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CERCOLOPHIA, A NEW GENUS FOR THE SPECIES OF AMPHISBAENA WITH A TERMINAL VERTICAL KEEL ON THE TAIL (REPTILIA, AMPHISBAENIA).

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ABSTRACT

Cercolophia, *gen. nov., type species* Amphisbaena roberti *Gans, 1964, is proposed for the South American species of* Amphisbaena *with a terminal vertical caudal keel. Included are* A. steindachneri *Strauch, 1881,* A. borellii *Peracca, 1897, and* A. bahiana *Vanzolini, 1964. The new genus, closest to* Amphisbaena, *differs from it in having a terminal vertical caudal keel and in having no caudal autotomy.*

Data on distribution, ecology, pholidosis, biometry and color pattern are adduced on the basis of one new specimen of steindachneri *from Pimenteiras, Rondonia, and one of* bahiana *from São Filipe, Bahia.*

INTRODUCTION

Gans (1964) monographed the South American species of *Amphisbaena* with a terminal vertical keel on the tail. He redescribed *A. steindachneri* Strauch, 1887, *A. borellii* Peracca, 1897 (reduced to a subspecies of *steindachneri*) and *A. bahiana* Vanzolini, 1964, based mostly on the type materials, and described the new species *roberti*. Except for the last named these forms are rare in collections. *A. steindachneri* was known to Gans from the type specimens, a lectotype and a paralectotype, *A. borellii* from 5 specimens, and *A. bahiana* from three. Acquisition of new materials led me to review the information on the species group, and to the belief that they constitute a good genus, which I call

Cercolophia, gen. nov.

Diagnosis

Amphisbaenidae. Snout rounded; head convex in profile. Upper head scales paired; no fusions of head scales; nasals meeting on the midline. Tail without autotomy, ending in a blunt surface showing a vertical keel.

Type of genus — *Amphisbaena roberti* Gans, 1964

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Species included

Amphisbaena steindachneri Strauch, 1881
Amphisbaena borellii Peracca, 1897
Amphisbaena bahiana Vanzolini, 1964

Etymology

From the Greek cerco (kerkos, tail) and lophia (crest, ridge).

COMMENTS

Cercolophia is very close to *Amphisbaena,* and certainly derived from it. The four species included share the terminal caudal keel and the absence of autotomy. Otherwise, they share physiognomic characters that are not diagnostic but that indicate relationship, especially the curved profile of the head.

I choose for type of the genus *A. roberti* because it is the form best represented in collections, thus naturally the best known. The original description was based on 31 specimens and recently I myself (Vanzolini, 1991) have been able to study its biometry and geographic differentiation, based on 52 specimens from 19 localities.

Amphisbaena is a large genus, with some 40 species. It is diversified in body size and scale counts, but remarkably uniform in scalation plan. The most discrete species group is the present one, characterized both by the presence of a caudal keel, as recognized by Gans (1964), and by the absence of autotomy, as now proposed.

Gans (1964: 410) noticed that none of his 40 specimens had autotomized tails, but still referred to probable levels of autotomy, that would be indicated by slightly narrowed caudal annuli. I frankly cannot see any external signs of an autotomy level in either *roberti* or *steindachneri.* In the only specimen of *borellii* I have seen the eighth caudal annulus is very slightly narrower than the adjacent ones. I believe it witnesses the loss of autotomy — a remarkable character among amphisbaenines.

All the species of *Cercolophia* are well described. Strauch's and Peracca's original descriptions are satisfactory, and so I trust is that of *A. bahiana.* Gans's description of *A. roberti* is meticulous, as are his redescriptions of the other there species, of which he saw all the type materials. There is no need to go over the ground again.

The only criticism I feel like making refers to the reduction of *A. borellii* to a subspecies of *A. steindachneri.* This was done in obedience to the mayrian paradigm prevalent at the time: if two allopatric forms are similar, they should be called subspecies. I personally think that the adoption of subspecific rank brings about some weighty implications, especially the need to demonstrate the presence of a relatively narrow belt of intergradation, the "hybrid zone" of geneticists (e.g., Vanzolini and Williams, 1970). This was not done in the case of *A. borellii* — in fact the materials available would not have been sufficient. I prefer to keep all forms as individual species.

Amphisbaena steindachneri seems to be a rare species, known thus far from three syntypes, a lectotype and paralectotype in Vienna, plus another paralectotype in Leningrad (Gans, 1971, 1971a). I have now collected one additional specimen at Pimenteiras, state of Rondonia, Brasil.

Strauch's description, as said, is good. Two of his types are specimens from the Vienna collection, both previously misidentified and published by Steindachner (1867: 55) as *Anops kingii:* NMW 12343 from Caiçara and NMW 12342 from "Matogrosso", both collected by Natterer. The two localities can be easily identified with the help of Pelzeln (1868). Caiçara is the well known "King's Ranch" (Fazenda do Rei), at 16°03'S, 57°43'W, across the Rio Paraguai from the city of Cáceres, in the state of Mato Grosso. "Matogrosso" is the former capital of the state, sometime known as Mato Grosso, at present Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade (15°01'S, 59°57'W).

Strauch (1881: 410) refers another specimen, in the Saint Petersbourg collection, as "leider schlecht erhalten". This further syntype, now also a paralectotype, was seen and confirmed as "exceedingly rotten" by Gans (1971). Its only locality data are a vague "Brasil", so there is no need for further preoccupation.

Gans (1964) redescribed the Vienna specimens of *steindachneri,* choosing NMW 12343, from Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade, as the lectotype, and fully illustrating its features.

There was no further mention of specimens in the literature until Tiedemann and Häupl's (1980) list of reptilian types in Vienna. They adopted Gans's choice of a lectotype and introduced the novel, but actually harmless, spelling "Cuicara" for Caiçara. A citation (Gans and Diefenbach, 1970) of a specimen of *A.s. steindachneri* from the state of S. Paulo, published by Mertens (1930), is based on a misidentification: the form actually involved is *A. roberti* Gans, 1964. My own (Vanzolini, 1948) citation of a specimen from Emas, S. Paulo, must also be referred to *A. roberti.*

Our new specimen of *steindachneri* was collected on November 28, 1985, on the right bank of the Rio Guaporé at Pimenteiras (13°29'S, 61°03'W), some 200 km NW from Vila Bela, the nearest locality of the species. Considering that the latter lies some 270 km WNW from Caiçara, the range extension is not extraordinary. It is interesting to note, however, that one of the localities is in the Paraná-Paraguay basin and two in the Amazon drainage. In fact, the whole region between the upper Guaporé and the upper Paraguay constitutes a lowland communication between the two great river basins. This interesting feature remains to be explored zoogeographically.

A comparison of our specimen with Gans's description and figures reveals some points of interest.

The first body annulus in our specimen has two enlarged median segments on the dorsum, which give the annulus an arcuate shape. The next seven annuli are narrower on the midline, assuming a still more arcuate form. The resulting pattern somewhat resembles the "hastate" pattern of *Amphisbaena hastata* Vanzolini, 1991. The same pattern is found ventrally, involving only the six first annuli. Gans's description gives the impression that he saw the same pattern.

The position of the preanal pores is characteristic, and exactly the same in our specimen and in Gans's figure: the two pores of each side are grouped together near the suture between the pore-bearing segments.

Finally, the tail deserves mention. It is proximally slightly flattened dorso-ventrally; at about the 9th-10th annulus it becomes definitely club-shaped. There is no annulus that could be taken as indicating autotomy The 18th annulus is decidedly constricted; it is followed by an incomplete annulus, with 4-5 segments on each side, after wich comes the "guard" of the keel: 6 (3 + 3) shovel-shaped, prominent segments. The keel itself is not definitely divided into segments, but there is an indication of a longitudinal sulcus and of three transverse ones.

It should be noted that the species with vertical keels on the tail end present somewhat different keel scalation patterns. In *A. borellii* there is one (our specimen) or two (holotype) vertical knobs. In *A. bahiana* the tip of the tail is conical, successive rings being successively more constricted until just two rows of conical segments remain, forming the keel. In *A. roberti* the keel is also formed by two rows of segments (less prominent than in *bahiana*), but the reduction from the rounded tail to the keel is sharply made through three successively diminishing annuli, the last one actually incomplete, reduced to two rows parallel to the keel. In this fashion. *A. steindachneri* seems to present the most extreme type of tail keeling, *A. borellii* the least extreme — in keeping with its retention of an indication of autotomy annulus.

Previous specimens being old and faded, MZUSP 64905 affords the first insight on the color pattern of *A. steindachneri.*

The general color scheme is a medium brown dorsum and a light yellow venter. The transition between the two parts is definite but not sharp. It occurs anteriorly two, posteriorly three segments below the lateral sulcus, which is light yellow.

As to morphometric and meristic data, there is excellent agreement (Table 1) among all specimens known in relative tail length and in number of body and tail annuli. There is, however, one discrepancy between our specimen and the types: MZUSP 64905 has 12:14 segments to a midbody annulus, against 14-16:16 in the types. It seems to me a significant difference, but one to which no special weight can be attached at present, especially considering the close agreement in so many other peculiar characters.

Amphisbaena bahiana was known from three specimens (Gans, 1964), only one, the holotype, with a definite locality, Senhor do Bonfim in Bahia (10°27'S, 40°11'W). The two other specimens had as localities "Brasil" (Hamburg 209) and "Bahia" (Vienna 12335-3). We have now one specimen collected by dr. M. A. Miles at São Filipe, Bahia (12°50'S, 39°06'W). This represents a 300 km range extension which, in Brasil, is not much; rather important, however, are the ecological implications.

Senhor do Bonfim (Projeto Radambrasil, 1983) is in a decidedly dry area. The annual rainfall is 700-900 mm and the average yearly temperatures are above 23°C; the concurrence of these factors leads to a hydric deficit of about 650mm/year, with from 7 to 10 dry months. The vegetation, as could be expected, is a mosaic of open formations, cerrados and caatingas, the latter, definitely semi-arid, predominating. São Filipe, on the contrary (Projeto Radambrasil, 1981) is in a very humid area, the so-called "Recôncavo", the region that surrounds the vast Baía de Todos os Santos. Annual precipitation exceeds 1600mm; hydric deficit is between 100 and 200mm, with 2-4 dry months and 4 months with excess precipitation. The original vegetation (now much devastated) was rain forest — part of the Atlantic forests.

The contrast between the two localities may well indicate extreme euryoecy of *A. bahiana*. It may, however, have a more interesting meaning. The region around Senhor do Bonfim is topographycallly and ecologically very complex: Projeto Radambrasil (1983) calls it a "tension area". In spite of the generally dry climate, there are areas locally favored by orographic rains. Its is possible that *A. bahiana* be found in such wetter spots, in which case its distribution in the interior would be a relict of better climates in the past.

The new specimen agrees closely with the previous ones in pholidotic and meristic characters, except for a remarkable anomaly of the anal flap. This shows one partial extra row of scales on its left half, superimposed upon the regular series, without correspondence of scales. One of these segments sports a pore, well-formed, but out of line. There is still an additional, very small pore, on the extreme of the normal series of four.

This specimen affords also an insight into the color pattern of the species. As described by Gans (1964), inferring from faded specimens, the dorsum is brown, the venter light yellowish. The head is lightly smudged, lighther than the dorsum; the tail is darker. Starting at about the fifth annulus, the dorsal segments show a darker center; a little farther back the longitudinal intersegmentary sutures appear as light lines. The limit between the dorsal and the ventral color runs in front along the second or third segment below the lateral sulcus, farther back along the fourth or fifth segment.

BIOMETRY

C. roberti, being the only species of the group well represented in collections, must, then, constitute the backdrop against which to evaluate the remaining species. This is, however, complicated by the mosaic pattern of geographical variation in *roberti*. In what follows comparisons will be made with all the larger *roberti* samples (meristic characters) or with pooled homogeneous regressions.

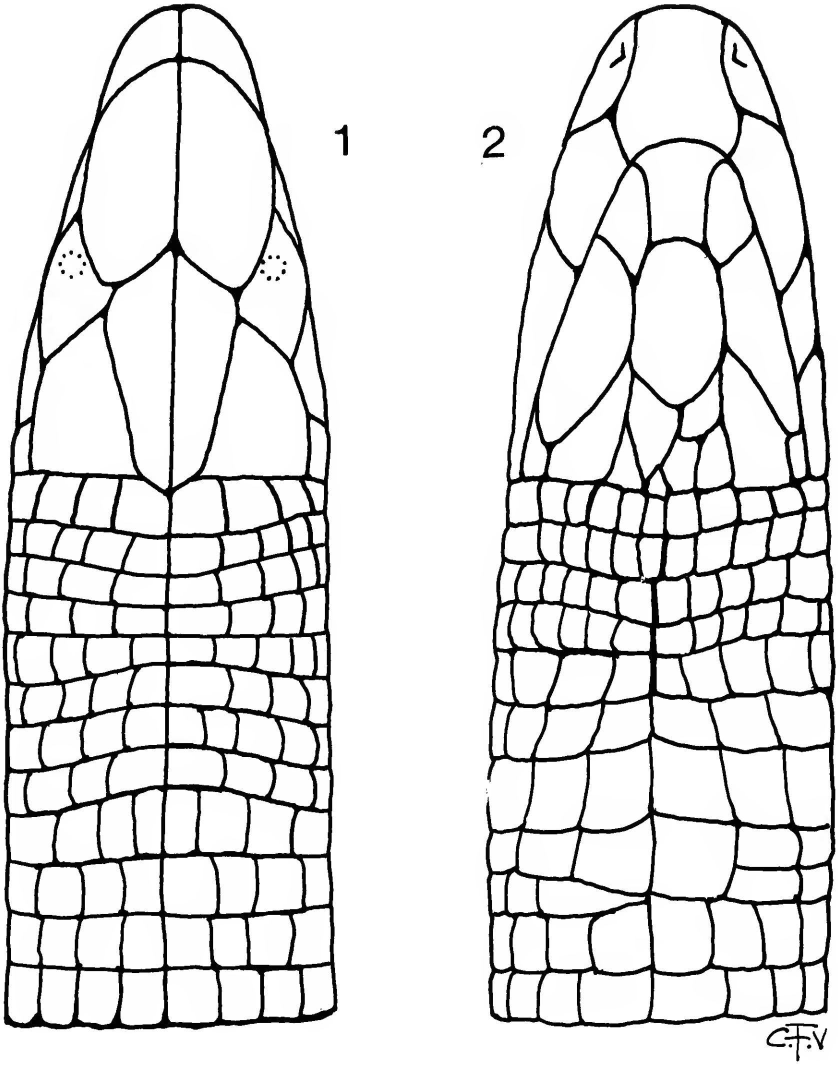
Scale counts

Inspection of Table 1 shows *steindachneri* and *borellii* have high values of body annuli, comparable with the higher ranking samples of *roberti*, which *steindachneri* even exceeds. *C. bahiana*, on the contrary, has very low values, without overlap.

Table 2 shows that *bahiana* has fewer tail annuli, and that *borellii* and *steindachneri* broadly agree with *roberti*.

Finally, Table 3 shows that *roberti, bahiana* and *steindachneri* are fairly homogeneous in number of segments, but that *borellii* presents larger numbers, i.e., narrower segments.

Scale counts are highly diagnostic in *Cercolophia*.



Figs 1 e 2. *Cercolophia steindachneri,* MZUSP 64905, Pimenteiras, Rondonia.

C. steindachneri: 1, Pimenteiras. 2, Vila Bela da Santíssima Trindade (old Mato Grosso). 3, Caiçara. *C. bahiana:* 4, Senhor do Bonfim. 5, São Filipe. *C. roberti:* 6, Ribeirão Preto. 7, Botucatu. 8, Emas. 9, São Paulo. *C. borellii:* 10, Caiza. 11, Hickman.

TABLE 1. *Cercolophia*, number of body annuli

	N	R	x̄	s	V	I(x̄)
roberti						
Peirópolis	11	235-246	242.0 ± 1.01	3.35	1.38	239.8-244.2
Ribeirão Preto	8	244-260	251.5 ± 2.10	5.95	2.37	246.5-256.5
Emas	9	240-248	244.0 ± 0.88	2.65	1.08	242.0-246.0
Botucatu	7	248-257	252.9 ± 0.86	2.27	0.90	250.8-255.0
S. Paulo	6	242-257	252.3 ± 2.19	5.35	2.12	246.7-258.0
steindachneri	3	255-266	259.0	-	-	
bahiana	4	204-223	211.3	-		
borellii	5	240-261	245.0 ± 4.13	9.25	3.77	233.5-256.4

N, individuals in sample; R, range; x̄, mean and its standard deviation; s, standard deviation; V, coefficient of variation; I(x̄), 95% interval of confidence of the mean.

TABLE 2. *Cercolophia*, number of tail annuli

	roberti							
	Peirópolis	Ribeirão Preto	Emas	Botucatu	S. Paulo	*steindachneri*	*bahiana*	*borellii*
14							3	
15								
16								
17	4		7	2	1	1	1	2
18	3	3	2	3	2	1		3
19	3	4		2	3	1		1
20	1	1						

TABLE 3. Segments to a midbody annulus

	roberti							
	Peirópolis	Ribeirão Preto	Emas	Botucatu	S. Paulo	*steindachneri*	*bahiana*	*borellii*
Dorsals								
12						1	1	
13							-	
14	6	5	2	2	1	1	1	1
15	3	1	-	1		-	1	
16	2	1	7	4	4	1	1	3
17								-
18								2
Ventrals								
12	1			1		1		
13	2			-		-		
14	7	3	7	6	5		2	
15	1	2	1			-	1	
16		2	1			2	1	1
17								1
18								3
19								-
20								1
Sum								
24						1		
25								
26	1						1	
27	2					-	-	
28	3	1	1	3	1	-		
29	2	3	1	1	-			
30	3	3	3	3	4		2	
31		-						
32		1				2	1	1
33								1
34								1
35								-
36								3

Body proportions

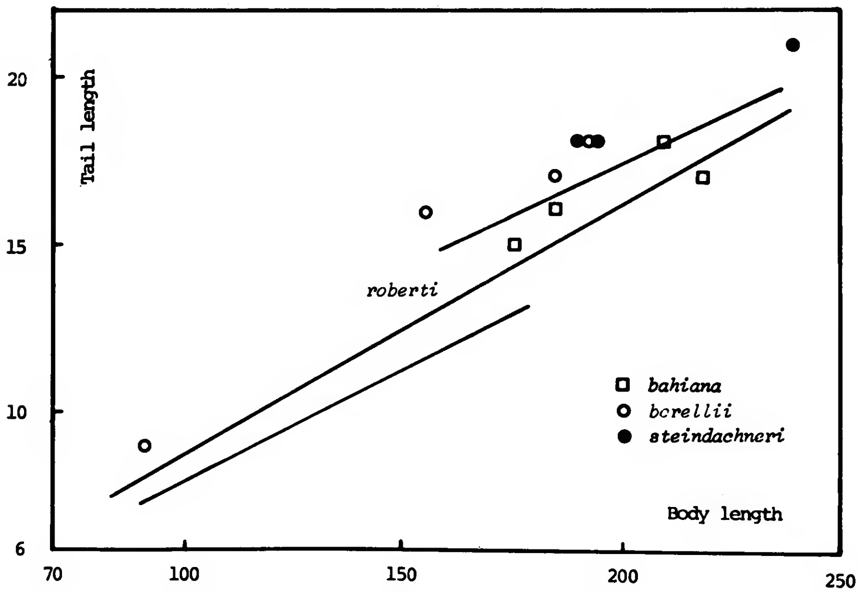
As *Cercolophia roberti* varies much geographically in body proportions (Vanzolini, 1991), in the graphs I show the lines belonging to two or three samples spanning the range of variation, the only exception being the regression of head width on head length, for which *roberti* is homogeneous.

Tail length x body length (Graph 1). The variation of *roberti* is considerable; the three other species tend to agree with the samples having longer tails.

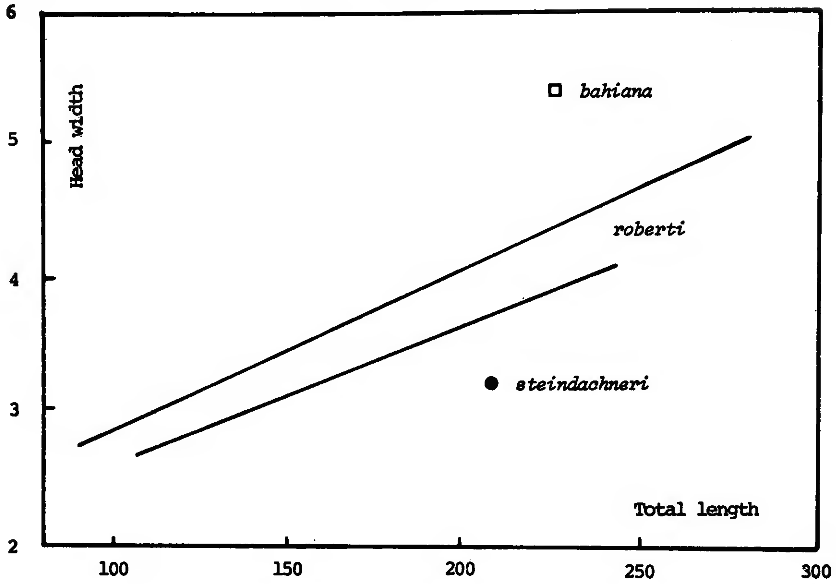
Head width x total length (Graph 2). I have no data on *borellii*. *C. bahiana* has a stockier body than *roberti*, *steindachneri* a more slender one.

Head width x head length (Graph 3). *C. bahiana* has a slightly blunter head than *roberti*; *borellii* and *steindachneri* agree with the latter.

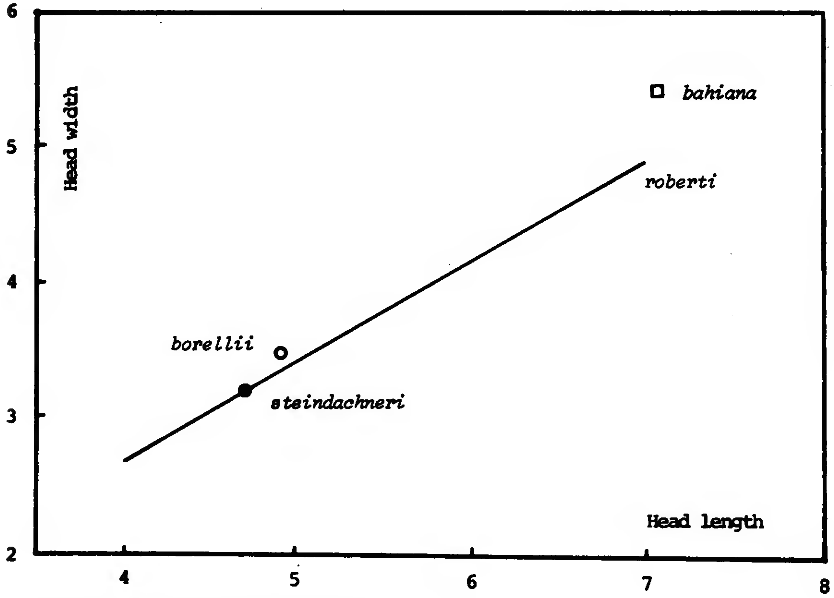
Head length x trunk length (Graph 4). *C. roberti* shows considerable statistical variation, but the lines converge towards rather uniform head length at full growth. *C. bahiana* has a much longer head, *C. steindachneri* a much shorter one.



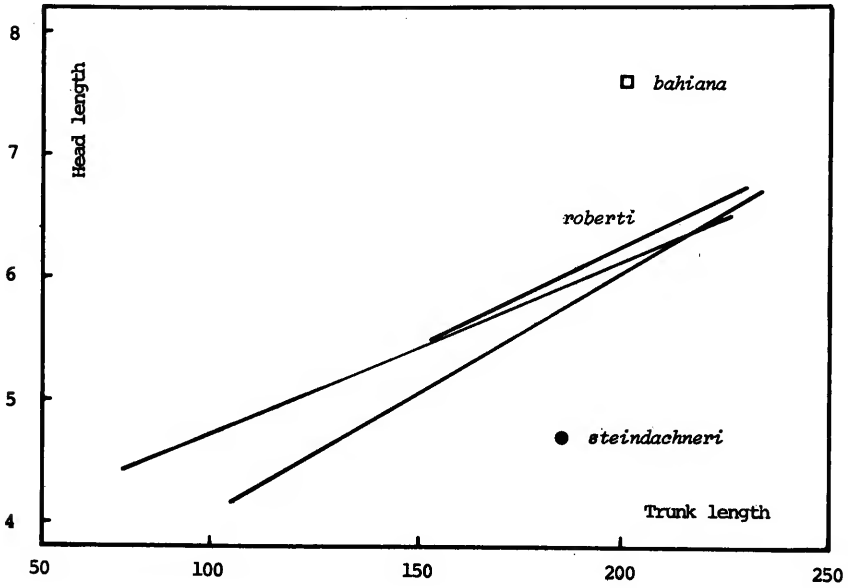
Graph 1. *Cercolophia*, regression of tail length on body (snout to vent) length.



Graph 2. *Cercolophia*, regression of head width on total length.



Graph 3. *Cercolophia*, regression of head width on head length.



Graph 4. *Cercolophia*, regression of head length on trunk (body minus head) length.

APPENDIX. Measurements and scale counts

		Length		Annuli		
		body	tail	body	tail	Segments
C. steindachneri						
NMW 12342*	Caiçara	194	18	256	17	14-16:16
NMW 12343*	Mato Grosso	243	21	266	18	16:16
MZUSP 64905	Pimenteiras	190	18	255	19	12:12
C. bahiana						
HM 209*	Brasil	215	17	204	14	12-13:14
NMW 12335-3*	Bahia	176	15	223	14	14-15:15-16
MZUSP 1259	Sr. do Bonfim	185	16	208	14	16:16
MZUSP 16923	São Filipe	208	18	210	17	16:16
C. borellii						
MACN s/n.°*	Brazil	185	17	240	18	14-16:16
BMRR 1946.8.2.23*	Caiza	155	16	240	19	16:20
IMZUT 2043A*	Caiza	193	18	239	17	16:16-18
IMZUT 2043B*	Caiza	91	9	245	17	16:16-17
IML 252	Hickman			261	18	18:18

* Data from Gans (1964)

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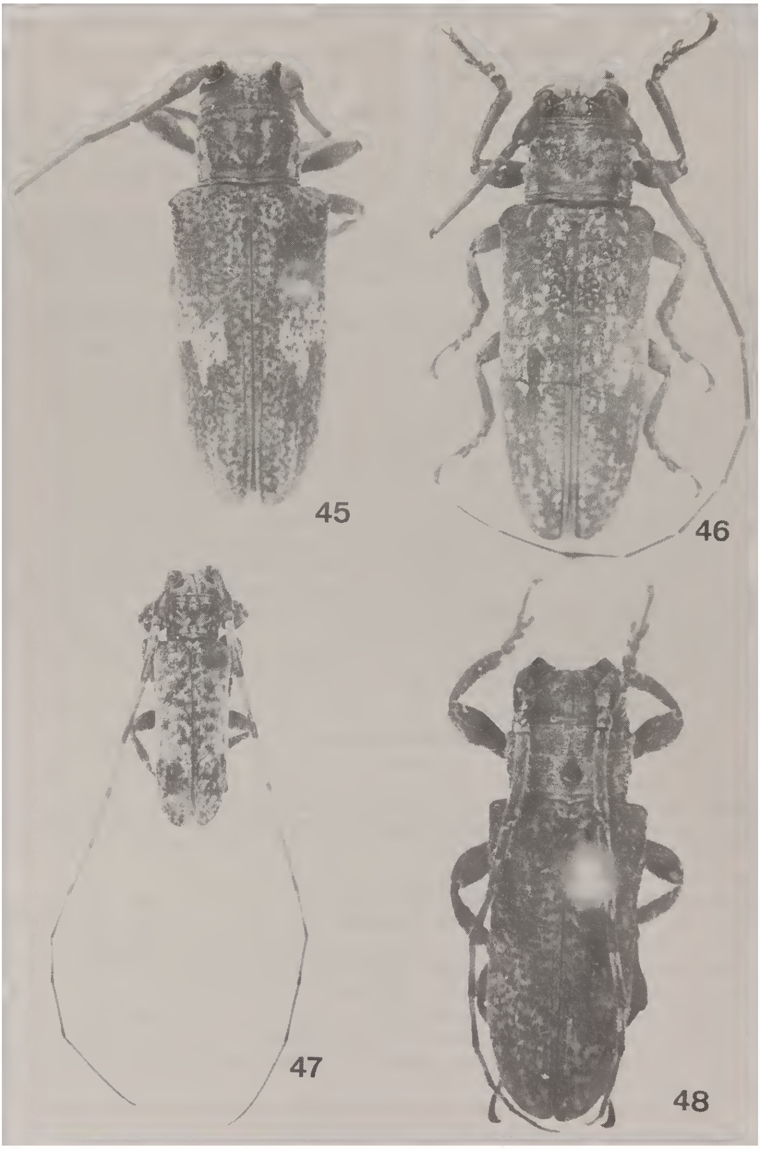

Fig. 45, *Trestonia fasciata*, sp. n., holótipo ♀; 46, *T. nivea*, sp. n., parátipo ♀; 47, *T. grisea*, sp. n., holótipo ♂; 48, *Trestoncideres laterialba*, sp. n., holótipo ♂.

Material. Suriname. Browsberge (500 m), 1 ♀, 20.IV.1981, G. Tavakilian col. (CGTC, parátipo). Brasil. Amapá: Rio Felicio, 1 ♂, 4.VIII.1957, J. Lane col. (MZSP, holótipo).

Trestonia fasciata, sp. n.

(Fig. 45)

♀. Tegumento avermelhado. Pubescência amarelada na fronte com alguns pontos castanhos. Antenômeros III e IV com pilosidade unicolor. Pronoto amarelado com duas faixas largas, pouco distintas, mais escuras e alguns pontos castanhos. Élitros castanho-claros, variegados por manchas de pilosidade amarelada; região centro-dorsal com área irregular de pilosidade branca. Lados dos urosternitos com pequenas áreas circulares glabras. Lobos oculares inferiores alongados, com *ca.* triplo do comprimento da gena. Antenômero III ligeiramente curvo. Tubérculo látero-basal do protórax indicado. Procoxa com tubérculo diminuto.

Dimensões, em mm, ♀. Comprimento total, 13,0; comprimento do protórax, 2,3; maior largura do protórax, 3,1; comprimento do élitro, 9,6; largura umeral, 4,6.

Material. Colômbia. Magdalena: 1 ♀ (MNHU, holótipo).

Discussão. Esta espécie, bem como *T. signifera* e *T. nivea,* acima descritas, têm padrão de colorido elitral muito diverso daquela apresentada pelas demais espécies (Dillon & Dillon, 1946: est. 16, figs. 6-13). Estruturalmente contudo, são muito semelhantes àquelas espécies, motivo pelo qual nos abstemos de estabelecer, por ora, gêneros novos. A presença de faixa branca no meio dos élitros é característica de *T. fasciata.*

Trestonia grisea, sp. n.

(Fig. 47)

♂. Tegumento castanho-avermelhado. Pubescência predominantemente alarajanda na cabeça, pronoto, quarto apical dos élitros e franjas dos urosternitos; em todas essas regiões entremeada por pubescência castanha. Os três quartos anteriores dos élitros (menos a declividade anterior) e face ventral do tórax com pubescência branca, que nos élitros é menos concentrada e disposta em áreas subcirculares. Antenômeros III e IV com metade apical escura; os demais escuros apenas no ápice. Lobos oculares inferiores estreitos, tão longos quanto as genas. Antenas com o dobro do comprimento do corpo, atingem o ápice elitral no meio do antenômero VI. Antenômero III robusto. Tubérculos anteníferos projetados mas não comprimidos. Tubérculos laterais do protórax reduzidos.

Dimensões, em mm, ♂. Comprimento total, 10,4; comprimento do protórax, 1,7; maior largura do protórax, 2,2; comprimento do élitro, 7,6; largura umeral, 3,0.

Material Brasil. Santa Catarina: Corupá (ex-Hansa Humboldt), 1 ♂, XII.1929, A. Maller col., ex-col. J. Melzer (MZSP, holótipo).

Discussão. Apenas em *T. albilatera* a porção anterior dos élitros é largamente ocupada por pubescência branca. Em *T. albilatera* além da região sutural apresentar pubescência castanha e alaranjada, a mancha castanho-escura do terço posterior dos élitros é muito manifesta.

Trestoncideres, gen. n.

Fronte quadrangular. Lobos oculares inferiores apenas mais curtos do que as genas. Tubérculos anteníferos distantes, agudos. Escapo subpiriforme; lado interno da base (♂) com sulco largo, profundo (fig. 14); metade apical da face ventral muito lisa, plana. Antenas (♂) apenas mais longas do que o corpo. Antenômero III robusto, curvo; o IV também robusto, reto. Protórax mais largo anteriormente do que na base. Pronoto com área glabra centro-basal. Lados do protórax irregularmente rugosos. Bases dos élitros com grânulos; gibosidades basais apenas indicadas. Procoxas sem tubérculo unciforme.