

New Lizard of the Genus *Leposoma* (Squamata, Gymnophthalmidae) from the Lower Rio Negro, Amazonas, Brazil

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ABSTRACT.—A new species of *Leposoma* is described from Ilha do Lago do Prato and Ilha do Açai, Arquipélago das Anavilhanas, in the lower Rio Negro, state of Amazonas, Brazil. Like all members of the *parietale* group, it differs from all species of the *scincoides* group by having wider and shorter dorsal scales and ventrals arranged in regular longitudinal rows. It is further characterized by having conic granules on the sides of neck, three enlarged pairs of chin shields, absence of granules between superciliaries and supraoculars, a longer than wide interparietal with lateral margins almost parallel, 42–44 transverse dorsal rows (the highest number in *Leposoma*), gular scales small in 13–15 rows (less than 11 in other *Leposoma*), 30–33 scales around body, 26–27 ventrals, two preanal and four femoral pores on each side in males, one preanal and no femoral pores in females, 13–14 and 19–21 lamellae under finger IV and toe IV, respectively. The new species is sympatric with *Leposoma guianense* and *Leposoma percarinatum* and is more similar to the latter.

Gymnophthalmid lizards of the genus *Leposoma* are small (snout–vent length, SVL below 50 mm) but form a conspicuous component of the leaf litter herpetofauna of tropical forests (Hoogmoed, 1979; Dixon and Soini, 1986; Rodrigues, 1997; Rodrigues et al., 2002a,b). Two species groups are presently recognized for *Leposoma*: the *scincoides* and *parietale* groups (Ruibal, 1952; Rodrigues, 1997). The five species of the *scincoides* group (*Leposoma annectans* Ruibal, 1952; *Leposoma baturitensis* Rodrigues and Borges, 1997; *Leposoma nanodactylus* Rodrigues, 1997; *Leposoma scincoides* Spix, 1825; and *Leposoma puk* Rodrigues, et al., 2002) are restricted to Atlantic forests of eastern Brazil and have elongate dorsal scales and lanceolate ventrals that are arranged in diagonal rather than in longitudinal rows. In the *parietale* group, which comprises nine species (*Leposoma guianense* Ruibal, 1952; *Leposoma hexalepis* Ayala and Harris, 1982; *Leposoma ioanna* Uzzell and Barry, 1971; *Leposoma osvaldoi* Avila-Pires, 1995; *Leposoma parietale* (Cope, 1885); *Leposoma percarinatum* (Müller, 1923); *Leposoma rugiceps* (Cope, 1869); *Leposoma snethlageae* Avila-Pires, 1995; and *Leposoma southi* Ruthven and Gaige, 1924), occurring throughout Amazonia to Costa Rica, dorsal scales are wider and shorter, and ventral scales are arranged in regular longitudinal rows (Rodrigues and Borges, 1997). Although in recent years the taxonomy of *Leposoma* has been improved with the description of new species (Avila-Pires, 1995; Rodrigues,

1997; Rodrigues and Borges, 1997; Rodrigues et al., 2002b) and the resurrection of another one (Rodrigues et al., 2002a), its species richness still seems underestimated (e.g., Avila-Pires, 1995, indicates three more possible species).

In the process of reviewing the holdings of gymnophthalmid lizards of the genus *Leposoma* at the Museu de Zoologia, Universidade de São Paulo (MZUSP), the senior author recognized as an undescribed new species a specimen obtained at the lower Rio Negro, state of Amazonas, Brazil. Until then, only two species were known from that region: the bisexual *Leposoma guianense*, and the parthenoform *L. percarinatum*, (see Avila-Pires, 1995). The referred specimen had been previously identified as *L. percarinatum* and, although having some of the diagnostic features of *L. percarinatum*, it was a male with distinct femoral and preanal pores. Looking at the literature, it became evident that this specimen was identical with a female specimen from the same area the junior author identified as "*Leposoma* cf. *percarinatum* (4)" in her review of the lizards from Brazilian Amazonia (Avila-Pires, 1995). Given the distinctive features of this female, she suggested that additional specimens could confirm its distinctness from *L. percarinatum*. Because the examination of these two specimens confirms their conspecificity and their novelty to science, they are described herein as a new species.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Snout–vent length was measured to the nearest millimeter with a ruler; scale counts were

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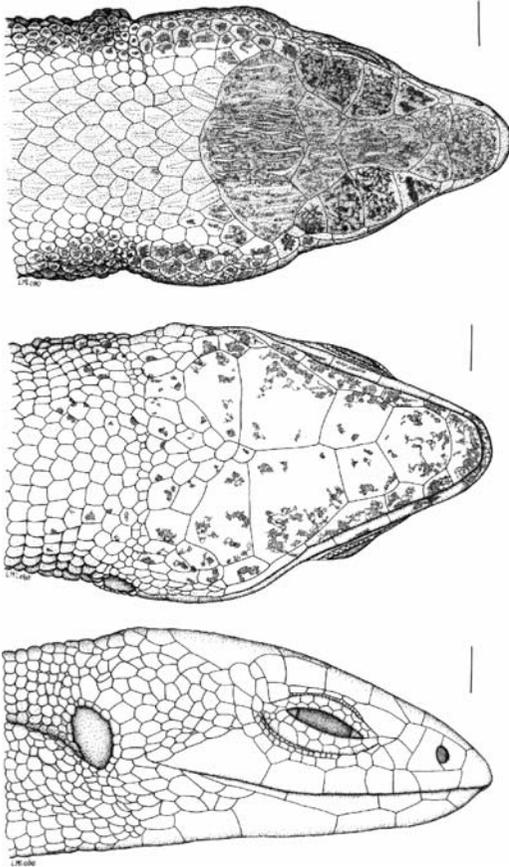


FIG. 1. Dorsal, ventral, and lateral view of head of the holotype of *Lepsosoma ferreirai*, from Lago do Prato, Arquipélago das Anavilhanas, Rio Negro, state of Amazonas, Brazil (MZUSP 57312). Scale bar = 1 mm.

taken with the aid of a stereomicroscope. Scale counts and scale nomenclature follow Avila-Pires (1995) and Rodrigues (1997). Sex was determined by the presence or absence of femoral pores. Comparative data were taken from preserved specimens housed at MZUSP (Museu de Zoologia, Universidade de São Paulo), MPEG (Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi) and INPA (Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia) herpetological collections (Appendix 1).

Lepsosoma ferreirai sp. nov.

Figure 1

Lepsosoma cf. *percarinatum* (4); Avila-Pires, 1995: 410.

Holotype.—MZUSP 57312, an adult male from Lago do Prato (02°47'S, 60°48'W), Arquipélago das Anavilhanas, Rio Negro, state of Amazonas, Brazil, on 31 July 1981.

Paratype.—INPA 283, an adult female from Ilha do Açaí, Arquipélago das Anavilhanas, Rio

Negro: state of Amazonas, Brazil, collected by Glória Moreira on 23 May 1988.

Diagnosis.—A *Lepsosoma* having a single fronto-nasal, ventral scales keeled and arranged in regular longitudinal rows, wide and short dorsal scales, conical granules on the sides of neck, three pairs of chinshields, no granules between superciliaries and supraoculars, and a longer than wide interparietal with lateral margins almost parallel. *Lepsosoma ferreirai* is further characterized by having 42–44 dorsals, 30–33 scales around body, 26–27 ventrals, two preanal and four femoral pores on each side in males, one preanal and no femoral pores in females, respectively, 13–15 and 19–21 lamellae under finger IV and toe IV, and small gular scales in 13–15 rows.

Description of the Holotype.—Rostral broad, wider than high, contacting first supralabial, nasal and frontonasal. Frontonasal pentagonal, entire, as wide as long; in broad contact with rostral, nasal, loreal and prefrontal; indenting the latter and separated from first supraocular by contact between loreal and prefrontal. Prefrontals as long as wide, in broad contact with first supraocular, their midline suture with the same approximate size of the width of loreal and deeply indented by frontal. Frontal hexagonal with concave lateral margins, approximately twice as long as broad, wider anteriorly; contacting the first and second supraoculars, suture with the latter largest. Frontoparietals pentagonal, in contact at midline; their midline suture larger than suture between prefrontals and with the approximate size of the width of third supraocular. Interparietal longer than wide with almost straight lateral margins, as long as and wider than frontal. Parietals irregularly pentagonal, smaller than interparietal, longer than wide, rounded posteriorly. Posterior margin of interparietal and parietals slightly rounded. Supraoculars four, second the largest, followed in order of size by the third, both wider than long; fourth the smallest and followed by a slightly smaller scute, which contacts parietal. Five supraciliaries, first largest, as long as and below first supraocular, expanded on lateral face of head, in broad contact with loreal. Other supraciliaries elongate, smaller than first. Nasal large, longer than wide, semidivided above, contacting first and second supralabials, with the nostril in the center. Loreal narrow, as high as nasal, diagonally oriented and contacting second supralabial, frenocular, first superciliary and first supraocular, prefrontal and frontonasal. Frenocular as long as broad and followed posteriorly by a series of small suboculars. Six supralabials, fourth and fifth under the eye, sixth the largest, separated from parietal by four postocular scutes and from the tympanum by three very small rounded and elongate granules. Eyelid with a divided semitransparent

disc formed by three enlarged scales and bordered by a series of elongate small palpebrals. Temporal region covered by smooth or slightly tuberculate, irregularly subsquared, juxtaposed scales, larger around tympanum and behind the eye between parietals and supralabials; smaller, elongate, and diagonally disposed near supralabials. Ear opening bordered by a series of small, juxtaposed, smooth, and rounded granules; tympanum distinct, subovoid. Sides of neck with 15 regular transverse series of irregularly conic and juxtaposed granules between posterior margin of ear and an antehumeral fold or collar corresponding to the last row of gulars. All scales on top of head with irregular, slight longitudinal striations.

Mental broad, wider than long. Postmental single, contacting first and second infralabials. Three pairs of enlarged chinshields or genials, first and second forming a diagonal medial suture and contacting infralabials, the second pair the largest; third pair wider than long, separated from infralabials by one or two scutes and at midline by one flat scute. Mental, postmental and chinshields smooth. Five infralabials, third the largest. Scales immediately posterior and lateral to third pair of chinshields enlarged, juxtaposed, smooth, slightly rounded, grading gradually into gulars. Gulars in 13 irregularly transverse rows, anterior ones smooth, juxtaposed, rounded posteriorly, becoming gradually larger, imbricate, and slightly keeled, those closer to interbrachial region strongly imbricate, mucronate and keeled. Interbrachial row with scales identical to dorsals.

Dorsal scales large, keeled, mucronate, imbricate, in 44 transverse rows between interparietal and posterior level of hind limbs. Anterior dorsal scales smaller, subsquared, tuberculate, juxtaposed, becoming gradually longer, strongly imbricate and mucronate. Lateral scales similar to dorsals, except for an area with small, flat, smooth, and juxtaposed scales near groin and a region with small and conic granules around arm insertion. Thirty-two scales around midbody. Ventrals wide, keeled, mucronate, imbricate, in 27 regular transverse and longitudinal rows from collar to preanals. Posterior margin of vent with six scales; central and paramedian ones the largest. Total pores 12, two preanal and four femoral on each side.

Scales of tail imbricate, keeled, in complete rings; those covering dorsal part of base of tail larger than dorsals, strongly keeled and mucronate, with posterior margin almost straight, becoming gradually identical to other tail scales toward extremity.

Limb scales keeled and imbricate, except on ventral surface of forearm and on posterior surface of thigh where scales are mostly subimbricate or juxtaposed, sometimes granular. Pal-

mar and plantar surfaces with small, conical, juxtaposed granules. Subdigital lamellae mostly double, 14 on finger IV and 21 on toe IV. Fingers and toes clawed, with the following relative sizes: $1 < 2 < 5 < 3 < 4$.

Dorsal surface of body and tail light brown with irregular and scattered dark brown reticulum specially concentrated along margins of keels of dorsal scales. A dorsolateral light stripe one to one-half scale wide runs from the level of the parietals to the tail, becoming inconspicuous toward end of tail. Below it a dark brown lateral stripe 4–5 scales wide also extends from neck to tail. Dorsal and lateral surfaces of head identical to corresponding parts of dorsum and flanks. Ventral parts of head, body, and tail creamy white with scattered dark brown spots on venter and especially concentrated in the gular area where dark brown spotting is very intense. Limbs dark brown dorsally, mottled with yellow; ventrally creamy white with dark brown spotting. Tail color identical to that of body proximally, becoming uniformly light brown with light spots towards tip.

Measurements.—Holotype, MZUSP 57312, SVL 35 mm; tail length 66 mm. Paratype, INPA 283, SVL 34.5 mm; tail length 70.5 mm.

Distribution.—Known only from the Arquipé-lago das Anavilhanas, Rio Negro, Amazonas state, Brazil (Fig. 2).

Etymology.—An homage to the Brazilian naturalist Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, who traveled extensively along the Rio Negro at the end of 18th century and who was the first to make systematic collections of fauna and flora in that region.

Comparisons.—Morphologically, *L. ferreirai* is a member of the *parietale* group, differing from all species of the *scincoides* group by having wide and short dorsal scales (vs. elongate) and ventrals arranged in regular longitudinal rows (vs. diagonal). *Leposoma ferreirai* differs moreover from all other *Leposoma* by having the highest number of dorsal scales (42–44 vs. less than 40), which are smaller, narrower, and shorter than those of its congeners (Table 1). It additionally differs from other *Leposoma* by having smaller gulars disposed in 13–15 rows (vs. 8–11) and a ventral color pattern characterized by small dark brown spots especially concentrated on the gular region. Only *L. baturitensis*, *L. nanodactylus*, and *L. puk* (all three of the *scincoides* group), and *L. hexalepis* (of the *parietale* group), approach this pattern. *Leposoma ferreirai* can be immediately distinguished from *L. hexalepis* among other characters by its keeled ventrals (vs. smooth), by having a frontonasal as wide as long (wider than long) and by the absence of granules separating supraoculars from superciliaries (present). Table 1 compares meristic data for all species of

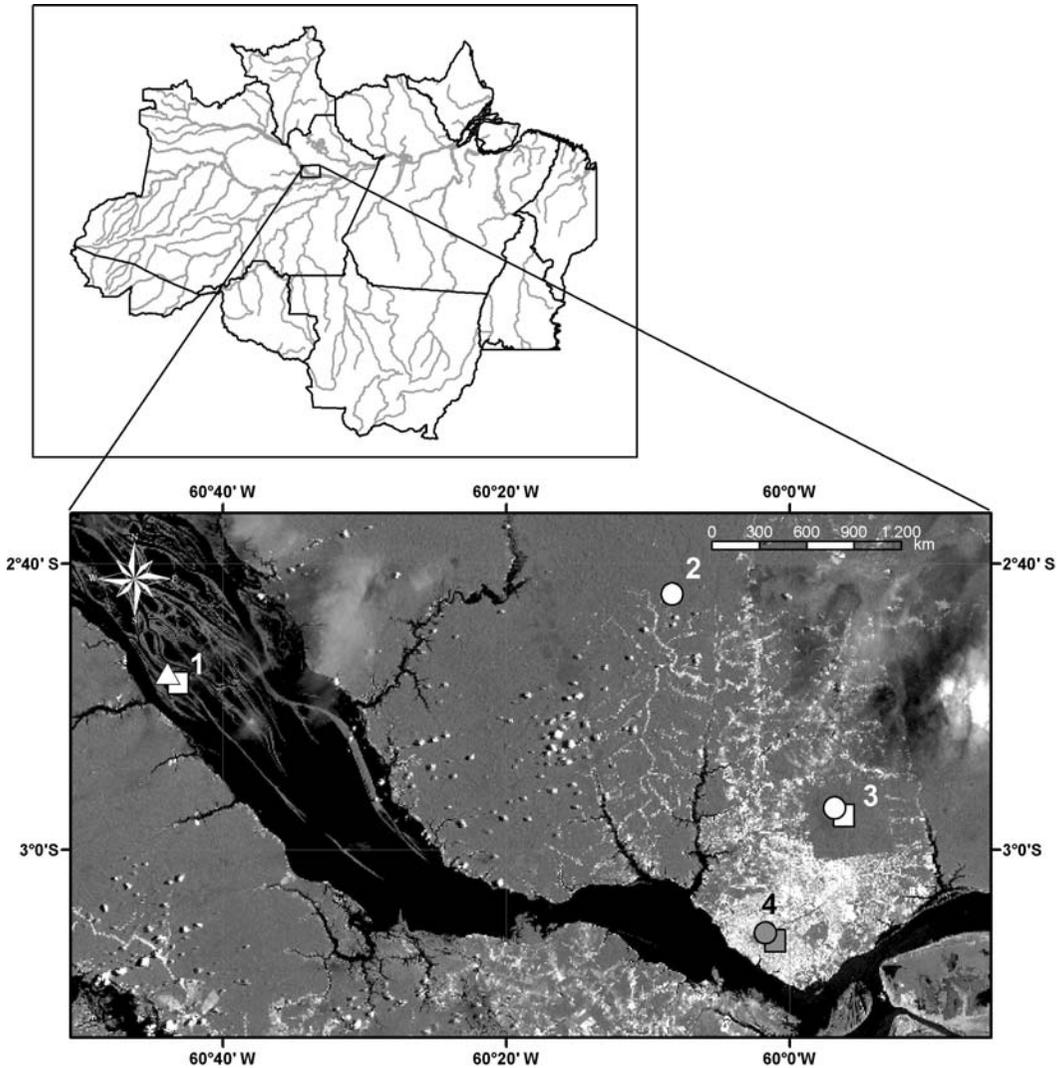


FIG. 2. Map of lower Rio Negro, state of Amazonas, Brazil, showing known occurrence of *Leposoma ferreirai* (triangle), *Leposoma guianense* (circles), and *Leposoma percarinatum* (squares) in the area. (1) Arquipélago de Anavilhanas; (2) INPA/ZF2 Reserve, 60 km north of Manaus; (3) Reserva Florestal Ducke, 25 km north of

Leposoma. Based on number and shape of dorsal scales *L. ferreirai* is more similar to *L. percarinatum*. *Leposoma ferreirai* also shares with *L. percarinatum* the shape of the interparietal scale, which is longer than wide and has almost parallel lateral margins, making the scale subrectangular. In the other species of *Leposoma* of the *parietale* group the lateral margins of the interparietal are clearly divergent. The only exception is *L. snethlageae*, where the margins of the interparietal are slightly divergent to parallel, but the scale is much wider, almost as wide as long. Among other characters, *L. snethlageae*

differs from *L. ferreirai* by having an additional pair of chin shields.

DISCUSSION

Leposoma ferreirai is only known from two localities from the Arquipélago das Anavilhanas, a large fluvial Archipelago with more than 400 islands, which extends over about 100 km in the lower Rio Negro. In the absence of field data for the type specimens and of a phylogenetic framework for the genus, there is little to comment upon. Three species of *Leposoma* occur now in the lower Rio Negro: *L. ferreirai*, *L. guianense*, and *L.*

TABLE 1. Comparison of scales around body (SAB), number of dorsal and ventral scales, total number of femoral pores in males, finger IV and toe IV infradigital lamellae, in species of the genus *Leposoma*. Data were taken from examined specimens (Appendix 1), from Ruibal (1952), Uzzel and Barry (1971), Ayala and Harris (1982), Avila-Pires (1995), Molina et al. (2002), and Rodrigues et al. (2002a,b).

Species	SAB	Dorsals	Ventrals	Femoral pores	Finger IV	Toe IV
<i>parietale</i> group:						
<i>ferreirai</i>	30–33	42–44	26–27	12	13–14	19–21
<i>guianense</i>	23–26	30–35	19–25	9–12	9–12	14–17
<i>hexalepis</i>	32–36	31–36	21–26	12–14	11–14	15–20
<i>ioanna</i>	21–22	28–30	20	?	12–15	17–20
<i>osvaldoi</i>	26–29	32–34	20–23	10–12	9–11	13–15
<i>parietale</i>	23–27	30–38	19–24	10–17	8–11	10–16
<i>percarinatum</i>	24–27	35–40	22–28	–	10–13	15–20
<i>rugiceps</i>	20–25	27–31	22–24	10	11–13	17–18
<i>snethlageae</i>	24–26	31–36	21–23	8–12	8–10	11–14
<i>southi</i>	20–25	28–33	20–24	8	10	13
<i>scincoides</i> group:						
<i>annectans</i>	21–27	26–30	16–20	10–13	9–12	12–16
<i>baturitensis</i>	24–26	25–27	17–18	9–11	11–12	16–18
<i>nanodactylus</i>	27–32	31–34	16–20	10	7–9	10–12
<i>puk</i>	27–30	26–30	20–22	17–18	13–14	16–19
<i>scincoides</i>	25–30	29–36	17–23	14–20	9–15	14–20

percarinatum (Appendix 1; Avila-Pires, 1995). This coexistence represents a very favorable scenario for the evolution of parthenogenesis in *Leposoma*. Uzzel and Barry (1971) suggested that parthenogenesis in the genus most likely originated by hybridization between closely related species. Based on the available data on geographic distribution they suggested that the bisexual species *L. guianense* and *L. parietale* could be possible candidates for being parental species. More recently, Pellegrino et al. (2003) described a triploid karyotype for *L. percarinatum* ($3n = 66$) from Vila Rica, in the state of Mato Grosso. As Pellegrino et al. (1999) had reported similar haploid sets in the bisexual, diploid species *L. guianense* and *L. osvaldoi*, Pellegrino et al. (2003) suggested this karyotype could result from hybridization between one of these two species and an unisexual one. We need more representative collections of *Leposoma* from Amazonia, and we lack karyotypic data for the populations of *L. percarinatum* from the Anavilhanas area, which is situated about 1300 km northwest from Vila Rica. Final identification of the putative species involved in the origin of parthenogenesis of *L. percarinatum* requires karyotypic and molecular studies. Nevertheless, the discovery of *L. ferreirai*, a bisexual new species closely resembling the parthenoform *L. percarinatum* in such a favorable geographic context seems to be an important piece to this interesting puzzle. Considering the present geographic distribution of these species, one possible scenario is that unisexual *L. percarinatum* originated through hybridization of *L. guianense* and *L. ferreirai*;

perhaps the triploid form reported by Pellegrino et al. (2003) represents a further hybridization of this unisexual form with *L. osvaldoi* (since *L. guianense* does not occur that far south). Cases of triploid species involving hybridization of both two and three species are known in *Aspidoscelis*, such as, in the *Aspidoscelis sexlineatus* and *Aspidoscelis tessellatus* groups (Wright, 1993). However, at present these are no more than speculations, to be verified by further studies.

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- Amazonas*: Manaus: MZUSP 51296, 51615, 56786, 56856, 57330–57333; Reserva Florestal Adolpho Ducke: INPA 12648, 12650. *Pará*: As Pedras: MZUSP 13538, 13189, 13192, 24537, 31387, 31664–31665, 35321–35323, 53707–53719; Oriximiná: 31387, 36002–36035; 35321–35333, 77193; Poção: MZUSP 77483; Tabuleiro Leonardo (Rio Trombetas): MZUSP 53798–53807, 54469–54470, 54838. FRENCH GUYANA: Cayenne: MZUSP 6818.
- Leposoma nanodactylus*.—BRAZIL: *Bahia*: Una: MZUSP 87955–87957, 87986–87987; Serra do Teimoso: Jussari: MZUSP 89332–89333.
- Leposoma osvaldoi*.—BRAZIL: *Amazonas*: Borba, Santa Bárbara: MPEG 16965. *Rondônia*: Cachoeira do Nazaré, Rio Machado: MZUSP 66339; Nova Brasília: MZUSP 66330; Nova Colina: MZUSP 66168; Nova Esperança: MZUSP 66336; Santa Bárbara: 64606–64608; Parque Estadual Guajará-Mirim: MPEG 20557, 20558. *Mato Grosso*: Apicás: MZUSP 81651–81658; Aripuanã: 81581–81586, 82703–82737; Juruena: MZUSP 82460–82737.
- Leposoma parietale*.—ECUADOR: between Sarayacu and Canelos: MZUSP 9277. PERU: Loreto: Moroyon: MZUSP 28250, 28292–28294, 28303, 28376, 39437; Estirón, Rio Ampiyacu: MZUSP 13931–13933, 13936–13945, 13947–13963; Paraiso, Rio Itaya: MZUSP 28340–28341; Yanamono: MZUSP 28352.
- Leposoma percarinatum*.—BRAZIL: *Amazonas*: São João (near Tapurucuara): MZUSP 28874, 28875; Manaus: MZUSP 57086, 66146, 66147, 66350; Rio Aracá, Serra Amanajá: MZUSP 57954; Tapera, Rio Negro: MZUSP 29382. *Mato Grosso*: Cláudia: MZUSP 82527. *Pará*: Agropecuária Treviso: MZUSP 79391–79394; Altamira: MZUSP 66405; Aveiro: MZUSP 19998; Cachoeira do Espelho, Rio Xingú: MZUSP 66399, 66400; Cachoeira do Limão, Rio Tapajós: MZUSP 53686; Igarapé do Anta, Rio Curuá-Una: MZUSP 57622; Taboleiro Leonardo: MZUSP 53809–53812, 54359; Uruá: MZUSP 52520; Vai-quem-Quer: MZUSP 77465, 77466, 78216, 78217. *Rondônia*: Santa Bárbara: MZUSP 64609–64612. *Roraima*: Colônia Apiaú: MZUSP 66971–66972, 67730, 68878; Ilha de Maracá: MZUSP 70335, 79306; Maloca Sorocaima: MZUSP 70249; Missão Catrimani: MZUSP 78309; Mucajá: MZUSP 68917; Santa Maria do Boiaçu: MZUSP 7303–7305; Tepequém: MZUSP 78110.
- Leposoma puk*.—BRAZIL: *Bahia*: Una: MZUSP 87959; São José da Vitória (Fazenda Unacau): MZUSP 66475; Serra do Teimoso: Jussari: MZUSP 89334.
- Leposoma rugiceps*.—COLOMBIA: *Madalena*: Los Cocos: MZUSP 55686. Panama: Gatun (Canal Zone): MZUSP 49178.
- Leposoma scincoides*.—BRAZIL: *Bahia*: Una: MZUSP 87805–87805, 87875–87954; Serra do Teimoso: Jussari: MZUSP 89324–89329.
- Leposoma snethlageae*.—BRAZIL: *Amazonas*: Amanã (Kalafate): INPA 9436; Amanã (Boa Esperança): INPA 9439, 9441, 9569.
- Leposoma southi*.—COSTA RICA: Suretka (Dixaola River): MZUSP 49175.

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APPENDIX 1

Comparative Material

Leposoma annectans.—BRAZIL: *Bahia*: Una: MZUSP 87792–87804; 87851–87874; 87958.

Leposoma baturitensis.—BRAZIL: *Ceará*: Serra de Baturité: Pacoti (Sítio Barbosa) MZUSP 79378; Pacoti (Sítio São Gonçalo do Freire) MZUSP 79379.

Leposoma guianense.—BRAZIL: *Amapá*: Laranjal do Jari: MZUSP 83227; Rio Amapari: MZUSP 3493, Serra