

The *Ctenotus colletti* complex (Lacertilia: Scincidae), including a new species from the Pilbara.

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Abstract

Former subspecies of *Ctenotus colletti*, viz. *C. c. nasutus* and *C. c. rufescens* are now considered to be allopatric species. Another species *C. nigrilineatus* is described.

Introduction

When I described *Ctenotus nasutus* (Storr 1969) the only Western Australian material was three specimens from the Great Victoria Desert 1100 km south of La Grange, whence came our two specimens of *C. colletti* (Storr 1975). It therefore seemed prudent to treat *nasutus* as a subspecies of *colletti*. Subsequently *nasutus* has been collected much further north in the Great Sandy Desert; in spite of the proximity of these specimens to the range of *colletti* (see map, Figure 1) they showed no approach towards *colletti*.

Meanwhile *C. rufescens* was described from the vicinity of Exmouth Gulf (Storr 1979); although substantially different in scalation and coloration, it too was treated as a subspecies of *colletti*. Recently a fourth member of the complex was discovered in the Pilbara; it is geographically intermediate between *rufescens* and *colletti* but is in no way morphologically intermediate. It is thus becoming clear that *C. colletti* and its closest relatives are best regarded as full species.

Ctenotus nigrilineatus sp. nov.

Figure 2

Holotype

104065 in Western Australian Museum, collected by R.A. How and J. Dell on 23 March 1990 near Woodstock, Western Australia, in 21°36'S, 119°01'E.

Paratype

90656 collected at same place.

Diagnosis

A member of the *C. colletti* species-group with 8 white longitudinal stripes and upper ear lobule greatly enlarged. Most like *C. nasutus* but 5 black stripes on back equally narrow (v. vertebral widest of 5 blackish brown stripes), prefrontals widely separated (v. normally in contact, rarely separated and then very narrowly) and loreals equal in size (v. second much wider than first). *C. colletti* and *C. rufescens* have 7 dark stripes on back; the latter is unique in the dark upper lateral stripe splitting into two stripes between eye and ear.

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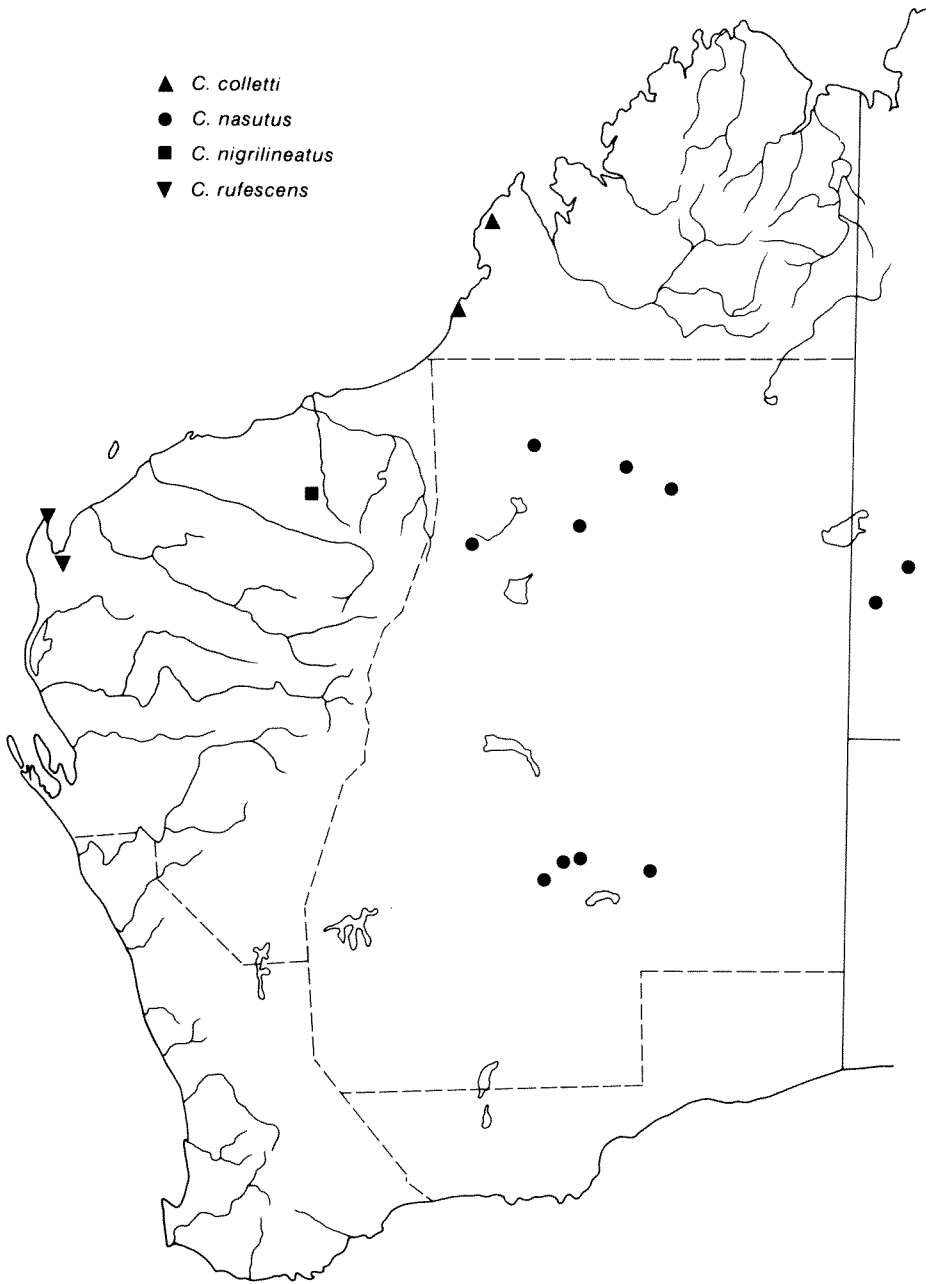


Figure 1 Map of Western Australia showing location of specimens of *Ctenotus colletti*, *C. nasutus*, *C. nigrilineatus* and *C. rufescens*.

Other material examined (all from Western Australia and in Western Australian Museum)

Ctenotus colletti: 26 km S Beagle Bay Mission (58489); La Grange (27883, 27886).

Ctenotus rufescens: Vlaming Head (60950); 3 km E Giralia (60994, 61152).

Ctenotus nasutus: 38 km SSW McTavish Claypan (64283-4, 64291); 15 km WSW Thompson Hills (94981-2); Well 39, Canning Stock Route (64220); 12 km NNE Well 29, Canning Stock Route (63957); 29 km S Nooloo Soak (63750, 63763); 8 km NE Dunges Table Hill (30250, 85704, 85779); 8 km WNW Point Salvation (85674-5, 85679, 89245, 99546-8).

References

- Storr, G.M. (1969). The genus *Ctenotus* (Lacertilia, Scincidae) in the Eastern Division of Western Australia. *J. Proc. R. Soc. West. Aust.* **51**: 97-109.
- Storr, G.M. (1975). The genus *Ctenotus* (Lacertilia, Scincidae) in the Kimberley and North-West Divisions of Western Australia. *Rec. West. Aust. Mus.* **3**: 209-243.
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