

Nomenclatural status of  
FITZINGER's (1861) *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*,  
and confirmation of *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820)  
from the Nicobar Archipelago  
(Squamata: Sauria: Agamidae)

Nomenklatorischer Status von FITZINGERS (1861) *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, und  
Bestätigung von *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) für die Nikobaren  
(Squamata: Sauria: Agamidae)

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KURZFASSUNG

Das während der Reise der österreichischen Fregatte 'Novara' von den Nikobaren aufgesammelte Agamenmaterial, auf das FITZINGER (1861) *Pseudocalotes archiducissae* begründete, wurde in der Herpetologischen Sammlung des Naturhistorischen Museums in Wien aufgefunden. Es wird gezeigt, daß dieser Name ein nomen nudum darstellt. Die von STEINDACHNER (1861) festgestellte Identität von *P. archiducissae* und *B. cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) wird bestätigt und folglich auch das Vorkommen dieser Art auf dem Inselarchipel der Nikobaren (Indien).

ABSTRACT

The specimens of agamid lizards collected from the Nicobar Islands during the voyage of the Austrian fregate 'Novara', on which FITZINGER (1861) based *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, were found extant in the collection of the Museum of Natural History in Vienna; the name is shown to be a nomen nudum. The identities of *P. archiducissae* and *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) as evaluated by STEINDACHNER (1861), were verified. This report confirms the presence of *B. cristatella* from the Nicobars Archipelago, India.

KEY WORDS

Reptilia, Sauria, Agamidae; *Pseudocalotes archiducissae*, *Bronchocela cristatella*, distribution, nomenclature, taxonomy, Nicobar Archipelago, India

The name *Pseudocalotes archiducissae* appears for the first time in a list of mammals and reptiles collected during the voyage of the Austrian fregate, 'Novara', around the world, authored by FITZINGER ("1860": 387 and 398, although published in 1861). GANS (1955) provided an itinerary of the voyage of the 'Novara'. The taxon was subsequently considered a synonym of *Bronchocela cristatella* (KUHL, 1820) by STEINDACHNER (1867: 27), who provided diagnostic characters of the purported new taxon. SMITH (1935: 184), too, treated the Nicobarese species tentatively as synonymous with *B. cristatella*, mentioning that the type of the former was lost, as did WERMUTH (1967) and BARTS & WILMS (1997: 64.1), although no worker subsequently appears to have tried to trace the material. BARTS & WILMS (1997: 66.1)

considered *B. danieli* (TIWARI & BISWAS, 1973) to be a valid taxon. Given that two species of the genus are reported as sympatric on the Nicobars, and the fact that *B. cristatella* has not been recorded from these islands in recent years (DAS 1999), a note verifying the systematic status of *P. archiducissae* and reporting on the discovery of the so-named lost specimens at the Natural History Museum, Vienna (NMW), was thought important.

Interest in the herpetofauna of the Nicobar Archipelago was to be spurred nearly a century later by the collections by the staff of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in the 1960s, leading to a large number of species descriptions. These included an agamid, collected from the Nicobars and described as *Calotes danieli* TIWARI & BISWAS, 1973. However, no further specimens