

Preface

In the period of 1893–96, Boulenger published the first comprehensive checklist of the Scolecophidia. Werner updated these checklists in 1917 (Leptotyphlopidae) and 1921 (Typhlopidae and what is now Anomalepididae). Since this time no fewer than 179 new forms have been described, and revisions of the species of many areas have also appeared.

These checklists have here been brought up to date and set out in the DAS TIERREICH format. Literature citation abbreviations are consistent with those used in the series. All primary synonyms and major spelling variations have been listed for each form, as has the first use of the current combination. The present location and museum number of each extant primary type specimen have been listed, where known. Under each taxon I have listed the most recent publication(s) dealing in some detail with that form. Where no publication is listed, it may be assumed that nothing significant has appeared since the original description, or Boulenger and Werner's checklists.

Many taxonomic problems still exist within the Scolecophidia. The systematics of most Asian forms especially is still in a primitive state. Numerous species of these secretive burrowing snakes are known only from the holotype, and little is known of the variation that exists in most species. An accurate drawing of the head scutulation of the worm snakes is worth more than a thousand words of description, yet many species have never been figured, and many of those that have, are not accurately drawn. This is mainly due to the small size of most species, and the difficulty in distinguishing the shiny, close-fitting head scales, even under adequate magnification. Scale counts now considered standard are also lacking in most descriptions for the same reasons.

I have consistently followed the zoological nomenclature committee's decision to consider all generic names ending in *-ops* as masculine (1972. Bull. zool. Nomencl. 29 (4): 177).

Many new name combinations were formed in McDowell's (1974) important work on the systematics of the Typhlopidae of the New Guinea area. For consistency, it has been necessary to assign the remaining species occurring in the Australasian and Asian areas not mentioned in his work to the most probable generic placement — *Typhlops* or *Typhlina*.

Museums housing type material are referred to by the following abbreviations. My sincere thanks goes to the listed curators for providing information on their collections.

A.M.N.H.	American Museum of Natural History, New York.
A.N.S.P.	Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
B.M.N.H.	British Museum (Natural History), London. (Andrew F. Stimson).
C.A.S.	California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco.
C.M.	Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. (C. J. McCoy).
E.H.T.-H.M.S.	Edward H. Taylor-Hobart M. Smith Collection.
F.M.N.H.	Field Museum Natural History, Chicago. (Hymnen Marx).

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F.S.M.	Florida State Museum, Gainesville.
I.R.S.N.	Insitut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique, Brussels. (Gaston F. de Witte).
K.U.	University of Kansas Museum of Natural History, Lawrence.
M.B.L.	Museu-Bocage, Lisbon. (J. de A. Fernandes).
M.C.Z.	Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. (Ernest E. Williams).
M.H.N.L.S.	Museo de Historia Natural LaSalle, Caracas.
M.H.N.P.	Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. (J. Guibé and Rolande Roux-Estève).
M.S.N.G.	Museo Civico di Storia Naturale "Giacomo Doria", Genova. (Lilia Capocaccia).
M.S.N.M.	Museo Civico di Storia Naturale, Milan.
N.M.B.	Naturhistorisches Museum, Basel.
N.M.W.	Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna. (Franz Tiedemann).
R.G.M.C.	Musee Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium. (D. Thys Van Den Audenaerde).
R.M.N.H.	Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden. (M. S. Hoogmoed).
S.D.S.N.H.	San Diego Society Natural History, San Diego. (Thomas Fritts).
S.M.F.	Natur-Museums und Forschungs-Institutes Senckenberg, Frankfurt a. M.
T.M.	Transvaal Museum, Pretoria.
U.M.	Umtali Museum, Umtali, Rhodesia. (Donald G. Broadley).
U.M.M.Z.	University of Michigan, Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor.
U.S.N.M.	United States National Museum, Washington, D. C. (Ronald I. Crombie).
W.A.M.	Western Australian Museum, Perth. (G. M. Storr).
Z.I.L.	Zoological Institute, Academy of Sciences, Leningrad. (I. S. Darevsky)
Z.M.B.	Zoologisches Museum, Berlin.

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