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THE PROPER NAME FOR SCELOPORUS CONSOBRINUS
BAIRD AND GIRARD

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While examining the literature preparatory to monographing the genus *Sceloporus*, it was noted in Cope's *Crocodylians, Lizards and Snakes of North America* (Rept. U. S. Nat. Mus., 1898, 1900, p. 385) that the name *S. consobrinus* Baird & Girard is placed in the synonymy of *Sceloporus thayerii* Baird & Girard after having been previously recognized as the valid name for a subspecies of *S. undulatus* Latreille (p. 377). It was during the investigation of this duplication in the name of *S. consobrinus* that the writer became convinced that this species is synonymous with *S. thayerii* and that the latter name is the proper one by right of priority.

Unfortunately the type specimen of *S. consobrinus* has been destroyed, so that it is not possible to compare the type specimens of the two species directly. However, prior to the examination of the type lot of *S. thayerii* (U. S. Nat. Mus., No. 2887, 3 specimens, from Indianola [Calhoun County], Texas, collected by J. H. Clark), the writer had examined specimens from the type locality (Red River [Roger Mills County],

Oklahoma) of *S. consobrinus*. After careful comparison of these specimens with many others from numerous localities, it seemed best to extend the range of *S. consobrinus* as far south as San José, Tamaulipas, Mexico, which is some distance beyond Indianola, Texas. Subsequent examination of the type lot of *S. thayerii* indicated that they fall well within the range of variation exhibited by specimens from throughout the rather well defined range of *S. consobrinus*. Certainly no appreciable differences were apparent to the writer. Other herpetologists seem to be in accord, for since 1900 the name *S. thayerii* has not appeared in the literature, although many collections have been made from localities adjoining that from whence the type came.

Baird and Girard, in the type description of *thayerii* (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad., Vol. VI, 1852-1853, p. 127), give as additional localities for the species, "On the Gulf of Mexico, San Antonio (Texas), El Paso and as far west as the province of Sonora (Arizona)." The specimens from San Antonio and El Paso would certainly seem to be the same as *S. consobrinus*, falling as they do well within the accepted range of that form. Those from the "Province of Sonora (Arizona)," as will be pointed out in a subsequent paper, are probably entitled to subspecific recognition as *S. thayerii tristichus* Cope.

Cope (1900, p. 386) lists specimens of *S. thayerii* from the following localities, "San Antonio and Indianola, Texas; Eagle Pass (Texas); San Pedro (Texas); Coal Creek (Colorado?); Fort Bliss, New Mexico and Indianola to Nueces (Texas)." Likewise he lists (1900, p. 380) specimens from San Pedro, Texas, and San Antonio (Texas) as *S. consobrinus*. This duplication of localities would indicate that, as in the previous case, either the two species occupy the same range in southern Texas or his identifications were based upon characters which are in reality but the extremes of individual variation. The latter seems to be the case, for Cope states that he based his separation (1900, p. 386) upon coloration and carination of the scales on the preanal and inferior tibial regions, two characters which exhibit tremendous variation even among specimens from the same locality.

Fortunately, the type description of *S. consobrinus* is a good one and a comparison between it and the type and type description of *S. thayerii* leaves little doubt that the two species are synonymous. In view of the fact that the two were described by the same authors, it is interesting to note that although they named *S. thayerii* in 1852 they do not mention it when describing *S. consobrinus* a year later. Yet in both descriptions they compare each new species with *S. graciosus* Baird & Girard and *S. scalaris* Wiegmann. This would perhaps suggest that the authors did not compare the two and thus failed to notice their great similarity, or that the two species were described independently by the authors at about the same time.

Sceloporus consobrinus was described in Marcy's Report on the Exploration of the Red River of Louisiana in 1853 (32d Congress, 2d Session, Senate Document No. 54, p. 237, Pl. X, figs. 5-12). Until Dr. Stejneger kindly informed me of the correct documents, dates and pagination, the reprint of this paper (33d Congress, 1st Session, House of Representatives Document, 1854, p. 208, Pl. X, figs. 5-12) was confused with the original edition.

Sceloporus thayerii Baird & Girard was described in the Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Science of Philadelphia, Vol. VI, 1852-1853, p. 127. Aside from the fact that page 127 carries the date August, 1852, the records of the Academy reveal the fact that the Smithsonian Institution acknowledged the receipt of Volume VI, or that part of the volume containing page 127, in the year 1852. Consequently, this date is accepted as the correct one, and the name *S. thayerii* is, therefore, given priority over *S. consobrinus*.

It seems unfortunate that a name so well known and as much used by herpetologists as *S. consobrinus* should be replaced by a name so relatively unfamiliar as *S. thayerii*. However, some consolation may be gained from the fact that the type of *S. consobrinus* has been destroyed whereas that of *S. thayerii* is still existent.

