

Cyrtodactylus madarensis Sharma (1980), a junior synonym of *Eublepharis macularius* Blyth (1854)

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Cyrtodactylus madarensis was described by Sharma (1980) based on a single juvenile male from near Madar (alt. 263 m), approximately 5 km north-west of Ajmer City, Rajasthan, in north-western India. No diagnosis of the new species was provided and the author compared his new find, for reasons uncited, only with the gekkonid, *Cyrtodactylus stoliczkai*, which is restricted to the extreme northern parts of India (Kashmir and Ladakh) and north-western Pakistan (North-West Frontier Province) and adjacent China (Welch et al., 1990).

Examination of the photographs and a close scrutiny of the type description of *Cyrtodactylus madarensis* revealed that the generic assignment of this taxon has been erroneous. The plate (No. IV: A) accompanying the paper clearly shows thick upper eyelids that are pale in color, which have been considered diagnostic of another gekkonid genus, *Eublepharis* (see Smith, 1935; Minton, 1966; Daniel, 1983). In general, the color pattern of the dorsum of the type is strikingly similar to Daniel's (op cit.) *Eublepharis macularius* (Blyth, 1854) juvenile (Plate 16, top).

Other generic characters of *Eublepharis* that were present in the type of *Cyrtodactylus madarensis* include the presence of lamellae under the digits; a segmented, cylindrical tail; dorsum of body with small granular scales intermixed with large subtriangular tubercles; and imbricate ventral scales. Specific characters of *Eublepharis macularius* noted in *Cyrtodactylus madarensis* include a large head with a distinct, narrow neck; pointed snout; prominent tubercles on the dorsum;

nine upper labials; ten lower labials; hind limbs reaching axilla; tail cylindrical, segmented, tapering to a point and tail length (36 mm) shorter than snout-vent length (50 mm). The description of coloration of dorsum agrees with that of *Eublepharis macularius* provided by Smith (1935) for juveniles (dark brown with bands and a white nuchal loop), and as previously noted, the type of *C. madarensis* is virtually identical in coloration to the juvenile of *E. macularius* illustrated in Daniel (1983). Adults of *E. macularius* are dark brown or reddish brown above, with the bands breaking up into spots.

Underwood (1954) revived the genus *Cyrtodactylus* Gray (1827), whose members are widespread from the shores of the Mediterranean eastwards through the Indian subcontinent, to Australia and the islands of the south-west Pacific. The subsequent splitting up of the genus by Szczerbak and Golubev (1986) has been criticised by Bauer (1987), but none of the members of this taxonomically complex group of padless geckos possess thick movable eyelids. Eyelids among gekkonids, in fact, are restricted to the eublepharines.

Males of *Eublepharis macularius* possess 9-18 preanal pores (Smith, 1935), which were not present in the type of *Cyrtodactylus madarensis*, according to the type description. However, the type was a juvenile male (snout-vent length 50 mm). *Eublepharis macularius* is known to reach about 250 mm in total body length, the 300 mm length supposedly attained by the species according to Theobald (in Smith, 1935) may refer to a third species of Asian

eublepharid, *Eublepharis angramainyu* (G. Benyr, pers. comm.).

Bhati (1989) synonymised *Eublepharis macularius* (Blyth, 1854) with *E. hardwickii* Gray (1827) after claiming to have examined a large series from Rajasthan. However, no evidence of this opinion was presented in the communication. In fact, another recent worker, Grismer (1988) has show both species of Indian eublepharids to be valid and that the ranges of the two species of Indian eublepharine geckos are separated by the plains of north-central India. *Eublepharis macularius* enters India in the north-west, with an apparently isolated population in northern Maharashtra State in western India, whereas *E. hardwickii* is restricted to north-eastern peninsular India and probably Bangladesh. The locality of Sharma's *Cyrtodactylus madarensis* therefore falls within the known range of the first named species.

Thus, I consider *Cyrtodactylus madarensis* a junior synonym of *Eublepharis macularius*, a gekkonid lizard found in north-western India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

In the description of his new species, Sharma claimed that the skin of his specimen exhibited luminescence. No explanation for this observation could be given in the present note, except that the pale bands on the dorsal aspect of the body of *Eublepharis macularius* juveniles appear extremely conspicuous against the dark brown background, a color pattern that may be aposematic.

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