

TWO NEW RECORDS OF DWARF SNAKES OF THE GENUS *EIRENIS*
JAN, (REPTILIA, COLUBRIDAE) IN IRAQI KURDISTAN (NORTH
AND NORTHEASTERN OF IRAQ) WITH ANNOTATED CHECKLIST,
FOR THE GENUS *EIRENIS* IN IRAQ

Sarbaz I. Mohamad and Saman R. Afrasiab
Kurdistan museum of natural history Arbil, Iraq & Iraqi Natural History
Museum, Baghdad, Iraq; Email: s_lahony@ yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Two dwarf snakes were discovered, *Eirenis thospitis* Schmidtler & Lanza from Sereen mountain, north east of Arbil and *E. rothii* Jan from Saffin mountain North of Arbil city North of Iraqi Kurdistan. Supported by description and important notes on variation. In addition summarized list for 9 species of the genus *Eirenis* Jan in Iraq is also presented.

Key words: Colubridae, *Eirenis*, Kurdistan, Iraq, Museum.

INTRODUCTION

The dwarf snakes of the genus *Eirenis* are one of the critical genus of the Colubrine snakes.

The presented paper bring new country records for two *Eirenis* species and provides an updated annotated list of *Eirenis* species known up to date from Iraq. In addition, brief characteristics and morphological data are given for the examined *Eirenis* specimens.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This checklist based on collection of Iraqi Natural History Museum of Baghdad University (IMNH), collections of Kurdistan museum Nat. Hist. of Salahaddin Universit (KMNH) and collection of Garmean University of Kalar. Morphology data taking from above collection and for the list on our collection and litterateur. Important and necessary notes also giving for some species of Iraqi *Eierenis*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Eirenis (Pediophis) thospitis Schmidtler & Lanza, 1990.

Locality: Northern and North East Arbil, of Iraq, 2106m. a.s.l. (N 36° 2'8' 23''o E .o o 44° 59' .26''.2). Fig., (1,2).

Single male No. (331RS) KMNH. Total length 415 mm., Tail length 85mm.

Coloration: Dorsal uniform pale olive grey anterior scale on the nape and around the neck region with dark margin and spots fused in the nape to form four elongated strips disappear along the dorsal of the body. dark spots on posterior of parietals frontal and upper labial shields with dark margins, Ventral pail yellow.

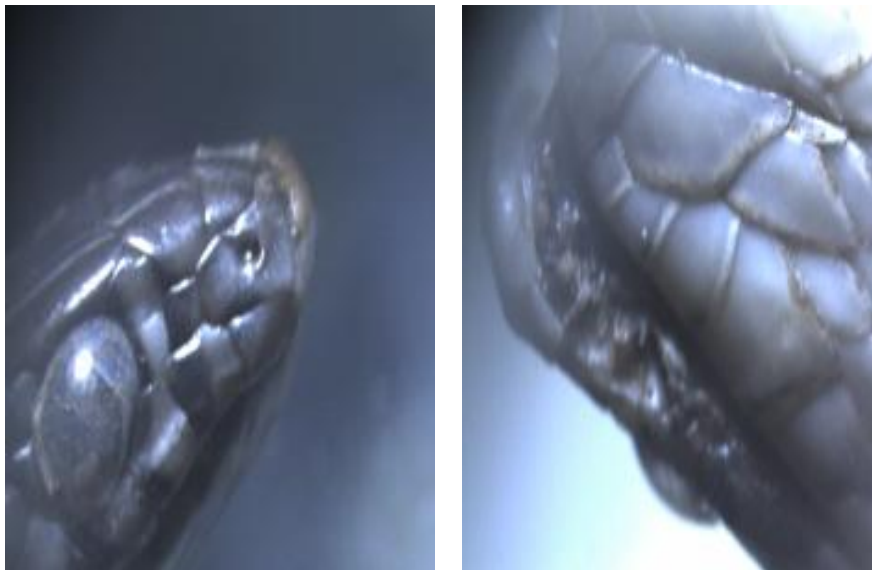
Scalation: Dorsal scale rows 15. Nostrils in single nasal, touching the 1st and 2nd upper labials. 1pre And two post ocular Upper labials 7, 3rd and 4th in contact with the eye. Lower labial 9. Small rectangular loreal higher than length touching 2nd and 3rd labials. Gularia and 4 of lower labials in contact with anterior chin shields (Fig. 2b) Ventral scales 183, subcaudal scales 63, Anal plate divided. Dorsal scale with single apical pit.

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Habitat: Oak forest. Kandeel mountain which covered by the snow most of the year as a barrier between our collection site and Turkish localities of *E. thospitis* Also for close related species *E. hakkariensis*.



Figure 1: *Eirenis thospitis*. From serene mountain north east Arbil Altitude 2106 m.asl.



a

b

Figure.2: a- Lateral view of the head of the *E. thospitis*, showing undivided nasal and loreal. b- Chin shields.

Table.1: Comparison between nominated variety of *E. thospitis*

Locality	Nasal scale and nostril position	Coloration	Subcaudal scales	Total maximum length
<i>Eirenis thospitis</i> Van, Turkey	Nostrils in between two nasals	Verticals and horizontal thin bars on nape and neck	48-58	540 mm.
<i>Eirenis thospitis</i> Iraqi Kurdistan	IN one nasal	Small transverse strips On the nape	63	415mm.
<i>Eirenis hakkarinsis</i> Hakkari, Turkey	One nasal and fused with loreal	Uniform no bars and spots	52-68	560 mm.

Eirenis (pediophis) rothii Jan, 1863. Fig.3 This regards a new records for this snake in Iraq. Reed and Marx (1959) reported this snake from north of Arbil, most of the authors they had reservation about their being *E.rothii*. (Leviton, *et al.* 1992), Mahdi and Georg, (1969).

The specimens kept in (IMNH) of Baghdad university under the name of *E. collaris*. collected from Aen Zala northwest of Mosul and Aradin-Duhuk. The second new location for this snake Fig.3, collected by 1st author from North of Arbil, Saffin mountain 1600m. a.s.l, No. 332 RSkept in, KMNH, Salahadin University, Arbil.

Measurement: *Eirenis rothi* is a small tiny snake, total length 217- 312mm. Tail length 16-72mm.

Coloration: Head with dark nasal, frontal and parietal band the dark blackish extend to upper labials, dark band on the neck 3-4 scale width. The body uniform pale olive grey. In Iraqi materials. The yellow of black collar margin and head is not prominent, it has faint yellow margin.

Scalations: 15 dorsal scale rows. 157-167 ventral plate and 58-60 subcaudal. One pre and two post ocular. Small loreal scale present. 8 supralabial 3rd and 4th touching the eye.



Figure.3: *Eirenis (Pediophis) rothii* collected by First author from Saffin Mountain north of Arbil.

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Eirenis (Pseudocyclophis) persicus. (ANDERSON, 1872).

Distribution in Iraq: This snake distributed in north and north east, Three from Saffin mountain north of Arbil, one from south east of Sulaimanyah. Fig.4.

Comments: Coloration of the head and dorsal bands varies from intense black (eastern specimens) to dark yellowish brown (most of the Arbil specimens). The dark band of the head of Arbil's *E. persicus* broken to spots but of eastern Sulaimanyah the black spot of the head fused with the neck band, dorsal strips of eastern one three scales width. According to Terent'ev & Chernov (1949). *E. p. walteri* BOETTGE, 1888a, is found in north east, Iraq. The collection of Arbil have the *E. p. nigrofasciata* NIKOLSKY 1907. Mahlow *et al.* (2013) giving 98 dorsal strips for *E. persicus nigrofasciata* fits with Arbil collections but collection of eastern Sulaimanyah does not exceed 60.



Figure.4: *Eirenis(pseudocyclophis) persicus, nigrofasciatus* NIKOLSKY,1907. From northern Arbil.

Eirenis (Eoseirenis) decemlineatus (DUMERIL, BIBRON &DUMERIL. 1854)

A specimen from north of Arbil, kept in KMNH of Arbil. Another collection from Hamzica, Dohuk gov. 15-6-75 No.223z6.

Eirenis (pediophis) panctatolineatus (BOETTGER, 1892)

Distribution in Iraq: North Arbil North and North east of Sulaimanyah.

No museum specimens are available, all records are represented by published data only.

Eirenis (Pediophis) ineomaculatus Schmidt, 1939. Two specimens from north of Arbil kept in KMNH.

Eirenis(Pediophis) collaris (Menetries 1832)

Distribution in Iraq: North eastern Iraq Sulaimanyah, Dukan, Kirkuk, common in old houses of Sulaimanyah city. Dohuk and Khanakeen east of Iraq. We did not have

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any specimens from Baghdad but Boulenger, (1919) and Corkil (1932) mentioned Baghdad as an Iraqi locality of this species.

Eirenis (Pediophis) coronella (Schlegel, 1837)

Distributions in Iraq western desert. south eastern Iraq.

Eirenis (Pediophis) coronelloides (Jan, 1862). Distribution in Iraq North of Arbil and Rutba west of Anbar.



Figure.5: *Eirenis (Pediophis) coronelloides* JAN from north west Arbil North of Iraq.

Comments: This snake for the first time recorded in Iraq by Afrasiab and Mohamad (2014) Previously Reed and Marx, (1959) and Mahdi & Georg (1969) assigned to *Eirenis brevicaudus* Nikolsky for northern Iraq, also they said its synonyms of *E. coronelloides* Jan. Diisi, (2002), Diisi *et al.* (2001) consider *E. fasciatus* Jan as a synonym of *E. coronella*. Nilson and Rastigar-Pouyani (2011) refer such pattern to *E. coronelloides* for Iranian specimens because of scale number with dark dorsal band and head pattern.

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تسجيلين جديدين لحيات القزمة لجنس (*EIRENIS JAN*, (REPTILIA, COLUBRIDAE) في كردستان العراق (شمال وشمال الشرقي في العراق) مع قائمة للجنس (*EIRENIS*) في العراق

سرباز ابراهيم محمد* و سامان رستم افراسياب**
*متحف كردستان للتاريخ الطبيعي – اربيل - العراق
**متحف التاريخ الطبيعي – جامعة بغداد – بغداد - العراق

الخلاصة

اكتشفت نوعين من حيات القزمة لأول مرة في العراق *Eirenis thospitis* Schmidtler & Lanza في جبل سيرين شمال شرق مدينة اربيل و *E. rothii* Jan في جبل سفين شمال مدينة اربيل في شمال العراق. دعمت بوصف وملاحظات مهمة عن التغيرات مع اضافة قائمة مصنفة لتسهيل انواع من جنس *Eirenis* Jan الموجودة في العراق.