

A NEW SPHAERODACTYL FROM PORTO RICO

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Sphaerodactylus gaigeae sp. nov.

Type No. 3358, male, Chapman Grant Collection, 7 Sept., 1931, mountains near Yabucoa, Porto Rico; collector, Chapman Grant.

Diagnosis: A *Sphaerodactylus* of medium size, 45 mm., very dark above, almost black; usually dark beneath. Throat dark with white spots, but this unique character fades in alcohol; habitus slim; scapular pattern wanting or reduced to light dots; head pattern in shape of "chevrons". No sexual dichromatism. Snout and throat strongly keeled.

Habitat: Mountains between Maunabo and Yabucoa, Porto Rico. Found under vegetable trash in moist situations.

Proportions: Slender; medium size, 45 mm. adult average.

Squamation: Upper side; scales across snout just in front of eyes, 12. This line to snout, 5. Scales all keeled including those bordering rostral. Lower side; Larger scales bordering mental, followed by smaller scales which increase in size at neck. All strongly keeled including chest. Belly scales smooth. Male escutcheon large.

Color and markings: No sexual dichromatism. Above; very dark brown, almost black. Head pattern a black "chevron", apex pointed forward at occiput outlined by a narrow light margin. Head pattern is unique among Porto Rican and adjacent island forms. Scapular pattern wanting or reduced to two light dots. Occasionally a sacral pattern of a pair of light longitudinal lines outlining three or four black scallops beginning at sacrum and extending onto tail. Below; chin black with light dots. This is a unique marking, but fades in alcohol. Belly marbled with dark, occasionally all gray. Also fades in alcohol. Underside of tail usually deep orange, occasionally brown. The orange fades in alcohol.

Remarks: Specimens taken, 22. This species is found associated with *S. grandisquamis*. When capturing these specimens I thought I was taking immature *S. klauberi*. This is the only "black" smooth bellied species known to occur on Porto Rico or the adjacent islands. It is much the blackest form, *S. klauberi* being a dark walnut. Named in honor of Helen T. Gaige.