address is based on work done as a partial requirement for the M.Sc. degree at the University of Sydney.

It is now relevant to make some remarks on the problems and the future of Australian herpetology. Even in the United States, where herpetology is in as advanced a state as anywhere in the world, the basic task of describing and naming endemic species has not been completed. Australia may safely be said to be at least 50 years behind America in this matter alone. When specific studies are about completed there will still be a great need for revisions of genera and families so that phylogenetic and zoogeographical problems can be solved.

The fields of ecological preferences, reproduction, breeding migrations, courtship patterns, variation, habits, temperature tolerance, food, frog calls, hibernation and

aestivation, responses to rainfall and moisture, anatomy and genetics have scarcely been touched in Australia. Lack of records of maximum, minimum and average sizes and weights, size at which sexual maturity is reached, and life spans by no means exhausts the list of our omissions. No complete book on the anatomy of any Australian chelonian, snake, lizard or frog has been published.

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