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**REDISCOVERY OF THE HOLOTYPE OF
OPHISOPS JERDONI BLYTH, 1853 AND
BARKUDIA INSULARIS ANNANDALE,
 1917**

(with two text figures)

The zoological holdings (including the types of new species described by the staff and members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal), after the passing of the Museum Act in 1866, came to the Natural History Section of the Indian Museum in 1875 (Fermor, 1936), and subsequently, to the Zoological Survey of India in 1916 (Roonwal, 1963; Sewell, 1932). Although no catalogue of the herpetological material in this institution exists, remarks on the same have been made in the works of Frost (1985) for amphibians and Smith (1931-43) for reptiles.

Several types of reptile species described by the staff of either the Asiatic Society of Bengal or the Indian Museum have been reported lost. While a few have been recently rediscovered among the general collections of the Survey (e.g., Sanyal and Talwar, 1975; Talukdar *et al.*, 1980; 1989), the types of several species which are at present considered valid are still considered lost, including two saurians, *Ophisops jerdoni* Blyth, 1853 and *Barkudia insularis* Annandale, 1917.

An examination of the holdings resulted in the discovery of the holotypes of both these species, which is being reported in this communication. The condition of the types are briefly described and both types are illustrated.

Ophisops jerdoni Blyth, 1853: Blyth (1853) described *Ophisops jerdoni* from "Mhow" (22° 33'N; 75° 46'E, in Madhya Pradesh, central India), mentioning that the material was collected by T. C. Jerdon. Smith (1935) reported that the type was lost. We consider ZSI 2196 to be the holotype, as it matches Blyth's (1853) original description of the species and bears a label with the following data: "2196 (13A) A.S.B. [= Asiatic Society of Bengal] Mhow, C.I. [= Central India], T. Jerdon". The type is an adult male with functional femoral pores and a partial tail (Fig. 1). Jerdon (1870: 71-72) himself makes a mention of the Mhow specimen, and implies that no

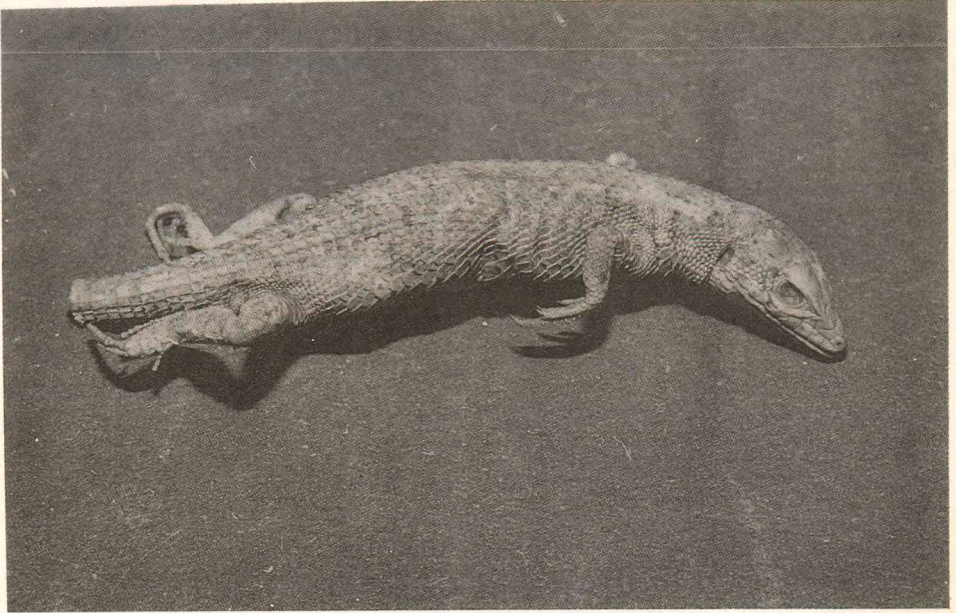


FIGURE 1: Holotype of *Ophisops jerdoni* Blyth, 1853 (ZSI 2196).

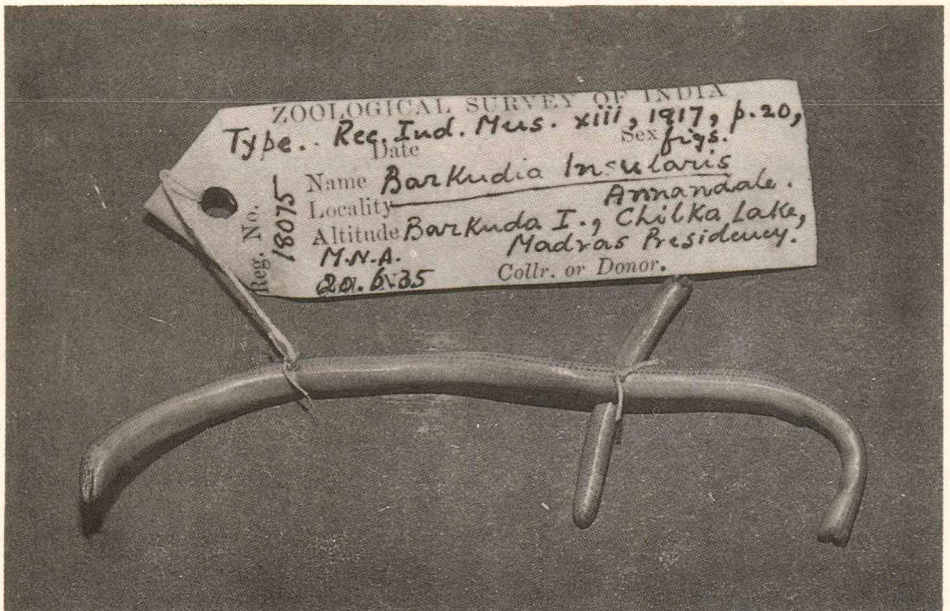


FIGURE 2: Holotype of *Barkudia insularis* Annandale, 1917 (ZSI 18075).

further material of the same has been collected from the type locality.

Barkudia insularis Annandale, 1917: Originally described by Annandale (1917), as a new genus and species from "Barkuda Island, Chilka Lake, Ganjam district, Madras Presidency" (19° 46' N; 85° 20' E, at present in Orissa State, eastern India), the holotype of *Barkudia insularis* was found extant in the ZSI. It was reported lost in the floods of Varanasi, where the collection of the Zoological Survey of India in Calcutta was stored during World War II by the Director, ZSI (according to a footnote in the paper by Ganapati and Rajyalakshmi, 1955; see also Biswas and Acharjyo, "1979" 1980). We consider ZSI 18075, an unsexed adult, to be the holotype, as it bears the original label with data on type locality and collector (F. H. Gravely) and matches the original description. It has a original, unregenerated tail that is now detached (Fig. 2).

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