

First record of *Dasia olivacea* Gray, 1839 (Squamata: Scincidae) from the mainland of Vietnam

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At present six species of the genus *Dasia* Gray, 1839 are recognized from Southeast Asia (Greer 1970, Inger & Brown 1980, Darevsky & Orlov 1994). These arboreal lygosomine skinks are widely distributed from Sri Lanka in the west to the Philippine Island of Palawan in the east. In the north the distribution is said to reach 15°N in the mainland, while the Indonesian island of Java forms the most southern part of its range (Smith 1935, Bourret 2009).

Dasia olivacea Gray, 1839, the type species of *Dasia* Gray, 1839, is the most widespread species. It has been reported from the mainland Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia), islands of the Sunda archipelago (Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Pulau Siberut, Pulau Berhala, and Pulau Natuna), and some smaller offshore islands of Peninsular Malaysia (Pulau Tioman, Pulau Pinang [type locality], and Pulau Perhentian) (Smith 1935, Taylor 1963, Lim & Lim 1999, Nguyen et al. 2009, Das 2010, Teynié & David 2010). The northernmost record of this species is Sakaerat Environmental Research Station (near 14°30'N, 101°55' E.), Nakhon Ratchasima Province, eastern Thailand (Nahbitabhata et al. 2000). In Cambodia, *Dasia olivacea* is known from Cardamom Mountains: one locality near Chum Noab, Thmar Baing District, Koh Kong Province and a second on Dalai Mountain, Phnom Somkos Wildlife Sanctuary (12°25.233'N, 103°04.072'E) (Stuart & Emmett 2006, Neang et al. 2010). The presence of *Dasia olivacea* in Laos is mentioned by Teynié & David (2010) but without a precise locality. In Vietnam, *Dasia olivacea* was first recorded by Smith (1920) from "Pulo Condore" (now Con Dao Island), an offshore island in southern Vietnam. Darevsky (1990) subsequently reported this

species from Cu Lao Panjang in the Gulf of Thailand and affirmed Smith's record from Con Dao Island (Darevsky 1999). The occurrence of *Dasia olivacea* on Phu Quoc Island, Kien Giang Province was stated by Bobrov and Semenov (2008) and Nguyen et al. (2009). The occurrence of *Dasia olivacea* in the Vietnamese mainland, as well as a postulated distribution on offshore islands in central Vietnam (Bobrov 1993) has not been documented in any recent herpetofaunistic works (e.g., Bobrov & Semenov 2008, Nguyen et al. 2009). During recent surveys in southern Vietnam, three specimens of *Dasia olivacea* were observed in Dong Nai and Kien Giang provinces. All specimens fit to the descriptions of Smith (1935) and Taylor (1963) showing the typical colouration pattern of the species: Dorsum green with bronze scales in the dorsolateral areas; transverse bands of irregular greenish white ocelli edged by black and extending low on flanks; head dark olive with black markings; throat and ventral parts of body bluish and yellowish green (Fig. 1). Like in the Malaysian

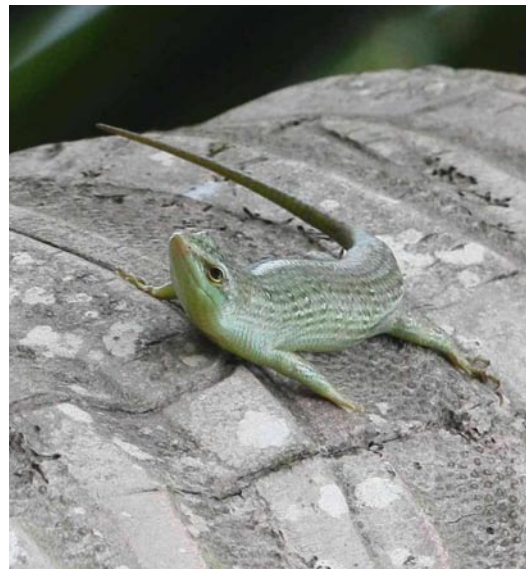


Figure 1. *Dasia olivacea* basking on a trunk of *Cocos nucifera*, Kien Giang Province, Southern Vietnam. Photograph: D.M.Hoang.

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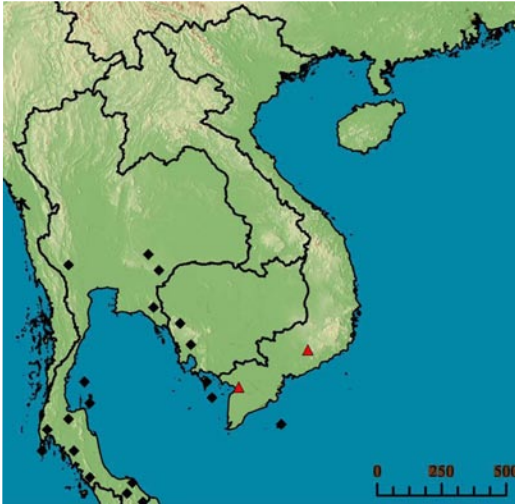


Figure 2. Distribution of *Dasia olivacea* in Indochina and Thailand (black diamonds). New records from the mainland of Vietnam are marked with red triangles (scale bar in km).

specimen depicted by Nguyen *et al.* (2009), Vietnamese specimens also have upper and lower eyelids edged in white (Fig. 1). The specimen from Dong Nai Province was found close to the headquarters of Cat Tien National Park, in an open deciduous gallery forest along the Dong Nai River (near 11°25'19.3"N, 107°25'42.0"E, 104 m a.s.l.) This specimen was observed basking on a trunk of *Lagerstroemia* sp., about 3 m above the ground, in the afternoon of 10 May 2009. The second and third specimens from Kien Giang Province were found in Ba Trai Village, Binh An Commune, Kien Luong District (10°09'13.8"N, 104°38'05"E), on a coconut tree (*Cocos nucifera*) at a height of about 3 m above ground in the morning of 24 July 2009. These habitats tally with the preference of the species for large trees and open forests like edges of clearings or plantations (Das 2010). The currently known localities of *Dasia olivacea* from Indochina and Thailand are summarized in Fig. 2.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: We are indebted to Tran Van Thanh and the team of Cat Tien National Park (Dong Nai) for permissions and hospitality. We thank E. Sterling (New York) and K. Koy (Berkeley) for providing the map. PG thanks E. Galoyan, Nikolay N. Poyarkov, Igor Palko, Anja Vassilieva, Anton N. Chekanov, Vladimir A. Zryanin, Alexander Krohn, Le Duc Khanh, Jendrian Riedel, Bernd Geissler, and Rike Bach for their support during numerous field trips in Cat Tien. The field studies of PG were partly financed by the Alexander Koenig Society (AKG) and the German Herpetological Society (DGHT). The field study of Duc Minh Hoang was partly funded by the John and Catherine MacArthur Foundation (Project 09-92488-000-GSS).

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