

# Key to the Dragons of South Australia



Central Netted Dragon, *Ctenophorus nuchalis*

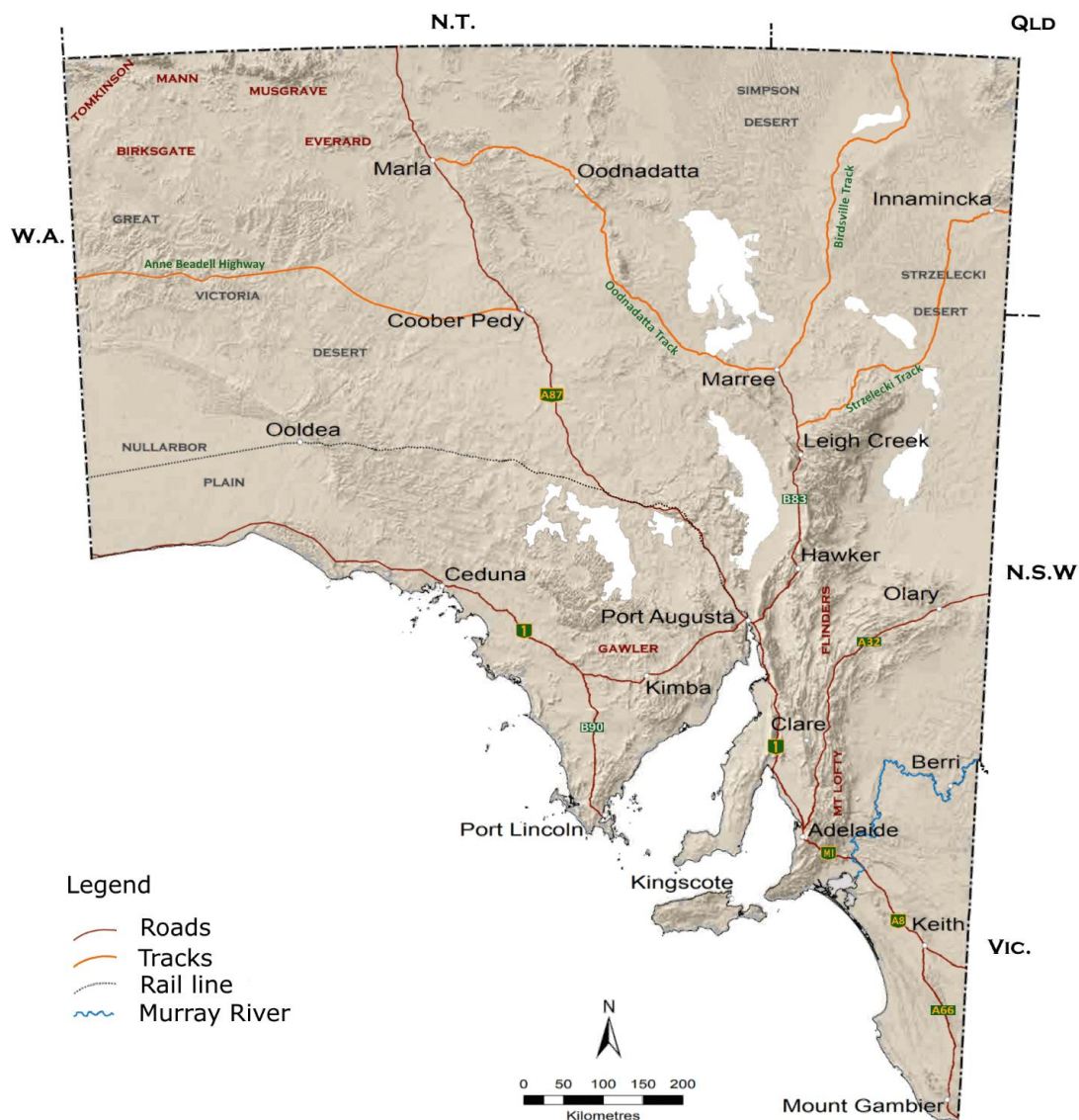
Mark Hutchinson & Ian Williams

Version: 2023

<https://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/reptile-keys>

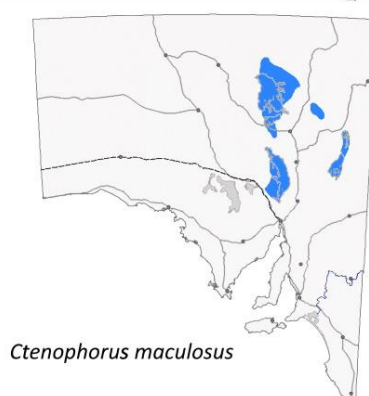
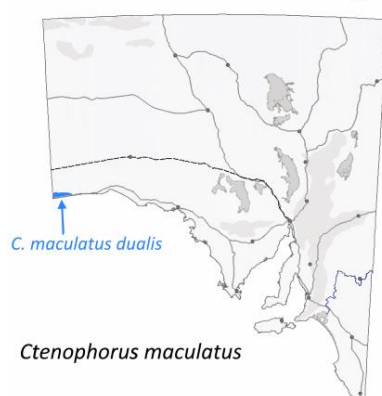
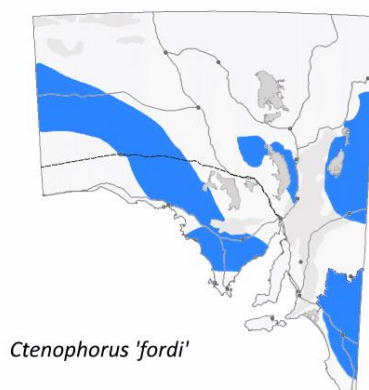
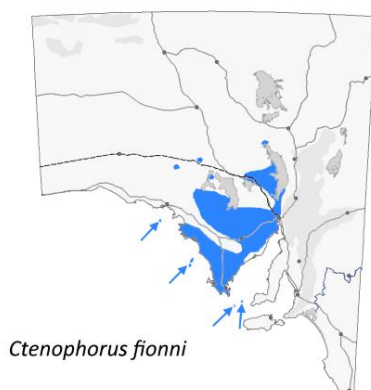
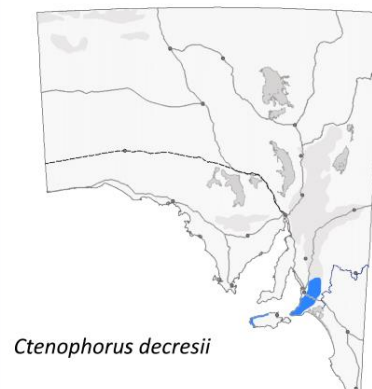
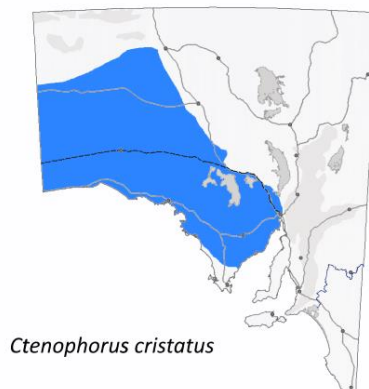
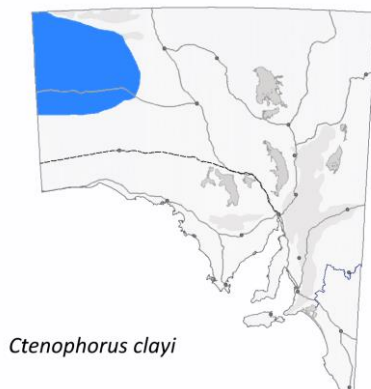
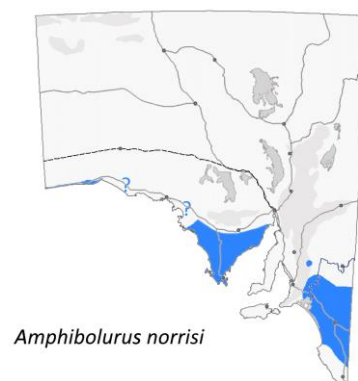
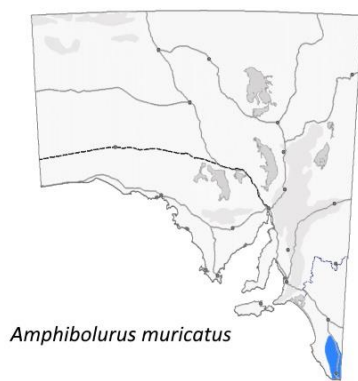
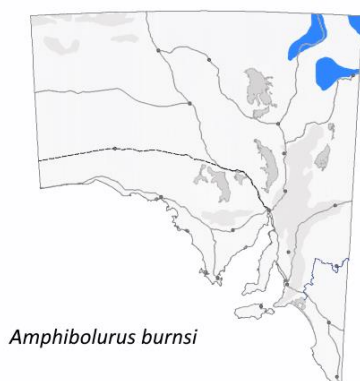
## THE DRAGONS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

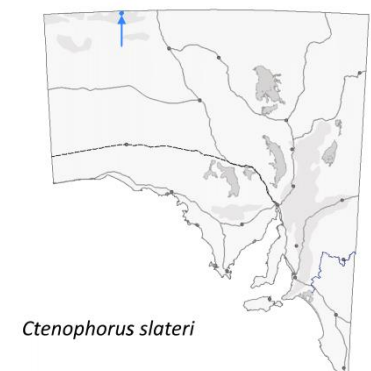
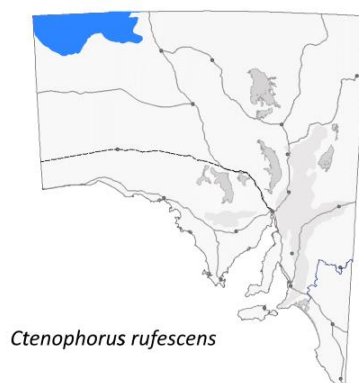
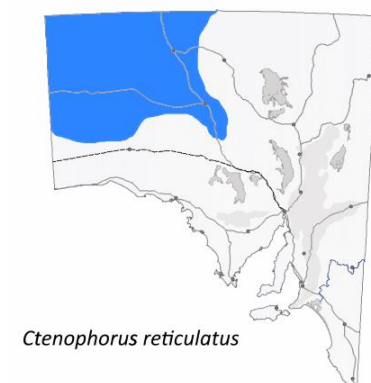
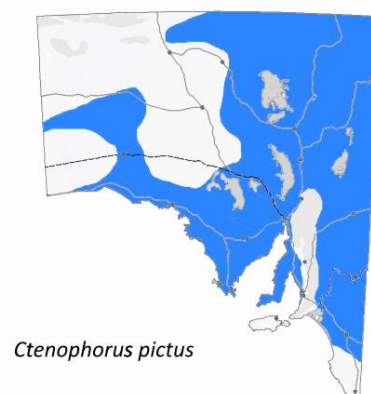
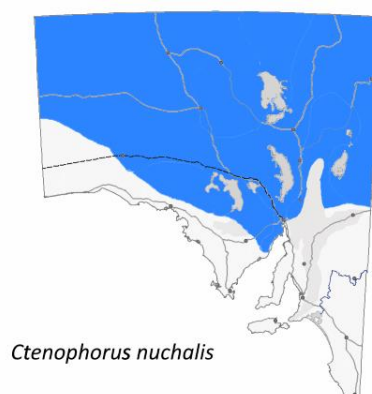
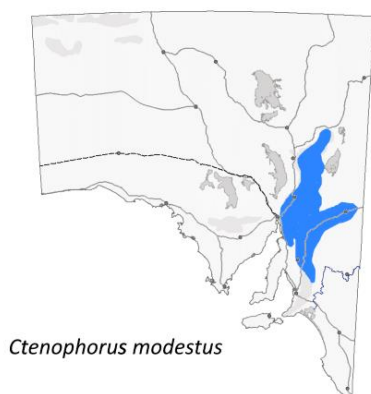
### GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Map modified from the Vertebrate Census of South Australia showing place names and geographical features as well as some main roads and major desert tracks, to assist with interpreting the following distribution maps.

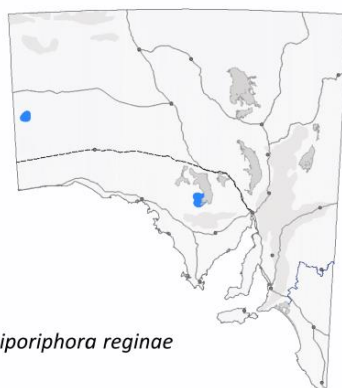
Distribution maps show known and likely occurrence, given suitable habitat. In some cases South Australian populations belong to recognised subspecies, indicated in blue text. Introduced populations mapped in magenta.



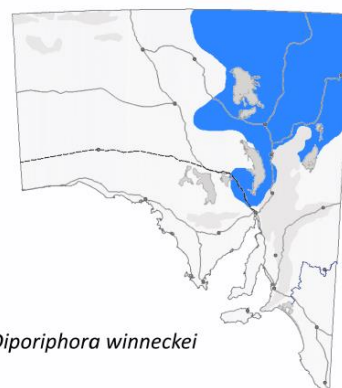




*Diporiphora paraconvergens*



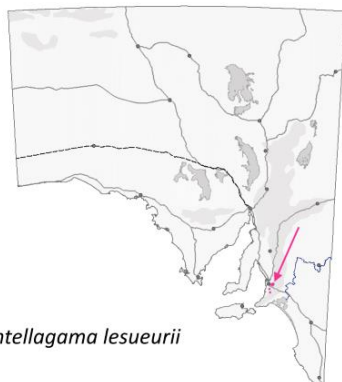
*Diporiphora reginae*



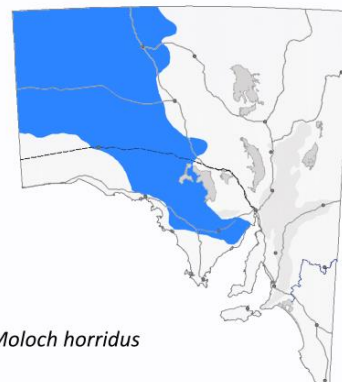
*Diporiphora winneckeii*



*Gowidon longirostris*



*Intellagama lesueurii*



*Moloch horridus*



*Pogona barbata*



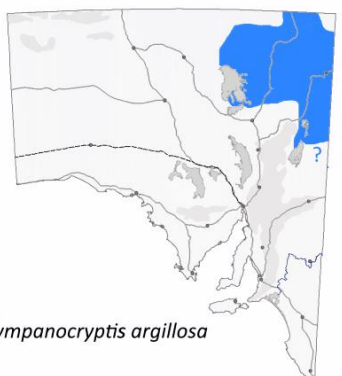
*Pogona minor*



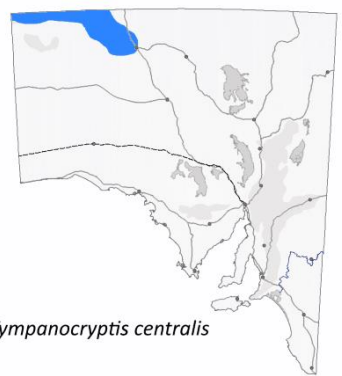
*Pogona nullarbor*



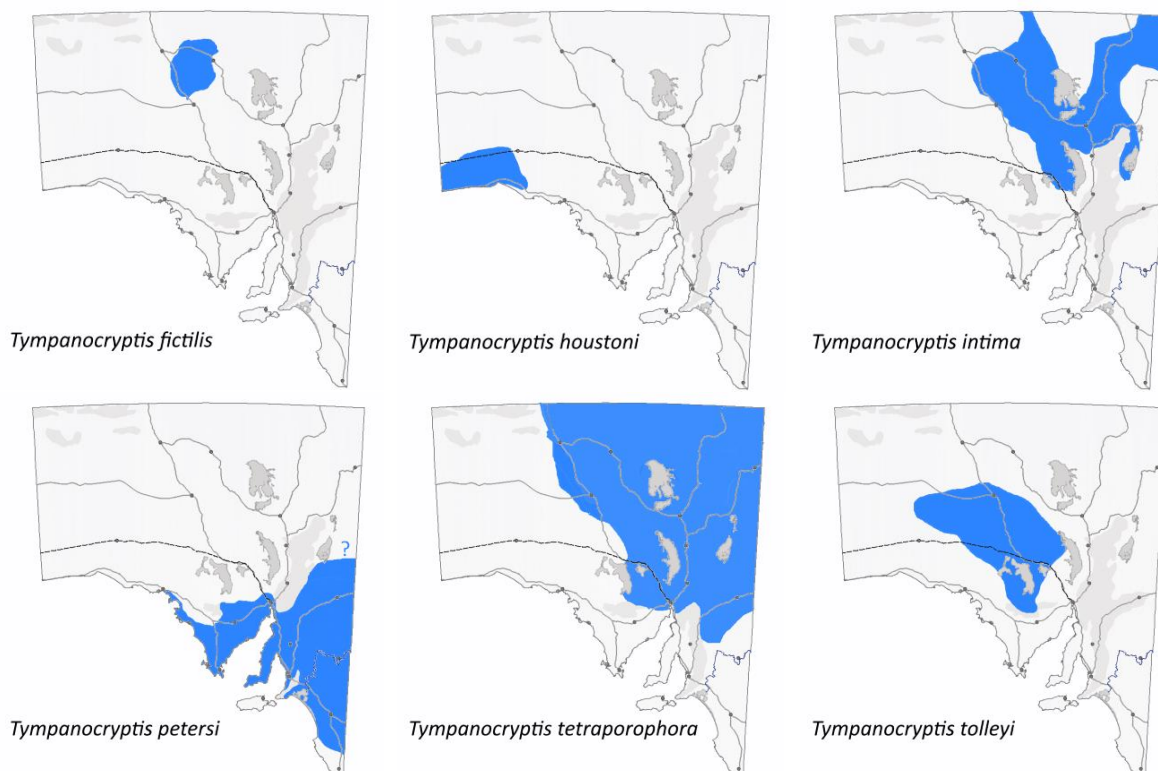
*Pogona vitticeps*



*Tympanocryptis argillosa*



*Tympanocryptis centralis*



## KEY TO THE DRAGONS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### FAMILY AGAMIDAE

**Femoral and preloacal pores.** These are glandular structures that have the appearance of small holes or wax-filled pustules in scales that lie on the underside of the thighs, some scales immediately in front of the cloaca, or both. Their function is obscure but they are more obvious in males than females. Due to variation in the way that these pores are arranged they are often of use in making identifications. Close examination with a hand lens may be necessary to accurately determine the arrangement and number of these pores.

**Head shape.** Head shape is a useful identifying feature of dragons, but can cause problems because small body size tends to be associated with a more rounded head shape. The key refers to adult lizards, so be alert to the possibility that you have a juvenile of a larger species rather than an adult of a small species.

1. a. Body and appendages covered with stout, erect spines, including horn-like spines above each eye, and the neck with a bulbous swelling bearing two large spines ..... ***Moloch horridus***  
Thorny Devil
- b. Not as above ..... **2**



**1a.** *Moloch horridus*

2.
  - a. Body with very uneven scalation, including many medium and large spiny scales that are scattered across the back and do not form continuous crests. . . . . **3**
  - b. Body with very uniform scalation, either all virtually smooth or if any spiny scales present these form one or more continuous straight crests running along the body, including one down the middle of the back . . . . . **5**



*Ctenophorus chapmani*

**3a.** Keeled and spiny body scales



*Tympanocryptis tetraporophora*

**3a.** Scattered large spiny scales


*Ctenophorus salinarum*

**3b.** Body scales lack spines

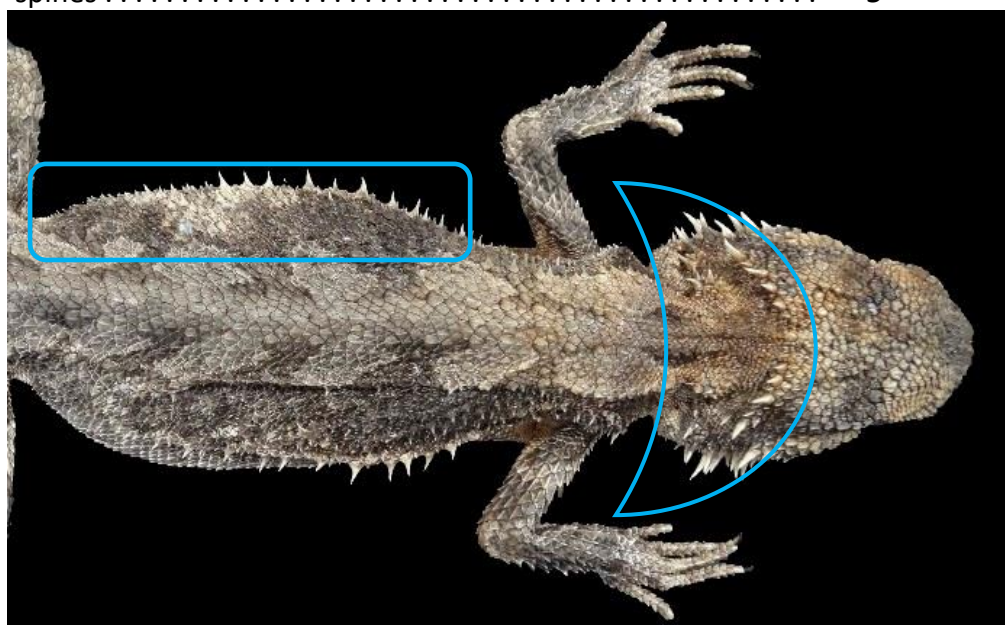

*Diporiphora nobbi*

**3b.** Spiny scales all small, arranged in straight crests

- 3.**
- a.** Back of head with a transverse row of spines; along each flank is a zone of scales that are markedly larger and more spinose than the adjacent dorsal scales . . . . .
  - b.** No transverse row of spines across back of head; flanks may have small spinose scales but not a continuous zone of large spines . . . . .

***Pogona*** (p. 27)

**5**


*Pogona minor*

**3a.** Rows of spines across back of head and along flanks

- 4.**
- a.** Ear drum missing, the area covered by scales; body scales of two sizes, with the larger scales bearing short spines . . . . .
  - b.** Ear drum visible; . . . . .

***Tympanocryptis***  
(p. 30)

***Ctenophorus*** (part)  
(p. 12)



*Tympanocryptis centralis*  
4a. Ear drum absent

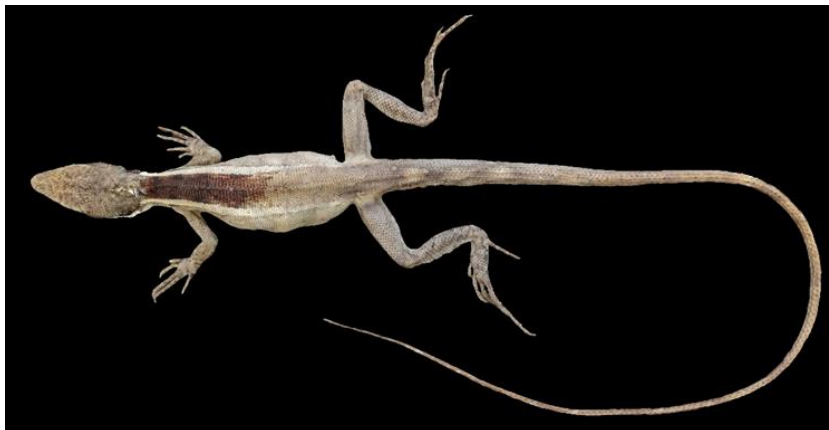


*Ctenophorus chapmani*  
4b. Ear drum visible

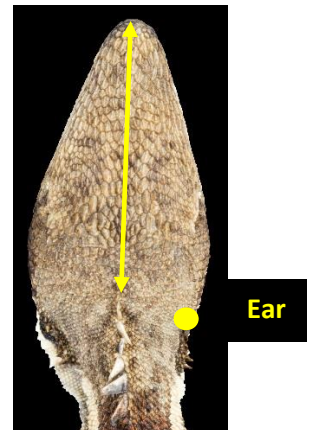
5. a. Snout greatly elongate\*, distance from ear to tip of snout more than twice distance between the ears; body scales smooth except for small crest on nape and a vertebral row of slightly enlarged pointed scales . . . . .
- b. Snout not greatly elongate, distance from ear to tip of snout less than twice the distance between the ears . . . . .

**Gowidon**  
**(*G. longirostris*)**  
Long-nosed Dragon

6



5a. *G. longirostris*



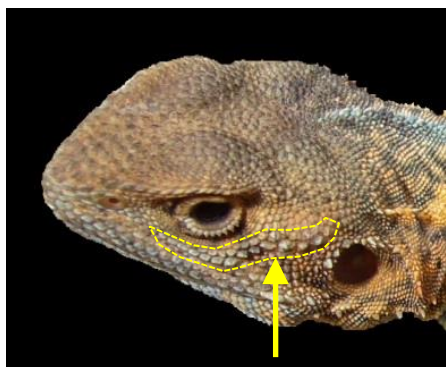
5a.

\*Hatchlings of this species have shorter snouts; may key to *Diporiphora*, but note extremely long tail (2.5x head and body) and pale dorsolateral stripe not running full length of body.

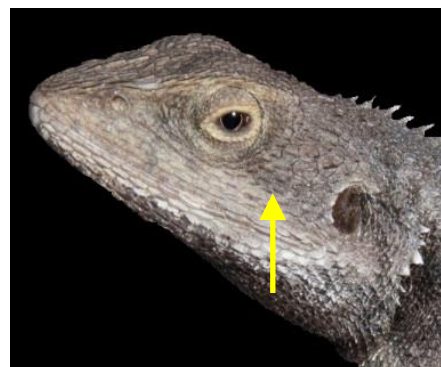


5a. *G. longirostris*

6. a. A row of enlarged scales forms a semicircular ridge that runs under the eye and (in some species) back on to the side of the head; row weak, broken or reduced to scattered enlarged scales behind the eye in some species ..... ***Ctenophorus* (part)**  
(p. 12)
- b. No row of enlarged scales under the eye ..... **7**

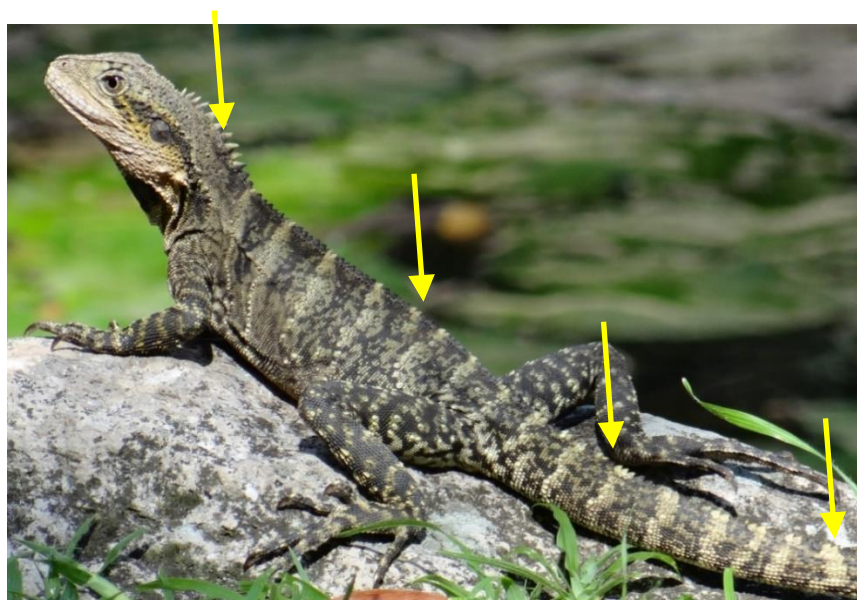
*Ctenophorus vadrappa*

- 6a.** A row of enlarged scales in an arc below and behind the eye

*Diporiphora nobbi*

- 6b.** No row of enlarged scales in an arc below and behind the eye

7. a. A strong vertebral crest of triangular scales continues the length of the tail which is laterally flattened ..... ***Intellagama lesueurii***  
Water Dragon  
(introduced)
- b. Vertebral crest, if present, goes no further posteriorly than the basal third of the tail, which is round in cross-section .... **8**

*Intellagama lesueurii*

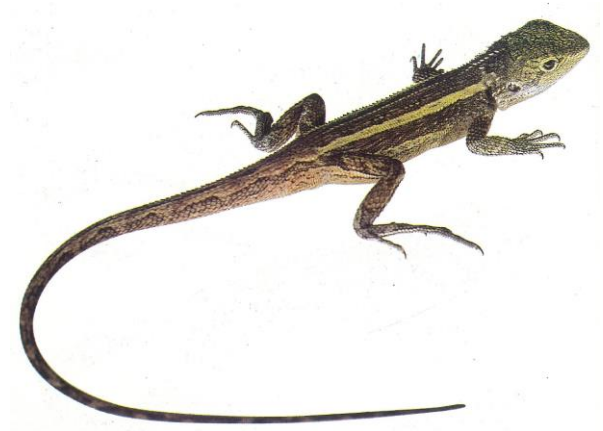
- 7a.** Vertebral crest runs the length of the body and tail

8. a. Lining of mouth and tongue yellow; male dorsal colour pattern never includes any pink or yellow markings ..... ***Amphibolurus***  
(p. 11)

- b.** Lining of mouth and tongue pink; males with pink to red flush on the base of the tail and/or the flanks, and dorsolateral stripes are coloured creamy yellow to lemon yellow . . . . . ***Diporiphora*** (p. 24)



*Amphibolurus norrisi* (C. Whitehead)



*Diporiphora nobbi* (Trevor Peters, SA Museum)

**8a.** Bright yellow tongue and mouth lining

**7b.** Male with yellow dorsolateral stripes and pink on the tail

## KEY TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPECIES OF *AMPHIBOLURUS*

1. a. Scales on dorsal surface of thighs keeled, but uniform, no scattered enlarged spinous scales . . . . . ***A. burnsi***  
Eastern Tree Dragon
- b. Dorsal surface of thighs both keeled, and with scattered enlarged spinous scales . . . . . **2**



*Amphibolurus burnsi*

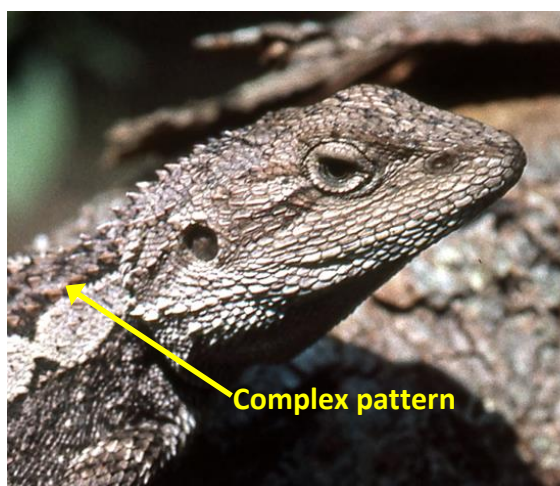
**1a.** Uniform thigh scales



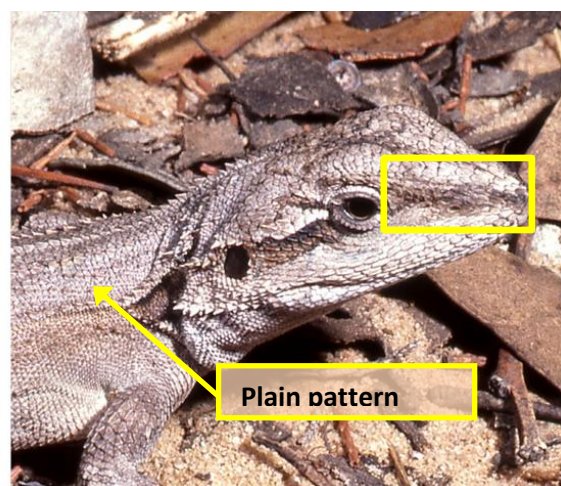
*Amphibolurus norrisi*

**1b.** Thighs with scattered spiny scales

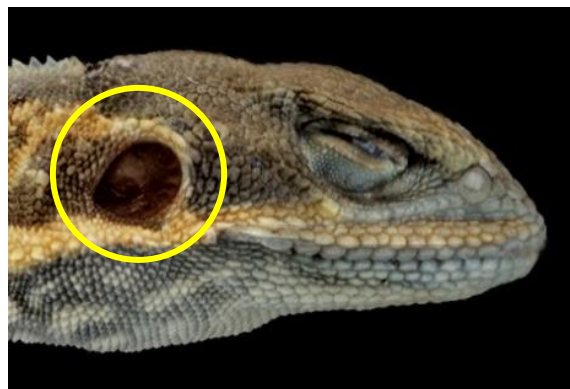
2. a. Dorsal colour pattern complex with light to dark brown sides and dorsal midline, heavily flecked with lighter and darker colouring, separated by a strong pattern of connected pale grey blotches or a more continuous broad wavy grey to off-white stripe running down each side of the back; no dark zone between snout & eye . . . ***A. muricatus***  
Jacky Lizard
- b. Mostly uniform plain grey above with a weak series of blotches down each side of the back; a dark stripe, sometimes blurry, runs from the snout to the eye. . . . . ***A. norrisi***  
Mallee Tree Dragon



**2a.** *A. muricatus*

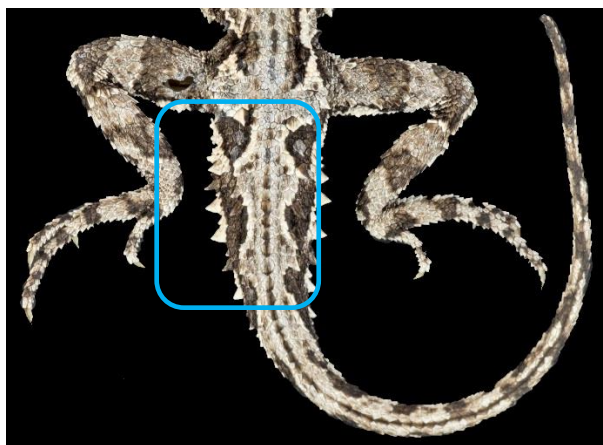


**2b.** *A. norrisi*



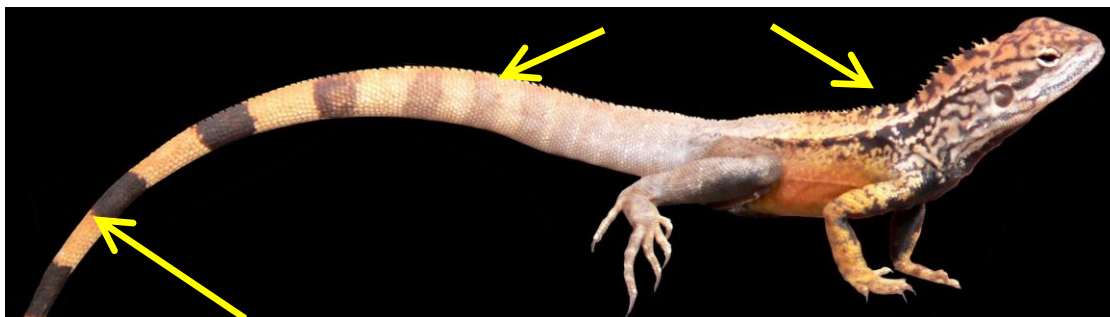
*Ctenophorus modestus*

- 1b.** Ear drum visible



**2a.** Body with numerous spiny scales and enlarged spiny scales on the base of the tail

3. a. Prominent crest of toothed scales runs from nape, along vertebral line to well along the tail; head and shoulders strongly black speckled, tail with contrasting blackish bands. . . ***C. cristatus***  
Crested Dragon
- b. Dorsal crest, if present, low and not continuing beyond base of tail; no dorsolateral series of spiny scales . . . . . 4

*Ctenophorus cristatus*

**3a.** Strong dorsal crest in adults; bold dark rings on the tail

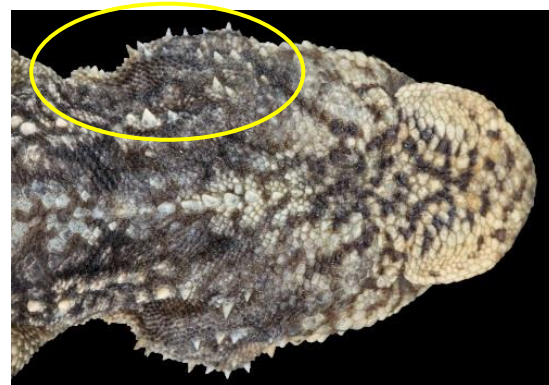
*Ctenophorus cristatus*, juvenile (Ted Johansen)

**3a.** Juveniles drab coloured and crest present but weak; note banded tail

4. a. No clusters of small spines on side of neck or around ear; dorsal scales completely homogeneous, small, with no spinose or tubercular scales . . . . . 5
- b. Clusters or scattered small spinose scales on neck and/or around ear; dorsal scales may include scattered small tubercular or spinose scales . . . . . 7

*Ctenophorus ibiri*

**4a.** Area around ears free of spines

*Ctenophorus reticulatus*

**4b.** Area around ears with spines

5. a. Dorsal pattern includes prominent whitish spots, narrowly edged in black; males with extensive black mask over the face and contrasting pale yellow lip stripe. . . . . ***C. isolepis***  
Military Dragon
- b. Dorsal pattern without dark-edged whitish spots; males without black face or contrasting yellow lip colouring . . . . . **6**

*Ctenophorus isolepis***5a.** Pattern includes black-edged white spots*Ctenophorus tjakalpa***5b.** No black-edged white spots*Ctenophorus isolepis***5a.** Male with extensive black on the face and shoulders*Ctenophorus isolepis***5a.** Female without black face and shoulders

\* The species for couplets **6** to **10** are best identified from males; females are duller, with less contrasting versions of the male colour and pattern, and without black chest or throat patterns.

6. a. Dorsal colour greyish; pale dorsolateral stripe breaks into dashes and elongate spots posteriorly; stripe bright orange to brick-red in males . . . . . ***C. maculatus*\***  
Nullarbor Sand Dragon
- b. Dorsal colour light brown to sandy orange; pale dorsolateral stripe continuous to the base of the tail; stripe off-white to straw yellow in males . . . . . **7**

\* *Ctenophorus maculatus* in South Australia currently assigned to the subspecies *C. m. dualis*.



*Ctenophorus maculatus*

**6a.** Dorsolateral stripe breaks up



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

**6b.** Dorsolateral stripe continuous

- 7. a.** Mallee on the right bank of the Murray, from Danggali to Swan Reach; upper lateral zone blackish with scattered light irregular bars; whitish dorsolateral lines narrow, well-defined; male throat white with weak black speckling . . . . .
- b.** Sandy inland South Australia; dorsal pattern varies from almost plain to heavily patterned like *C. spinodomus*; male throat varies from plain white to white with a strong black chevron or numerous black spots . . . . .

***C. spinodomus***

Eastern Mallee Dragon

***C. "fordi"*\***

Mallee Dragons

\* Genetic relationships and species boundaries within several as yet undescribed species related to *C. fordii* are currently under study.



*Ctenophorus spinodomus*

**7a.** Male; upper lateral zone mottled in blackish and orange red; light dorsolateral lines narrow, cream



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

**7b.** Male; heavily marked, black-sided brownish population; light dorsolateral lines prominent, orange-yellow



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

**7b.** Male; weakly marked, sandy orange population; light dorsolateral lines narrow, grey-white



*Ctenophorus spinodomus*

**7a.** Throat white with weak darker speckling



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

**7b.** Throat white



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

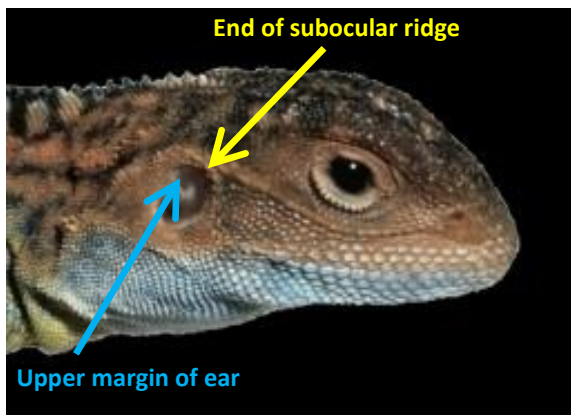
**7b.** Throat with strong black speckling



*Ctenophorus "fordi"*

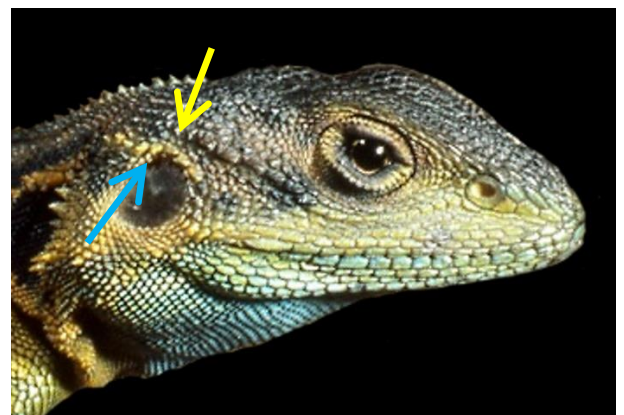
**7b.** Throat with strong black chevron

8.     a.   Subocular ridge very well differentiated from adjacent scales and continuous from below eye to the upper margin of the ear     **9**
- b.   Subocular ridge variable, weakly differentiated, discontinuous or, if continuous, does not form the upper margin of the ear . .     **10**



*Ctenophorus pictus*

**8a.** Ridge continuous to the ear margin



*Ctenophorus decresii*

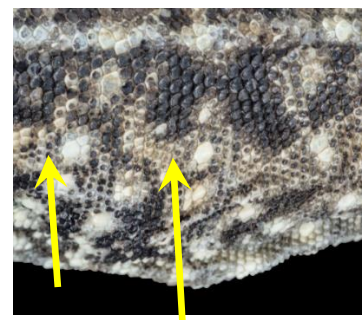
**8b.** Ridge not contacting ear

9.     a.   Dorsal scalation homogeneous, without scattered enlarged tubercular scales; sexually dichromatic, adult males with blue and orange and/or yellow markings . . . . . ***C. pictus***  
Painted Dragon
- b.   Dorsal scalation heterogeneous, with enlarged obtuse tubercular scales scattered over the flanks; males without bright colour hues . . . . . ***C. salinarum***  
Claypan Dragon



*Ctenophorus pictus*

**9a.** Sides of body with uniform scales



*Ctenophorus salinarum*

**9b.** Sides of body with scattered enlarged pale scales


*Ctenophorus pictus*

**9a.** Males with blue throat and other blue markings


*Ctenophorus salinarum*

**9b.** Males without any blue colouring; throat with central black streak

- 10.**
- a.** Head relatively short and deep, with a blunt snout . . . . . **11**
  - b.** Head relatively longer, and snout more pointed . . . . . **14**


*Ctenophorus nuchalis*

**10a.** Snout profile blunt


*Ctenophorus fionni*

**10b.** Snout profile more tapering

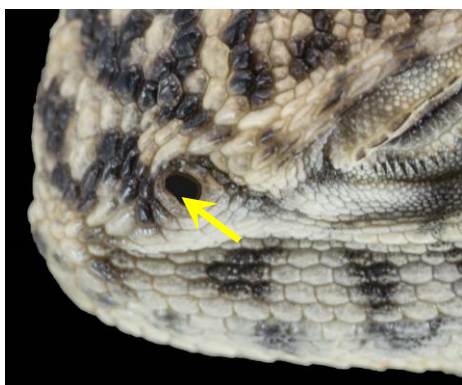
- 11**
- a.** Tail with darker dark rings, most obvious on the posterior half of the tail; nostrils on swollen snout ridges and directed upwards . . **12**
  - b.** Tail with a dark lateral stripe or with a row of dark lateral blotches that run the complete length of the tail; nostrils below snout ridges and opening laterally or downwards . . . . . **13**



**11a.** Dark rings around the rear half of the tail

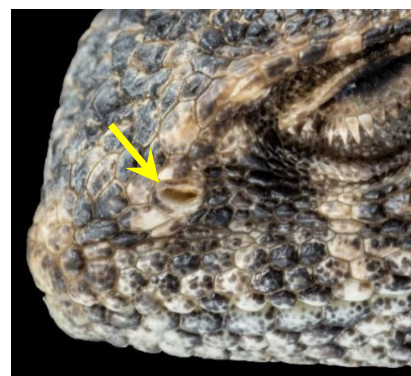


**11b.** Blotches all along sides of tail



*Ctenophorus nuchalis*

**11a.** Nostrils open forwards and upwards



*Ctenophorus gibba*

**11b.** Nostrils open outwards and downwards

- 12.**
- a.** Females and males with a dorsal network pattern, no pale dorsolateral stripes; precloacal and femoral pores totalling 16–26, widely spaced along lines which curve forwards on each thigh; sandplains and sand dunes ..... ***C. nuchalis***  
Central Netted Dragon
  - b.** Females with irregular, pale dorsolateral stripes, males with a network pattern; precloacal and femoral pores totalling 30–45, closely arranged along a more or less straight line; clayey and stony terrain ..... ***C. reticulatus***  
Western Netted Dragon



*Ctenophorus nuchalis*

**12a.** Female, network pattern without pale dorsolateral stripes



*Ctenophorus reticulatus* (P. Tremul)

**12b.** Female with irregular pale dorsolateral stripes



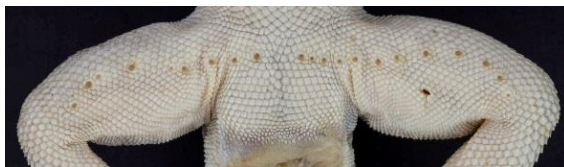
*Ctenophorus nuchalis*

**12a.** Male, network pattern



*Ctenophorus reticulatus* (P. Tremul)

**12b.** Male, network pattern



*Ctenophorus nuchalis*

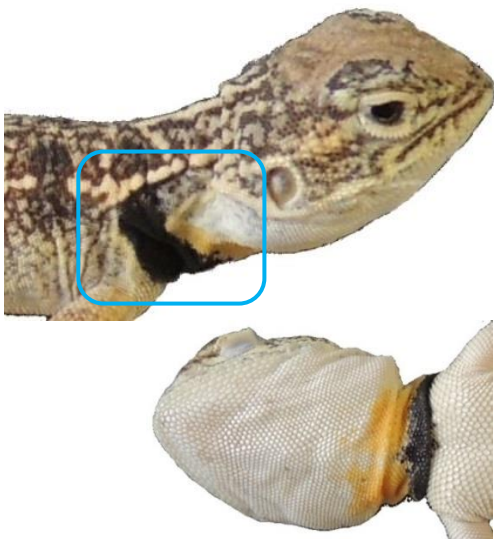
**12a.** Pores widely spaced along thighs



*Ctenophorus reticulatus*

**12b.** Pores in continuous row

- 13.**
- a.** Black "collar" on each side of neck; throat white in both sexes; sand dune desert ..... ***C. clayi***  
Black-collared Dragon
  - b.** No black "collar"; sides of tail marked with a series of dark, blotches; males with a black throat patch and a black median "goatee" stripe below chin; gibber and clay plains ..... ***C. gibba***  
Gibber Dragon



*Ctenophorus clayi*

**13a.** Males with yellow-edged black collar



*Ctenophorus gibba*

**13b.** Males with black spot on throat and small black "goatee"

14. a. Mid-dorsal zone with a series of grey-white blotches, margined by an interconnected series of elongate dark blotches, and then a series of pale blotches, the pattern extending on to the back of the head; males with an elongate black throat patch . . . . . ***C. mckenziei***  
McKenzie's Dragon
- b. Back pattern not as above; male throat colouring not black . . . . . **15**

*Ctenophorus mckenziei*

**17a.** Complex back pattern; males with black throat stripe

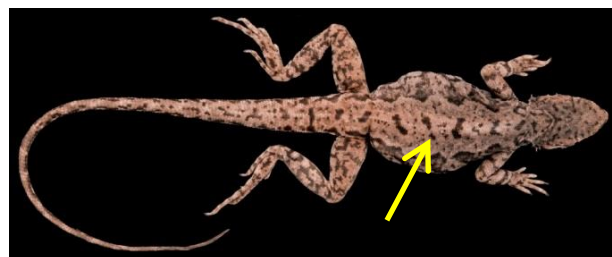
15. a. Both sexes predominantly rusty to medium brown, males lack bright yellow, orange or blue colouring on the head, neck or throat; north-west ranges of South Australia . . . . . **16**
- b. Females and juveniles camouflaged according to local rock colour but males with bright colours in patches on the neck, throat or flanks\* . . . . . **17**

\*Females and juveniles of all the remaining species overlap in colour pattern variation and can be difficult to identify. In some cases geographic origin will be necessary to assign a particular individual to a species.

16. a. Head and body strongly flattened; males uniformly rusty brown to dull orange; females and juveniles with heavy mottling of blackish on a red-brown background that continues along the tail . . . . . ***C. rufescens***  
Rusty Dragon
- b. Head and body not obviously flattened; both sexes rusty brown to pale grey with a series of paired small black spots running down the back, each pair alternating with a cross-row of white dots; the white dots merge into pale grey-white rings that run the length of the tail . . . . . ***C. slateri***  
Plain Rock Dragon



**16a.** Male uniformly rusty

*Ctenophorus rufescens*

**16a.** Juveniles and females heavily marked with black



*Ctenophorus slateri*

**16b.** Both sexes with paired black dots along the back

- 17.**
- a.** Colour pattern on the back and sides consists of irregular light and dark barring (red and black in males, brown and black in females); males with bluish vertebral stripe, limbs and tail; northern Flinders Ranges and north-west outliers. ....
  - b.** Colour pattern not as above. ....

***C. vadrappa***  
Red-barred Dragon  
**18**



**17a.** *Ctenophorus vadrappa* male (left) and female. (Shade of brown or grey in females and juveniles matches local rock colour)

- 18.**
- a.** Males uniform powder blue above with salmon lower flanks; females and juveniles with numerous pale spots on the body, becoming cross-rings on the tail; low stony hills and eroded creek lines in the Lake Eyre Basin. ....
  - b.** Males not uniformly bluish; male colour varies markedly according to locality, but most have yellow or red patches that coincide with clusters of spines around the ears and the back of the head .....

***C. tjantjalka***  
Ochre Dragon  
**19**



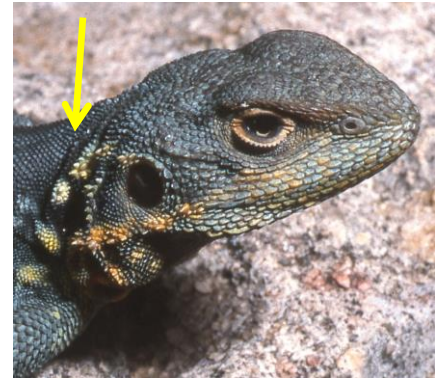
**18a.** *C. tjantjalka* male (T. Peters, SA Museum)



**18a.** *C. tjantjalka* female



*C. modestus*



*C. fionni*

**18b.** Males with orange to yellow patches around the ears

- 19**
- a. Rocky areas of Eyre Peninsula and adjacent islands north to the Arcoona Tableland; northern males may have red instead of white dorsal spotting but lack bluish colouring (as in *C. vadrappa*) ..... ***C. fionni***  
Eyre Peninsula Dragon
  - b. Rocky ranges and hills east of Spencer Gulf ..... **23**



**19a.** *C. fionni*, female, Gawler Ranges. Shade of brown or grey matches local rock colour



**19a.** *C. fionni*, Gawler Ranges male typical of the main Eyre Peninsula populations



**19a.** *C. fionni*, male from Winter Hill, Port Lincoln



**19a.** *C. fionni*, male of weakly marked form from the Eyre Peninsula southern coast

20. a. Male throat colour blue; orange markings around ears and flanks broad, smudgy; Mt Lofty Ranges and Kangaroo Island . . . . . ***C. decresii***  
Tawny Dragon
- b. Male throat colour pale greyish, yellow or orange-red, never blue; orange or yellow markings around ears and flanks narrow, sharply defined; North Mt Lofty ranges through the Flinders Ranges and Olary Spur . . . . . ***C. modestus***  
Swift Rock Dragon



23a. *C. decresii* male



23b. *C. modestus* male



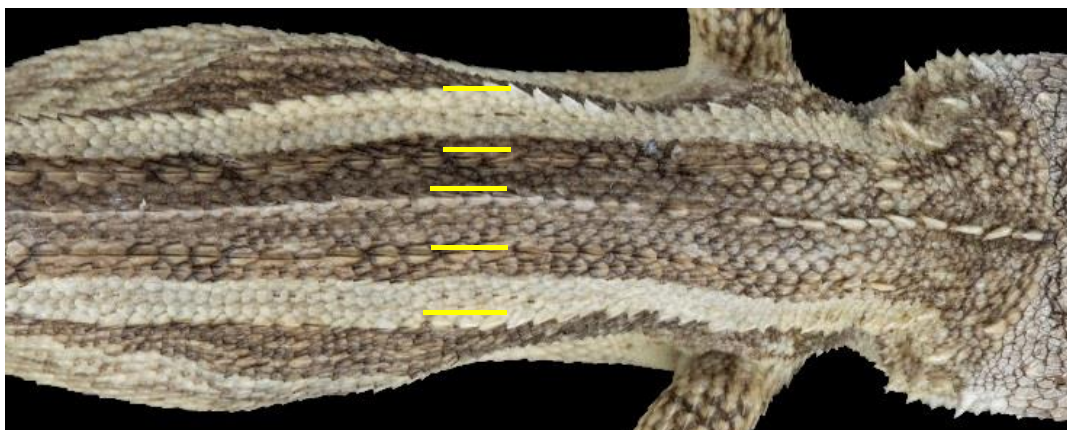
23a. *C. decresii* female. Shade of brown or grey matches local rock colour



23b. *C. modestus* female. Shade of brown or grey matches local rock colour (G. Trethewie)

# KEY TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPECIES OF *DIPORIPHORA*

1. a. Back with 3 or 5 distinct longitudinal keel lines . . . . . ***D. nobbi***  
Nobbi Dragon
- b. Back without longitudinal lines of strongly keeled scales . . . . . **2**

*Diporiphora nobbi*

**1a.** Dorsal crests present

*Diporiphora lingua*

**1b.** Dorsal crests absent

2. a. Underside of throat and belly with longitudinal grey to yellowish stripes. . . . . **3**
- b. Underside of throat and belly uniform pure white. . . . . **4**



*Diporiphora winneckei*

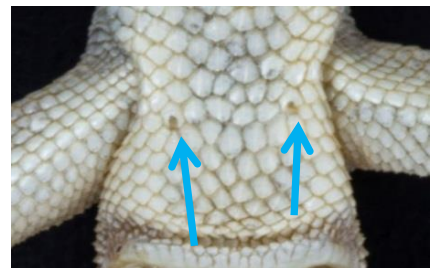
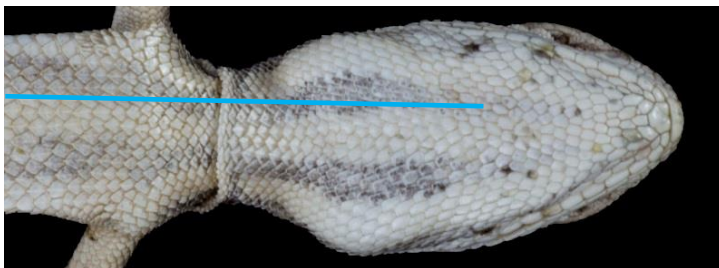
**2a. Underside striped**



*Diporiphora reginae*

**2b. Underside white**

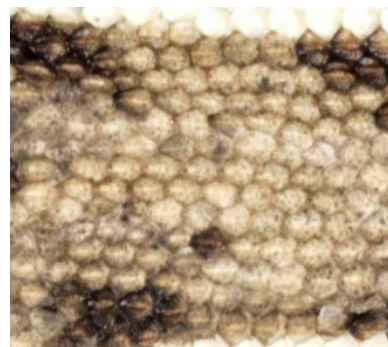
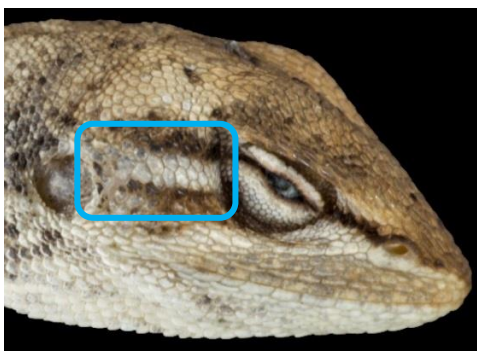
3.
  - a. Throat with 3 wide grey or yellowish longitudinal stripes, the median one continuing onto the chest and belly where it divides into two (**fig. 2a, above**); males without precloacal pores; Lake Eyre Basin and eastern inland ..... *D. winneckei*  
Canegrass Dragon
  - b. Throat with 2 narrow grey or yellowish longitudinal stripes but no median stripe, the two lines converging under the neck then separating as a pair of ventral stripes; males with two precloacal pores; northwest ranges ..... *D. paraconvergens*  
Grey-striped Desert Dragon



*Diporiphora paraconvergens*

**3b. Two throat stripes continuous with two belly stripes; a pair of precloacal pores**

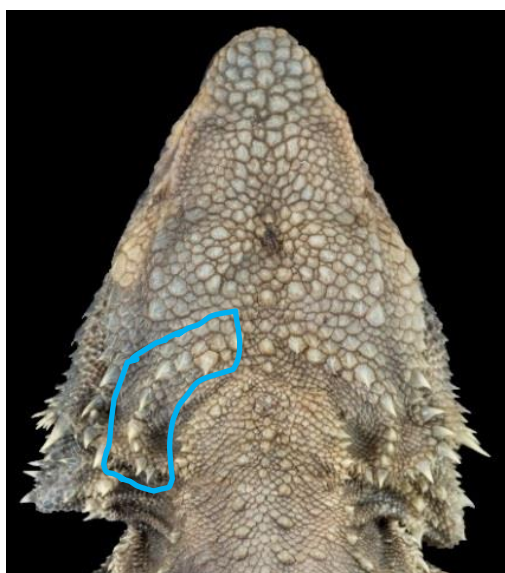
4. a. Dorsal scales strongly keeled, the keel extending beyond the apex of the scale to form a small spine; no pale temporal stripe; males with vivid red colouring concentrated on the base of the tail . . . . . ***D. reginae***  
Plain-backed Two-lined Dragon
- b. Dorsal scales weakly keeled; not spinose; a short pale temporal stripe from the eye to the ear; males with red to pink colouring mainly on the sides of the body . . . . . ***D. linga***  
Linga Dragon

*Diporiphora reginae***4a.** Dorsal scales keeled*Diporiphora linga***4b.** Dorsal scales smooth*Diporiphora linga***4b.** Pale stripe behind eye*Diporiphora reginae* (David Hirst)**4a.** Male with vivid red at base of tail*Diporiphora linga* (Coralie Peddie)**4b.** Male with pink wash on sides

## KEY TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPECIES OF *POGONA*

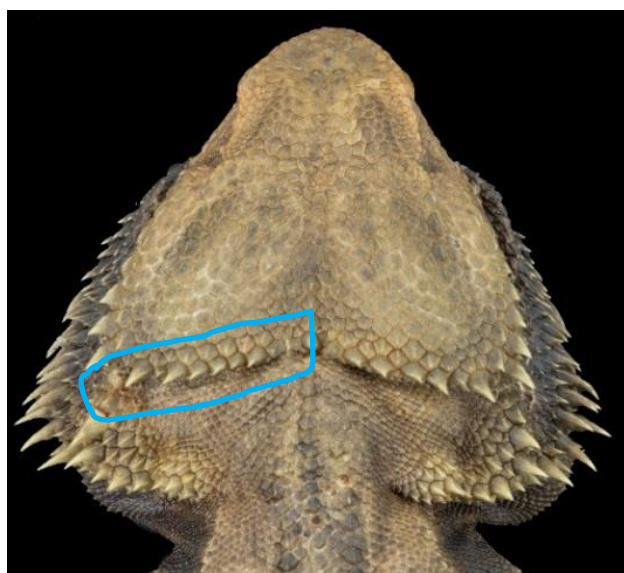
**Juveniles.** Bearded dragon hatchlings are very small compared to the adults and are often confused with other, smaller dragons that have spiny scales (especially *Tympanocryptis*). Check for obvious ear drums, and the same arrangement of spiny scales as adult *Pogona*.

1.    a. Transverse row of spines on back of head curving posteriorly on each side and paralleling row of spines above each ear; basal section of tail with several cross-rows of enlarged spinous scales .    2
- b. Transverse row of spines or ridge across back of head more or less straight; basal section of tail without cross-rows of enlarged spinous scales . . . . .    3



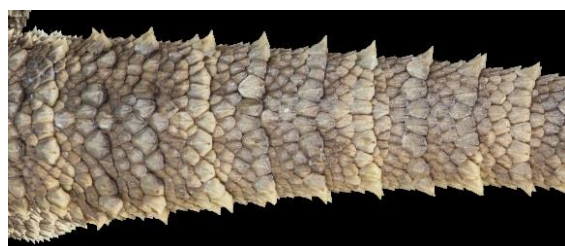
*Pogona barbata*

- 1a.** Row of spines on back of head curves posteriorly



*Pogona vitticeps*

- 1b.** Row of spines on back of head runs laterally



*Pogona barbata*

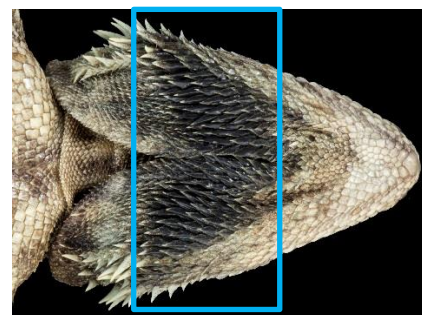
- 1a.** Base of tail with rows of enlarged spines



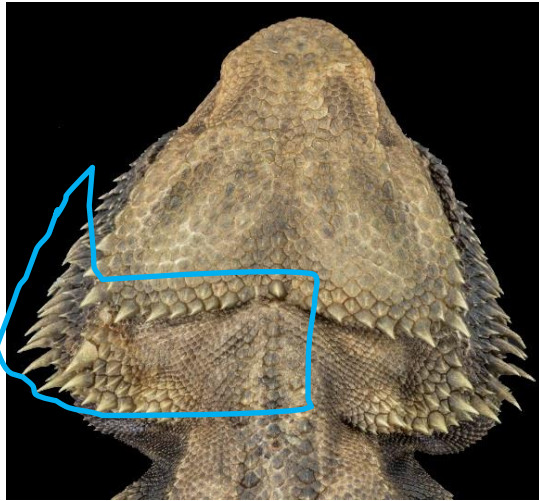
*Pogona vitticeps*

- 1b.** No rows of enlarged spines

2. a. Back with whitish cross bars; throat strongly patterned with longitudinal grey and white wavy stripes ..... ***P. nullarbor***  
Nullarbor Bearded Dragon
- b. Back without whitish cross bars; throat plain, or with only a dark transverse band ..... ***P. barbata***  
Eastern Bearded Dragon

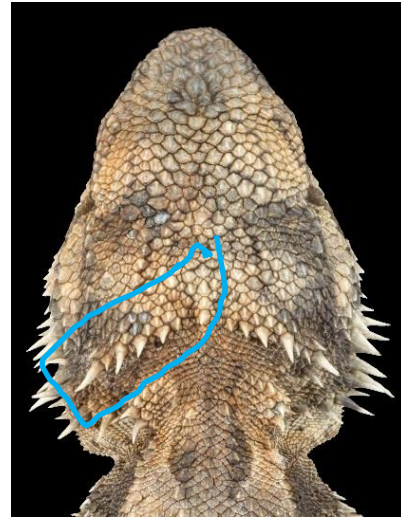
*Pogona nullarbor***2a. Pale bands***Pogona barbata***2b. No bands***Pogona nullarbor***2a. Dark stripes***Pogona barbata***2b. No stripes; dark "beard" spines**

3. a. Spines on back of head stout, closely-set, broad-based, forming a continuous serrated ridge that continues forward on the side of the head; head length about equal to its width ..... ***P. vitticeps***  
Central Bearded Dragon
- b. Spines on back of head relatively slender, irregularly spaced and not continuing on to the sides of the head; head length about 1.5 times its width ..... ***P. minor***  
Western Bearded Dragon



*Pogona vitticeps*

**3a.** Spines on back of head stout; row continues forward on side of head



*Pogona minor*

**3b.** Spines on back of head slender; row not continuous onto side of head

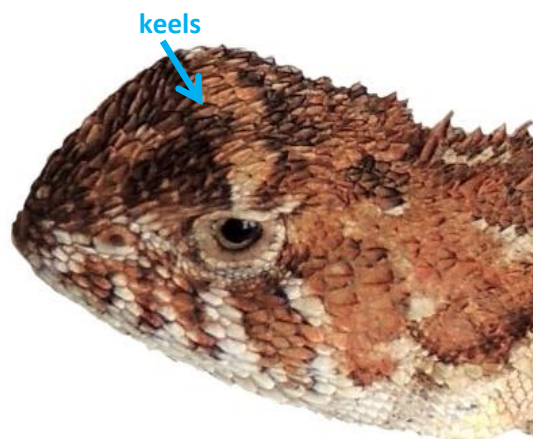
## KEY TO THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SPECIES OF *TYMPANOCRYPTIS*

1. a. Dorsal head scales smooth or only weakly keeled; smaller body scales are also mostly smooth, only the enlarged dorsal scales bearing keels or spines. . . . . 2
- b. Dorsal head scales rough, distinctly keeled; smaller dorsal scales, smooth to strongly keeled . . . . . 3



*Tympanocryptis intima*

1a. Head scales without keels



*Tympanocryptis tolleyi*

1b. Head scales with keels

2. a. Back with three dark cross-bands, strongly contrasting with very pale background colour . . . . . ***T. fictilis***  
Harlequin Earless Dragon
- b. Back pattern weak, and often completely plain, without strong cross-bands . . . . . ***T. intima***  
Smooth-snouted Earless Dragon



*Tympanocryptis fictilis*

2a. Strongly contrasting banded pattern on back (Aaron Fenner)



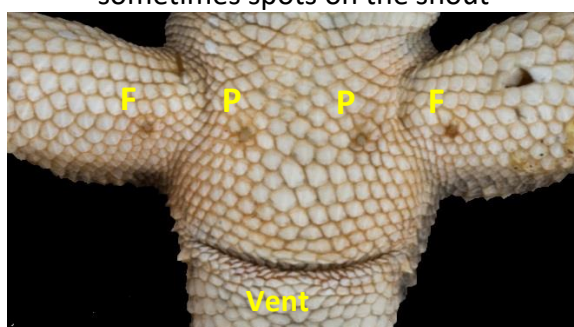
*Tympanocryptis intima*

2b. Back pattern weak or absent

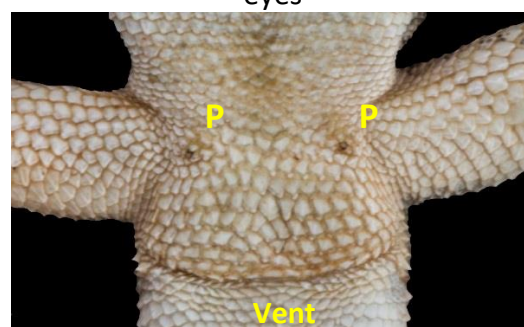
3. a. Top of head lacks a pale bar running across the eye bulges (Fig 1b); four pores (two precloacal [P] and two femoral [F]) ***T. tetraporophora***  
Eyrean Earless Dragon
- b. Top of head has a pale bar running across the eye bulges (Figs 4a and 4b); two pores (two precloacal [P] only) . . . . . **4**

*Tympanocryptis tetraporophora**T. centralis**T. toleyi*

- 3a. No pale bar across the eyes, but sometimes spots on the snout

*Tympanocryptis tetraporophora*

- 3a. Femoral pores as well as precloacal pores

*Tympanocryptis centralis*

- 3b. Precloacal pores only

4. a. Dorsolateral light lines and vertebral light lines absent or very short. . . . . ***T. toleyi*** (female)  
Gawler Earless Dragon
- Vertebral line present and usually continuous; dorsolateral lines present at least where they cross the dark cross-bands **5**

*Tympanocryptis toleyi**Tympanocryptis petersi*

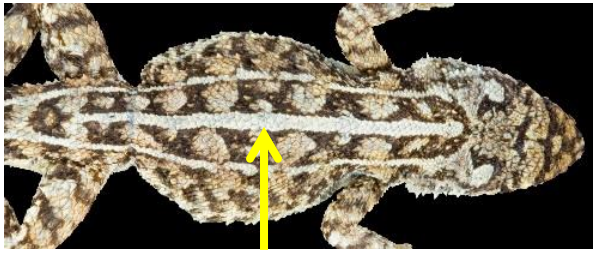
- 4a. No light vertebral line; dorsolateral lines reduced to pale dots or dashes

- 4b. Light vertebral line and dorsolateral lines present

5. a. Light grey vertebral line much wider than white dorsolateral lines; usually an elaborate pattern of black flecks and lines on belly, chest and throat; Nullarbor Plain . . . . . ***T. houstoni***  
Nullarbor Earless Dragon

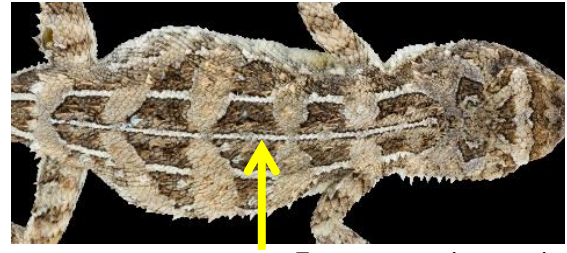
- b. Whitish vertebral line (if present) no wider than dorsolateral lines; underside usually lacks dark markings . . .

6



*Tympanocryptis houstoni*

5a. Vertebral stripe markedly wider



*Tympanocryptis petersi*

5b. Vertebral stripe narrow



*Tympanocryptis houstoni*

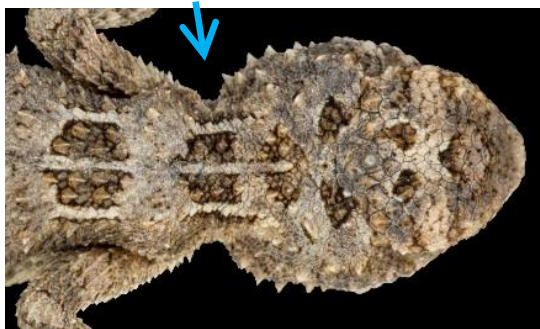
5a. Underside with black spots and stripes



*Tympanocryptis petersi*

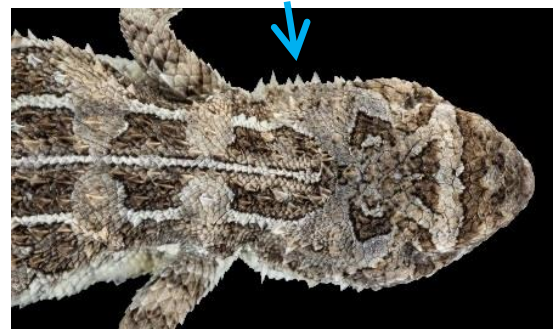
5b. Underside almost unmarked white

6. a. Neck sharply distinct (narrowed) from rear of head and jaw; stony hills of northwestern SA . . . . . **T. centralis**  
Centralian Earless Dragon
- b. Neck indistinct, as broad as head; eastern two-thirds of SA. . . . . **7**



*Tympanocryptis centralis*

6a. Neck distinct



*Tympanocryptis petersi*

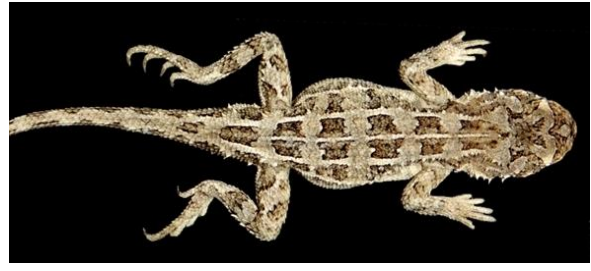
6b. Neck obscured by skin ridges

7. a. Light dorsolateral lines expand to fill the spaces between the dark dorsal blotches, forming hourglass-shaped pale patches . . . . . **T. tolleyi** (male)  
Gawler Earless Dragon
- b. Light dorsolateral lines narrow, paler than the pale spaces between the dark dorsal patches or not visible on the pale spaces (see Figs 5a and 5b). . . . . **8**



*Tympanocryptis toleyi*

**7a.** Light dorsolateral lines fill the spaces between the dorsal blotches



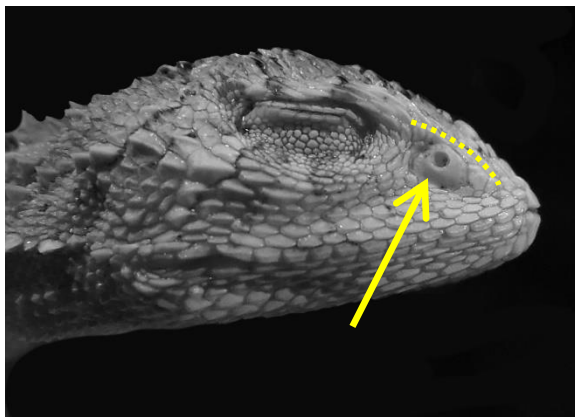
*Tympanocryptis petersi*

**7b.** Light dorsolateral lines separate from the pale cross-bands

- 8. a.** Snout tapers uniformly to a point when viewed in profile, nasal scale placed below the upper edges of the snout . . . . .
- b.** Snout blunt, the ridges on either side separated from the snout scale by one or more rows of smaller scales; nasal scale overlaps the snout ridge . . . . .

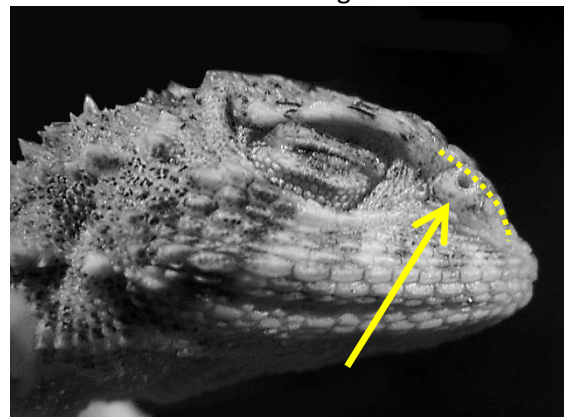
***T. petersi***  
Lined Earless Dragon

***T. argillosa***  
Claypan Earless Dragon



*Tympanocryptis petersi*

**8a.** Snout tapering in profile; nasal scale below the snout ridge



*Tympanocryptis argillosa*

**8a.** Snout blunt, lips protrude forwards; nasal scale sits on the snout ridge