

First Steps in Setswana Herpetology

By RONALD AUERBACH*

Introduction

This paper is an attempt at presenting an outline of Setswana categories applied to reptiles. Only three Setswana categories for amphibians were recorded in spite of extensive enquiry, and these are listed in the appendix. Herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians, and an attempt has been made here to list all the reptiles known to occur in Botswana. Scientific, English and Setswana categories have been listed. The categories have been listed in systematic order with notes on the sources of the Setswana names. An amalgamated alphabetical index to scientific, Setswana and English categories follows the systematic index. This arrangement should allow those who use the list quick access to the identity of reptiles named in Botswana. Lists of Chishona, Sindebele and other reptile names are included in works published in Botswana's neighbouring states. Although a variety of errors may be present in this paper, it is hoped that it will be of some practical use. Reptiles are peculiar creatures, and occupy a special place in the mythologies of many peoples. Setswana categories for "Reptiles" with non-reptilian attributes are listed at the end of the introduction.

At least 123 reptile species have been recorded in Botswana, and as many species appear similar to the unpractised eye, species are often confused in the field. An attempt has been made to list Setswana synonyms in the alphabetical index. In conjunction with books on the reptiles of Southern Africa, the list may be used to identify reptiles in Botswana. It is hoped that the publication of this list will stimulate discussion and criticism, and thus advance our knowledge of Botswana's herpetofauna.

Sources of names

The scientific taxa used in this paper were derived from major works and papers on the herpetology of

Southern Africa. The taxonomic structure of the systematic list follows that of H.G. Dowling and W.E. Duellman's "Systematic Herpetology", after Broadley (1983) and Pienaar et al (1983) — (Re Bibliography). Species were compiled from an unpublished checklist of the reptiles of Botswana written by Dr Donald Broadley of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe (Bulawayo), and publications on Southern African herpetology.

English names were derived from the same source as the scientific taxa. No attempt has been made to list all the English synonyms for species, as access through latin names to information on reptiles should be adequate for the confirmation of species identification. English synonyms for reptile species *abound*, and only names contemporarily current have been listed.

Setswana names have been collected in the course of many years amateur field-work in Southern Africa. Much of this field-work has been conducted in areas where Setswana is spoken, and Setswana is the mother tongue of many of the informants I have had discussions with about reptiles. The most exhaustive attempt at translating a representation of Setswana reptile taxa encountered is the list of names in chapter 6 in *The Guide to Botswana* by Alec Campbell (1980) entitled "Natural Life", ("Mainly for Tourists"). This section is, however, a list of names rather than a systematic enumeration. An outline of Sesotho taxonomy is included in P.J. Quinn's *Food and Feeding Habits of the Pedi* (1959), but the herpetological section is limited to 14 reptiles and 2 amphibians. Extensive use was made of J.T. Brown's *Setswana-English dictionary*, and the Setswana names included in V. FitzSimon's *Snakes of Southern Africa* (1962), and D. Broadley's 1983 revision of this work.

Categories not previously recorded were derived from conversations with Setswana speakers in various circumstances. Specimens, photographs and verbal discussion was used to confirm identification. All listed Setswana categories have been confirmed by several informants. In cases where doubt still exists in the identity of species, a question-mark has been added. It is of importance to note that there are many regional variations in the

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names accorded to reptiles in Setswana, and unanimous agreement on the Setswana names for a given species is rare. In practice, this is also true of English reptile names!

Setswana

Setswana is spoken throughout a large part of Southern Africa. It is the language of the Batswana, an ethnic group resident on the Southern African plateau. The majority of Batswana live in South Africa, and a large part of the population of Botswana is composed of Batswana. Setswana, the language of the Batswana, is an official language in Botswana. Setswana belongs to the Sotho group of languages, and is similar to Sepedi (North Sotho) and Sesotho. Sesotho and Sepedi categories have been included in this paper as they are often similar or identical to Setswana categories.

Setswana dialects have not been analysed, although all spelled versions of recorded names have been listed. Concise notes on dialect variations are to be found in "Some Setswana names of woody plants" by Campbell and Hitchcock in *Botswana Notes and Records*, Vol. 17, (1985).

In a few cases Afrikaans and Shangaan names have been included. These categories were felt to have practical importance in identifying species.

Setswana categories are given in both singular and plural form wherever possible. The prefix attached to Setswana nouns in singular and plural forms varies greatly, and although the plural form of reptile names is rarely encountered in the field, it was felt that inclusion might prove of practical value and further stimulate discussion.

The declension of Setswana nouns involves a number of fascinating attributes both implicitly and explicitly. Plural forms are sometimes vigorously debated, and may indicate the cultural significance of the reptile under discussion. Most books on Setswana grammar enumerate the Setswana noun classes.

Sekgalagadi or Sekhalagari, a dialect spoken in the Kalahari has been indicated for species 32, 73 and 82. As these terms involve the identity of common venomous snakes, it was felt that the origin of the categories should be included. The case of the confusion of Setswana and Sekgalagadi categories for the Puff Adder (*Bitis a. orientans*, Species 82) is of particular practical importance, and has been confirmed by several informants from Tshwane Pan and Lethlakeng, and independently verified. Some Sekgatla terms are also noted, but in most cases dialect variations are used to distinguish species (often co-incidentally geographically separated).

The Etymology of Setswana Reptile names

Setswana nouns are usually made up of a prefix, a

stem, and a suffix. The prefix indicates singular or plural, the stem indicates the subject, and the suffix may change to indicate location or a diminutive form. Both the prefix and the suffix are therefore related to the syntactical context of a noun, and are accordingly subject to variation.

The noun stem is therefore usually of major etymological significance. Some of the Setswana terms listed are discussed, and etymologies included in the Systematic list. No attempt was made to include exhaustive etymologies. Etymologies noted were of a cultural, linguistic and onomatopoeic nature. It is possible that the diminutive form of some listed nouns is further used to differentiate species.

Folk Taxonomy

Folk Zoology is the descriptive analysis of what is known within a particular community about animal classification, morphology and behaviour, and the comparative study of such systems of knowledge (*Tzeltal Folk Zoology*, Eugene S. Huhn 1977: 4). Folk taxonomy, the nomenclatural system of a community, is therefore a valuable tool to those with an interest in biology.

The discipline implicit in the systematic analysis of linguistic taxonomic data necessarily entails a cultural bias. Although such "scientific" or "anthropological" analyses yield practically useful results, the assumption that scientific taxonomic categories (the International Nomenclatural System) provide an "Etic grid" (Ibid. Eugene S. Huhn 1977: 74) or an objective framework of analysis is questionable. The categories for reptiles in Setswana manifest diverse etymological origins. Insofar as Setswana taxonomy is culturally structured, like all taxonomies it is an aspect or manifestation of an epistemology or "weltanschauung". All categories are therefore data useful in interpretation and understanding. Diverse epistemologies are demonstrably useful and complementary. It is only by attempting to dispense with culturally "objective" systems that the nature and meaning of other culture's taxonomic systems may be understood.

Setswana reptile names include categories with complex semantic roots. The names for Turtles (Order: Testudines), Crocodiles (Order: Crocodylia), Monitor Lizards (Family: Varanidae), the African Rock Python (*Python sebae*) and the Puff Adder (*Bitis orientans*) are common to a number of African languages, and are all said to have "Ur-Bantu" roots. Many other Setswana categories have been derived (often semantically) from other languages. A wealth of information is available from this data, but unfortunately through a process of enculturation much of this data has permanently vanished.

It is hoped that this paper will stimulate debate

and the acquisition of data that will facilitate the understanding of African herpetofauna.

Folk Zoology (and Folk Biology) is an interdisciplinary branch of science that is receiving increasing attention. Ethnozology (the animal lore of a race or people) was generally the province of anthropologists. The comparison of cultural taxonomies elucidates the structure of universal scientific nomenclature and contributes to knowledge of living organisms in a broad context. The creation or notation of a systematic list of Setswana categories for fauna and flora is therefore an important task. A Folk-zoological framework has been used here for its inherent practical nature. It is hoped that the scientific systematics (which in the case of reptiles have been radically modified over the past two centuries ...) on which this paper is based prove practically useful rather than confusing in. Folk Zoology should provide a cultural interface for the exchange and acquisition of Zoological data.

Knowledge of Reptiles

Of the odd 123 reptiles species found in Botswana, Setswana taxa have been accorded to 82. In many cases the same Setswana name is applied to several similar reptile species (cf Skinks of the genus *Mabuya* and "Sand Snakes" of the genus *Psammophis*). The broadest taxon encountered was *Mmampharing*, a lizard attributed with a venomous bite. 17 species of lizards from three families have been frequently attributed this name. In practice, if the lizard is handled, it is demonstrably not *Mmampharing*. Other names for many of the species identified as *Mmampharing* are recorded.

Accurate snakebite statistics have not yet been compiled for Botswana. An analysis of medical statistics indicates 5-10 fatalities per annum.

Ellen, Stimson and Menzies point out "That individuals within a society are not entirely consistent in the identification they make of natural species, and variations in the ways in which they classify them might be thought to be self-evident". *The content of Categories and experience; the case for some Nuaulu reptiles*, :3 (1977). This paper does not attempt to analyse the consistency in the attribution of Setswana herpetological categories, and the possibility of mis-identification should always be borne in mind, especially when dealing with snake-bite. It has been my experience that Setswana speakers have also frequently and frankly expressed ignorance as to the identity of reptiles and amphibians, often simultaneously pointing out similarities between the species in question and other species.

Dingaka (doctors) are the individuals likely to have the greatest knowledge and experience of herpetology in a rural context. The traditional

doctors use reptiles for a variety of purposes. Pythons, monitor lizards and girdled lizards are popular items in the traditional pharmacopeia. The medicinal value of items derived from these creatures is in all cases questionable. Although traditional knowledge of the habits and ecology of herptiles is rich and diverse, the treatment of snakebite and use of animal toxins by persons with no scientific training should be regarded with scepticism. Animal toxins decompose rapidly when exposed to oxidation and direct ultra videt radiation, usually within a matter of hours. Although many properties of animal toxins do have a demonstrable curative value, the preservation of these properties requires a complex procedure. Venom not thus treated degenerated (decays) rapidly, and its administration carries a high risk of infection from biotic activity within such compounds.

Comments on the nature and behaviour of reptile species is generally fairly accurate, and discussions with Batswana about reptiles is often both stimulating and informative. The most common error encountered was that of attributing venomous capabilities to non-venomous reptiles. This is understandable, and it is obviously of practical importance that the tendency is to label non-venomous creatures venomous rather than venomous creatures harmless (an error I have not yet witnessed among Setswana speakers).

The nature and capabilities of the Puff Adder (*Bitis arietans arietans*), the most common venomous snake in Botswana, are well known, and these snakes are usually regarded with a surprisingly tolerant caution in Botswana.

This paper is intended for use in Botswana, and has not included scientific species endemic to other Setswana-speaking areas. One or two taxa that do not occur in Botswana have been included where Setswana categories were encountered. The reptiles of Botswana inhabit three distinct biomes — the Okavango system, the Kalahari Desert and the Eastern Hardveld. A detailed analysis of dialect variation in these areas might yield further practically useful taxa (in particular Setswana names for reptiles from the Okavango, and Sekgalagadi names for reptiles from the Kalahari Desert). That terminology for reptiles of the hardveld and savannas is richest is partly of the history of the Batswana, who migrated from the area near the Magaliesburg in the Transvaal province of South Africa, and the fact that early literary centres of Tswana cultures were concentrated to east of the area inhabited by Batswana.

Setswana reptile categories vary greatly. Attribution to a particular scientific taxon is difficult, and in some cases taxa ascribed serve as specific and generic terms. No names were traced for many spe-

cies, and in the absence of Setswana categories, the use of other terminology, especially Isizulu, Isindebele, Ikalalange and Chishona are often practically useful. The scope of this paper does not allow for the inclusion of these terms.

Structure

The data that follow have been arranged for easy access. The first list is a systematic arrangement of scientific, English and Setswana categories. The systematic arrangement allows quick determination of the biology of taxa enumerated. In conjunction with any work on Southern African Reptiles, details about species may be easily determined. A species from each family discussed has been illustrated immediately below the scientific name of the family. It is hoped that this arrangement will facilitate use of the list. Additional illustrations have been included of members of sub-families of the *Cordylidae* (Girdled, plated and flat-rock lizards) and the *Colubridae* (typical harmless snakes).

The systematic list is indexed as follows: Orders are indicated by the Roman numerals I-III, Suborders by the capital Roman letters A-C, families by the lower cases Roman numerals i-viii. This system has been hierarchically arranged (ie. there is a IAi, IIAi, IIBi, etc.), but species with Setswana names have been named in order of consecutive appearance in the systematic list in Arabic numerals. Each species discussed therefore has a unique single Arabic number.

The alphabetical index following the systematic list is a consolidated index of all taxa used in the paper including the composite number indicating the paragraph(s) in which categories are discussed in the systematic index. A bibliography and appendix follows the alphabetical index.

Mythological significance

Reptiles are often attributed with supernormal powers wherever they occur. Some of these attributes in Tswana culture are listed in the systematic index. Of particular importance, however, are the following categories.

1 *Kwena*: (Systematic Index II A i 9). The crocodile is the totem of a large Tswana clan, the Bakwena, and is therefore intimately associated with the cultural history of these people.

2 *Mmampharing*: (Systematic Index: III A i 30-32, III A ii 23-27, III A v 40). This lizard is said to be venomous, and deaths have been ascribed to its bite, most recently in 1985 in the Kweneng district. The cause of this confusion may be with deadly scorpions (*Parabuthids*) or a result of slow-acting envenomation through another agency (eg. the bite of the Boomslang *Dispholidus t. typus* or the Vine Snake *Thelotornis capensis*).

3 *Kwanyape* (not listed). Schapera (1971) records this Sekgatla taxon, and says that its dung and eggs may be used for rainmaking, and that this *snake* is said to go about in the form of a thin whirlwind. Schapera illustrates the significance of this taxon in Kgatla rainmaking tradition. Other informants state that when *Kwanyape* moves, it creates a massive disturbance, often destroying trees and otherwise changing vegetation. No corresponding scientific taxon was found ('Kwanyape' Schapera 1971).

4 *Noga ya Putsane* (Systematic index III C iii 56). This taxon is ascribed to the African Rock Python, *Python sebae natalensis* by FitzSimons (1962) and Broadley (1983). The python is commonly known as *Tlhware* though, and *Noga ya putsane* is said to have feathers on its head and bleat like a lamb or kid. Many tales are associated with this taxon, and it is often said to overpower and consume unsuspecting shepherds and wayfarers.

5 *Phika*: (Systematic index III C iii 56, III C v 80). Schapera (1971) notes: "*Phika* Unidentified. Described by informants as 'a spotted *mamba* (genus *Dendraspis*) of the hills or mountains', though one species is often mistaken for the python, from which it differs only in being 'more black and shining'. This taxon is universally known amongst Setswana speakers." It is often described as an arboreal species, and is said to attack people. The method of attack is peculiar in that *Phika* is often said to knock a hole in the heads of its victims, and then descend from its arboreal vantage to suck the brains from its victim. Auerbach (1985) incorrectly ascribed this name to the Vine Snake (*Thelotornis capensis*) on the basis of this species' apparently sharp nose and the peculiar symptoms of haematotoxic envenomation (including profuse bleeding internally and at the site of the bite). As a "good" taxon has been found for this species (III C iv 74- *Legonyana*), *Phika* should be relegated to a mythological taxon.

Note: it is believed that the Vine Snake (or *Legonyana*) is not dangerous. Although the species is back-fanged and reluctant to bite except under provocation, the fallacy that it is not deadly has resulted in the death of at least one herpetologist.

6 *Leja Pela*: (Systematic Index: III C iii 54, III C v 80). This taxon is especially well-known amongst the Bakgatla, and has also been recorded by FitzSimons (1962) as a North Sotho (Pedi) term for the African Rock Python. Informants insisted however that this snake was venomous. It is said to be an inhabitant of rocky outcrops and mountains where it feeds on rock-rabbits (as its name implies). It is possible that this taxon is applied to large cobras, in particular Egyptian Cobras, *Naja haje* (species 77). *Leja Pela* is also frequently attributed with supernatural powers.

Mythical taxa should be regarded in much the same light as the English Dragons, Basilisks and even such scientific taxa as *Tyrannosaurus*, a rather awesome Dinosaur. Although these creatures do not seem to exist today, they manifest an objective cultural reality in traditions and everyday concepts. Though *Tyrannosaurus* left us with a skeleton, the flesh, minds and hearts of mythical reptiles are largely a cultural function.

Acknowledgements

My first debt of gratitude is to the people of Southern Africa. I have had countless discussions with people in a variety of situations about the names and nature of Southern African Herptiles.

I would like to thank Z. Matumo of the Botswana Book Centre, currently engaged in the revision of the Setswana dictionary, for his patience, assistance and understanding with the problems I have presented to him. In publishing "The Reptiles of Gaborone" the Botswana Book Centre also provided the impetus necessary to collate much of the data I had accumulated, and so my thanks to Rev J.D. Jones, General Manager of the Botswana Book Centre for his patience and assistance.

I was assisted in systematics and identification by Dr D.G. Broadley of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo, and he provided the original unpublished checklist of the Reptiles and Amphibians of Botswana on which this paper is based. Thanks also to Dr W. Böhme of Museum Alexander Koenig in Bonn, West Germany, for assistance with systematics. S. Spawls and Lt T. Blackbeard also — offered assistance and advice. Thanks to Dr Arnold and C.J. McCarthy of the British Museum of Natural History for advice on this paper, and especially to Michael Mann of the Linguistics Department, London University for advice on sources. Dr N. Parsons and Alec Campbell of the National Museum of Botswana and Dr C. Sydes of the University of Botswana also rendered valuable assistance. Thanks to J. De Graaf and the Botswana Orientation Centre.

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Systematic list of Reptile Taxa named in Setswana indexed to closest relevant Setswana Category (Annotated)

Class: Reptilia (Reptiles) — *Digagabi*. Sing: *Segagabi*.

Although the category *Digagabi* is broader than the Class Reptilia in content ("*Digagabi, n.*, pl. of *segagabi*, Creeping things, animal or insect." (Brown 1925: 49)), it may be used in a more specific context ("*Digagabi* (crawling creatures). The cate-

gory *digagabi* includes all snakes ..." (Quinn 1959: 127)). As snakes are clearly accorded a Setswana category, Brown's definition of Reptile ("*Segagabi; segopi*" (Brown 1925: 520)) is cited.

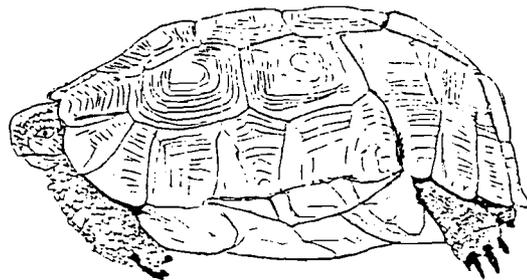
Subclass: Anapsida (Solid-skulled Reptiles).

I Order: Testudines (Tortoises, turtles and terrapins) — *Dikhudu*. Sing: *Khudu*.

The term *Khudu* may be interpreted as a rough synonym for turtle in the broadest sense of the word, i.e. as a reference to all members of the Order Testudines. The term is used in descriptive compound, and as *Dikhudu tsa metsi* is clearly understood as aquatic turtles, the term *Dikhudu tsa lewatleng* might be an acceptable term for marine turtles.

IA) Suborder: Cryptodira (Hidden-necked or modern tortoises and turtles).

LAa) Family: Testudinidae (Tortoises). *Dikhudu tsa lefatshe*.



Kinixys belliana spekii Gray. (Species 3, specimen: Lobatse)

The compound *Dikhudu tsa lefatshe* is suggested as a meaningful category equivalent to the Family Testudinidae. Three species have been recorded in Botswana, one of which is accorded a clearly unique category.

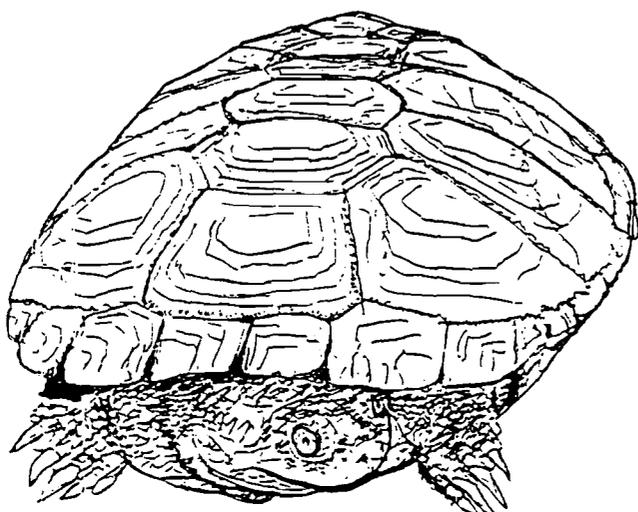
1 *Geochelone pardalis babcocki* (Loveridge) (Leopard or Mountain Tortoise) — *Khudutlou*. ("*Khudutlou, n.* A species of very large tortoise; an elephant tortoise" (Brown 1925: 135)). As this species reaches dimensions of up to 600 mm (shell length) and may attain a mass of 43 kg (Greig & Boycott 1978: 41), and is thus the largest species on the sub-continent by a comfortable margin, it is clearly the species in question. The Pedi term *Khudu-kgomo*, literally a "cow-tortoise", recorded by Quinn (1959: 127) and defined as "a large land tortoise" refers to the same species.

2 *Psammobates oculifer* (Kuhl) (*Serrated Tortoise*) — *Kgakgana*

3 *Kinixys belliana spekii* Gray (Bell's Hinged Tortoise) *Kgakgana*. Both defines *Kgakgana* as a species of small land

tortoise" (Brown 1925: 120). The category would be appropriate for both species 2 and 3. Small specimens of *Geochelone pardalis babcocki* are easily confused with *Psammobates oculifer*. P.J. Quinn (1959: 127) defines the Pedi term *Khudu* as "small land tortoise (*Homopus areolatus*)", a species confined to the South of the Cape province of South Africa.

IB) Suborder: Pleurodira (Side-necked Turtles)
 IBi) Family: Pelomedusidae (Primitive Side-necked Turtles) — *Dikhudubane*.



Pelusios sinuatus (S. Smith). (Species 8, specimen: Manyana).

The Family Pelomedusidae is represented in Botswana by five species. These are the only aquatic Testudines in Botswana. The category *Dikhudubane* is discussed below. Other aquatic turtles are represented in Southern Africa by *Cycloderma frenatum*, the Zambezi Soft-shelled Turtle of the Family Trionychidae, Suborder Cryptodira (recorded as the Shangaan taxon *Hasi* (P. Taylor, HAR 19)), and marine species.

4) *Pelomedusa subrufa* (Lacepede)
 (Marsh or Cape Terrapin) — *Khudubane*.

5) *Pelusios subniger* (Lacepede)
 (Pan Hinged Terrapin) — *Khudubane*.

6) *Pelusios bechuanicus bechuanicus* (Fitz-Simons)
 (Ngami Hinger Terrapin) — *Khudubane*.

7) *Pelusios rhodesianus* Hewitt
 (Hewitt's Hinged Terrapin) — *Khudubane*.

8) *Pelusios sinuatus* (A. Smith)
 (Serrated Hinged Terrapin) — *Khudubane*.

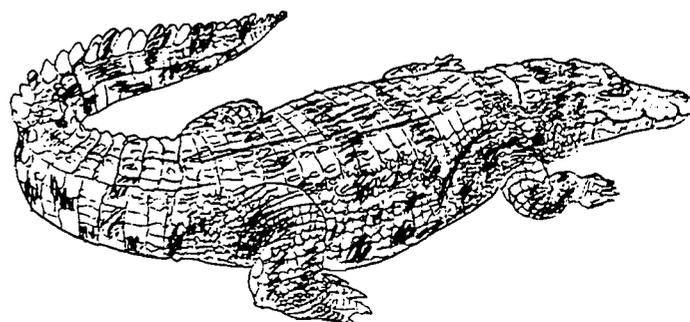
(*Khudubane* — Turtle (Campbell 1980: 631)), (*Khudubane, n.*, A species of water tortoise" (Brown 1925: 119), *Kgwadibane* (Brown 1925: 570)). This taxon is widespread, and the content of the category restricts its meaning to local aquatic turtles.

Subclass: Archosauria (Ruling Reptiles).

II) Order: Crocodylia (Crocodylians).

IIA) Suborder: Eusuchia (True Crocodylians).

IIAi) Family: Crocodylidae (Alligators, Crocodiles and Gharials) — *Dikwena*.



Crocodylus niloticus Laurenti. (Species 9, Specimen: Okavango Swamps).

The Nile Crocodile, *Crocodylus niloticus*, is the only surviving member of the Subclass Archosauria found in Botswana. The closest related Crocodylian on the African continent is the Slender snouted Crocodile, *Crocodylus cataphractus* Cuvier, which occurs on the southern shore of Lake Tanganyika and further north. The term *Kwena* may be interpreted as both specific and generic.

9) *Crocodylus niloticus* Laurenti. (Nile Crocodile) — *Kwena*.

(*Kwena, n.*, A crocodile (Brown 1925: 145)). The noun *Kwena* (plural: (plural: *Dikwena*) is applied to crocodiles found in the region. It is also the name and totem of a Tswana clan (the Bakwena), and the root of the word is discernible in many languages spoken in Southern Africa. Composite terms may be used to distinguish exotic crocodylians.

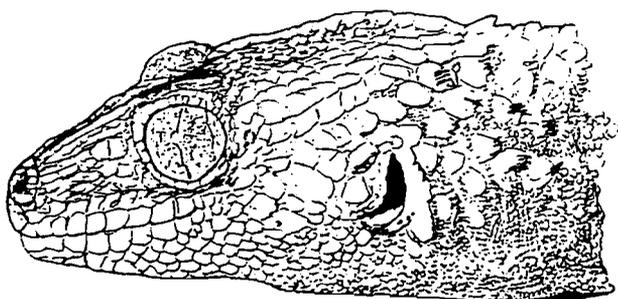
Subclass: Lepidosauria (Scaly Reptiles)

III) Order: Squamata (Lizards, Amphisbaenians and Snakes).

IIIA) Suborder: Sauria (Lizards) — *Bomantseane*. Sing: *Mantseane*

The term *Mantseane* is used both as a general term for lizards, and as a category including some members of the genus *Mabuya* (see below). Brown (1925: 464) defines lizard as *Kgatwe;kgatwane;ntseane*. Campbell (1980: 631) defines Lizard as *ntseane*, which is consistent with my own experience of the use of the term.

Infra-order: Gekkota (Geckos and allies).
 IIIAi) Family: Gekkonidae (Geckos) —
Bommampharing. Sing Mampharing



Pachydactylus bibronii (A. Smith). (Species 19, specimen: Odi).

10 *Hemidactylus mabouia mabouia* (Moreau de Jonnes) (Tropical House Gecko) — *Mmampharing*.

11 *Ptenopus garrulus garrulus* (A. Smith) (Barking Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

12 *Lygodactylus bradfieldi* Hewitt (Bradfield's Dwarf Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

13 *Lygodactylus capensis capensis* (A. Smith) (Cape Dwarf Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

14 *Lygodactylus chobiensis* FitzSimons (Chobe Dwarf Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

15 *Homopholis wahlbergii* Peters (Wahlberg's or Velvety House Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

16 *Colopus wahlbergii wahlbergii* Peters (Peters' Ground Gecko) — *Mmampharing?*

17 *Pachydactylus punctatus punctatus* Peters (Spotted Thick-toed Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

18 *Pachydactylus capensis capensis* (A. Smith) (Cape Thick-toed Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

19 *Pachydactylus bibronii* (A. Smith) (Bibron's Thick-toed Gecko) — *Mmampharing*

20 *Pachydactylus tsodiloensis* Haacke (Tsodilo Hills Rock Gecko) — *Mmampharing?*

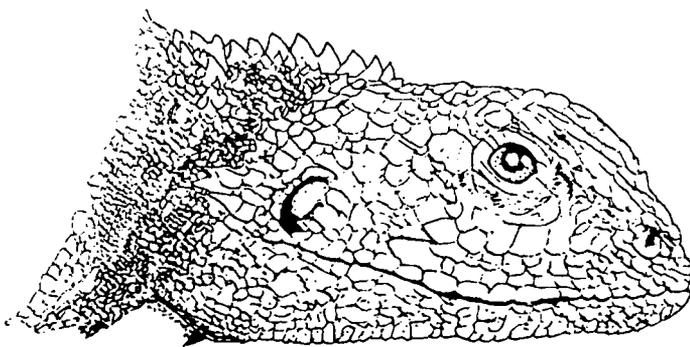
21 *Pachydactylus rugosus rugosus* (A. Smith) (Rugose Gecko) — *Mmampharing?*

22 *Pachydactylus tigrinus* Van Dam (Tigroid Thick-toed Gecko) — *Mmampharing* ("Lizard scaly — Mmamparini", (Campbell 1980:

631). This category is commonly used, and applied broadly. Terricolous Agamas and members of the genus *Cordylus* are also sometimes grouped in the category *Mmampharing*. *Mmampharing* is reputedly venomous, and is widely feared. Hewitt and Power (1913: 149) note of *Ptenopus garrulus*: "Known to the Hottentots as 'T'kan T'kan', and considered deadly poisonous". The category probably also includes *Chondrodactylus angulifer angulifer* Peters, a ground gecko.

Infra-order: Iguania (Arboreal Lizards) — *Mantseane ba/wa ditlhare*.

III Aii) Family: Agamidae (Eurasian Arboreal and Agamid Lizards)



Agama aculeata Dumeril and Bibron. (Species 27, specimen: Letlhakeng)

23 *Agama hispida makarikarika* FitzSimons (Makgadikgadi Spiny Agama) — *Magotogotwane, Kgatlampane?*

24 *Agama atra* (Daudin). (Southern Rock or Mountain Agama) — *Magotogotwane, Kgatlampane/Mmampharing, Pata Dikgogane?* ("A red lizard, pata dikgagane" (Brown 1925: 464).

25 *Agama atricollis* (A. Smith) (Tree or Black-necked Agama) — *Magotogotwane, Kgatlampane, Pala Dikgagane*.

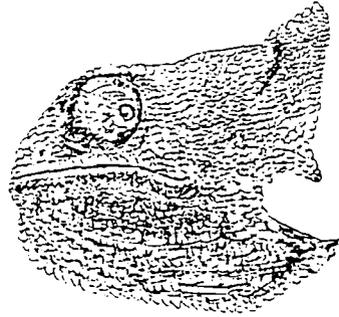
26 *Agama kirkii* Boulenger (Kirk's Rock Agama) — *Magotogotwane, Kgatlampane, Pata Dikgagane?* ("A red lizard, pala dikgagane" (Brown 1925: 464).

27 *Agama aculeata aculeata* Dumerill and Bibron & *Agama aculeata armata* (Peters). (Tropical Spiny Agama) — *Magotogotwane, Kgatlampane/Mmampharing*.

("... a rough lizard, blue on the throat, *kgantlape; kgantlapane; tlantlape*" (Brown 1925: 464)). This category presents a number of problems. Brightly coloured males of the group in seasonal garb are almost invariably referred to as *Mmamagotogotwane*, or a variant of the word. Distinctions between species are also encountered, and the terricolous members are often called *mmampharing*.

Quinn (1959: 127) cites the Pedi category *Mank-gwagwarape* — “Rock Agama ... (*Agama atra*) ... not eaten. Pedi tradition has it that terrific thunderstorms occur when a certain bird known as *tladi* eats this lizard.”

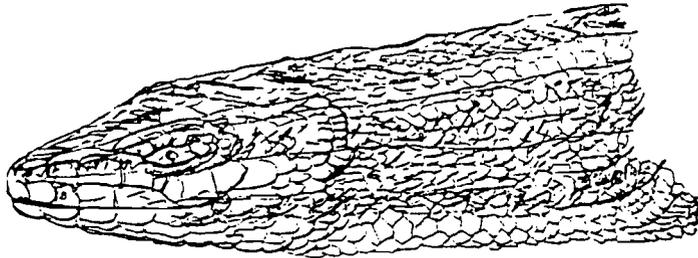
IIIAiii) Family: Chamaelonidae (Chameleons)— Lobodu/Lobodu, Sing: lobodu.



Chamaeleo dilepis dilepis (Leach). (Species 28, specimen: Lobatse).

(“Chameleon ... *Lobodu; lelolu*” (Brown 1925: 370)). Since this Family is represented throughout the area in which Setswana is spoken by one species only, *Chamaeleo d. dilepis*, the unique category *lobodu* covers both the Family and Specific taxa:

28 *Chamaeleo dilepis dilepis* (Leach). (Flap-necked-Chameleon) — Lobodu, lelolu. It is possible that *Lelolu* and *Lobodu* are a reference to this species “Dewlap” or “Flap-neck” (“Dewlap del — *lebodu, lobodu*” (Brown 1925: 395).
 Infra-order: Scincomorpha.
 IIIAiv) Family: Scincidae (Skinks).
 Subfamily: Lygosominae



Mabuya varia (Peters), (Species 32, specimen: Letlhakeng).

29 *Mabuya quinquetaeniata margaritifera* (Peters) (Rainbow Rock or Blue-tailed Koppie-skink) — *Sefelekwe*, plural: *Masefelekwe*
 This category has been confirmed by many informants, but seems to be a Sekgatla dialect unique taxon for the species.

30 *Mabuya capensis* (Gray) (Cape Ground or Cape Three-striped Skink) — *Ntseane*

31 *Mabuya occidentalis* (Peters) (Western Ground Skink) — *Ntseane?*

32 *Mabuya varia* (Peters) (Variable or Common Variegated Skink) — *Ntseane/Lebolobolo* (*Sekgalakgadi* only, see note below). *Modicwe?* (“A smooth black lizard *Modicwe*” (Brown 1925: 464)). *Mokgatutswa*.

33 *Mabuya variegata punctulata* (Bocage) (Long-lobed Skink) — *Modicwe?*

34 *Mabuya striata striata* (Peters), *Mabuya striata punctatissima* (A. Smith), *Mabuya striata wahlbergii* (Peters), *Mabuya striata sparsa* (Mertens).

(Common Striped Skink, Southern Striped Skink, Mopani Skink, South-western Striped Skink) — *Ntseane*, *Mokgantitwane?* *Bomokgantitwane* (pl). The category *Ntseane* is applied to most members of the genus *Mabuya*. It is of interest to note that the distinctive tail of *Mabuya quinquetaeniata margaritifera* has been recorded as a unique taxon — *Sefelekwe*, and that *Mabuya varia* is known as *Lebolobolu* in the *Kgalagadi*, a term used in other areas to describe the Puff-adder, *Bitis arietans*.

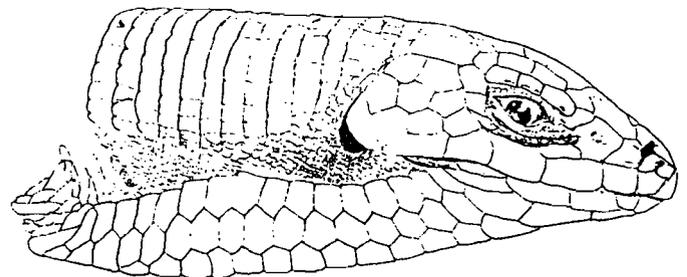
Mokgantitwane (Lizard Striped, *Mekgantitwane* (Campbell 1980: 631)) or *Mokgatutswa* are other categories used for the genus *Mabuya*. *Mabuya spilogaster* (Peters) is probably also known as *Ntseane*. No categories were recorded for *Lygosoma sundevallii sundevallii* (A. Smith) (Sundevall’s Writhing Skink) *Panaspis wahlbergii* (A. Smith) (Wahlberg’s Snake-eyed Skink) or *Typhlacontias gracilis rohani* Angel (Gracile Limbless Skink).

Subfamily: Acontinae

No categories were recorded for *Acontias percivali occidentalis* FitzSimons (Western Black Limbless Skink), *Typhlosaurus lineatus lineatus* Boulenger (Striped Limbless Skink), or *Typhlosaurus gariepensis* FitzSimons (Orange River Legless Skink).

IIIAv) Family: Cordylidae (Plated, Flat and Girdled Lizards)

Subfamily: Gerrhosaurinae (Plated Lizards) — *Mogatsa noga*, Sing: *Mogatsa noga*.



Gerrhosaurus multilineatus auritus Boettger (Species 3, specimen: Jwaneng).

35 *Gerrhosaurus validus validus* (A. Smith) (Giant Rock Plated-lizard) — *Lesholobitha, Let-somanemane* (“a very large lizard; *lecomanemane*”

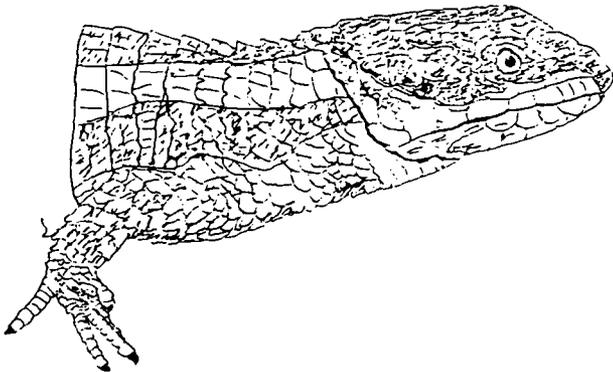
(Brown 1925: 464)).

36 *Gerrhosaurus nigrolineatus* Hallowel
(Black-lined Plated-lizard) — *Mogatsa noga*?

37 *Gerrhosaurus multilineatus auritus* Boettger.
(Kalahari or Golden Plated-lizard) — *Letsomana-*
mane? (See 35 above, *G. v. validus*), *Mogatsa noga*?

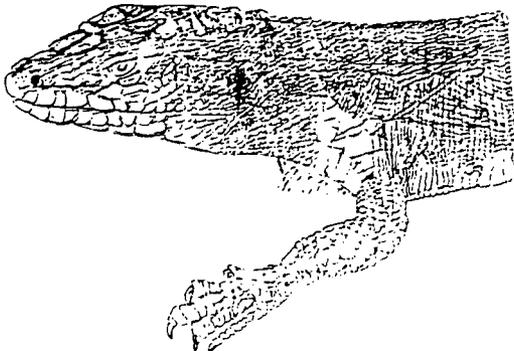
38 *Gerrhosaurus flavigularis* Wiegmann
(Yellow-throated Plated Lizard) — *Mogatsa noga*.
Mogatsa noga literally means 'the wife of the
snake'. This category is commonly applied to
members of the genus *Gerrhosaurus*, though it
might also be applied to members of the genus
Tetradactylus in South Africa.

39 *Platysaurus intermedius rhodesianus* Fitz-
Simons and *Platysaurus intermedius nigrescens*
Broadley (Zimbabwe Flat Lizard, Shoshong Hills
Flat Lizard) — *Pata dikgagone* ("a red lizard; *pata*
dikgagane" (Brown 1925: 464).
Subfamily: Cordylinae (Girdled Lizards).



Cordylus tropidosternum jonesii (Boulenger). (Spe-
cies 39, specimen: Jwaneng).

40 *Cordylus tropidosternum jonesii* (Boulenger):
(Jones' Arboreal Girdled Lizard) — *Mmampha-*
ring. The category *Mmampharing* is sometimes
applied to *Cordylus tropidosternum jonesii*
(*Mmampharing* - Lizard, scaly (Campbell 1979:)).
No category was found for *Codylus vittifer*
(Reichenow), the Transvaal Girdled Lizard.
IIIAvi) Family Lecertidae (Old World Runners)
— *Bolekgada tshega*. Sing: *Lekgaola tshega*.



Pedioplanis lineocellata lineocellata (Dumeril

and Bibron). (Species 46, specimen: Jwaneng).

41 *Nucras intertexta* (A. Smith)
(Spotted Sandveld or Scrub Lizard) — *Lekgaola*
tshega.

42 *Nucras taeniolata ornata* (Gray)
(Ornate Sandveld or Scrub Lizard) — *Lekgaola*
tshega.

43 *Nucras tessellata* (A. Smith)
(Tesselated Sandveld or Scrub Lizatd) — *Lekgaola*
tshega?

44 *Heliobolus lugubris* (A. Smith)
(Black and Yellow Sand Lizard) — *Lekgaola*
tshega.

45 *Pedioplanis namaquensis* (Dumeril and
Bibron)
(Namaqua Sand Lizard) — *Lekgaola tshega*?

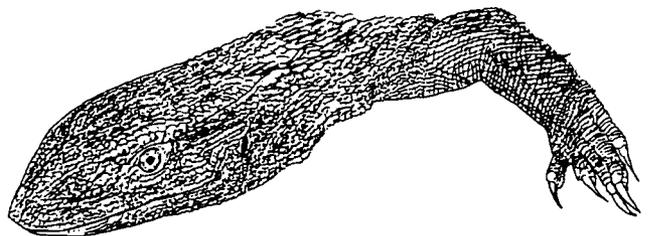
46 *Pedioplanis lineocellata lineocellata* (Dume-
ril and Bibron) (Ocellated Sand Lizard) — *Legaola*
tshega.

47 *Ichnotropis squamulosa* (Peters)
(Tete or Tropical Rough-scaled Sand Lizard) —
Lekgaola Tshega?

48 *Ichnotropis capensis* (A. Smith)
(Cape Rough-scaled Sand Lizard) — *Lekgaola*
tshega?

49 *Ichnotropis grandiceps* (Broadley)
(Caprivi Rough-scaled Sand Lizard) — *Lekgaola*
tshega?

The term *Lekgaola tshega* is broadly applied to the
active desert Lacertids. Tales of the antics of these
lizards are told to frighten inattentive shepherds.
Infra-order: Anguimorpha (Fold-tongue Lizards).
IIIAvii) Family: Varanidae (Monitor Lizards) —
Digopane, Bogopane. Sing: *Gopane*.



Varanus exanthematicus albigularis (Daudin). (Spe-
cies 49, specimen: Olifantsdrift).

50 *Varanus exanthematicus albigularis* (Daudin)
(Savanna or White-throated Monitor, Rock or Tree
Leguaan) — *Gopane, Kgwane, Kgwate*. (*Gopane*
... an iguana living away from water (Brown 1925:
80)), ("Iguana, n.; *Kgwate; gopane*; a water iguana,
polo" (Brown 1925: 447)).

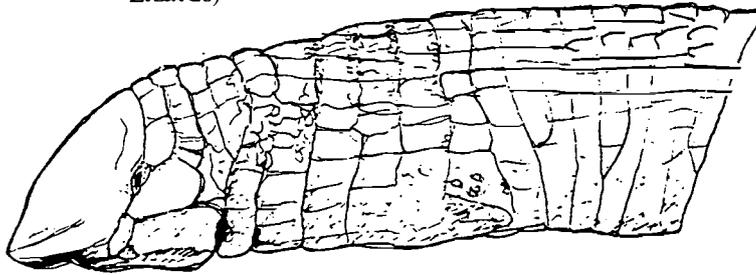
51 *Varanus niloticus niloticus* (Linnaeus)
(Nile Monitor, Water or River Leguaan) — *Polometsi*, *Polo tsa metsi*. (“*Polo*, *n.*, plural *dipolo*. A species of large iguana living in or near water” (Brown 1925: 255)).

Quinn 1959: 127 interpret the Pedi term *Polometse*.

Water Leguaan, Water Likkewaan (*Varanus niloticus*).” The kinship or relationship of *Varanus exanthematicus albigularis* and *Varanus niloticus niloticus* is recognised broadly, and collectively they are usually referred to as *Bogopane*, probably because *V. exanthematicus albigularis* is the more common species throughout much of Botswana.

IIIB) Suborder: Amphisbaenia (Amphisbaenians)

IIIBi) Family Amphisbaenidae (Tropical Worm Lizards)



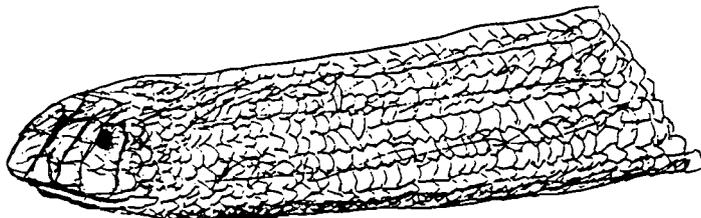
Monopeltis capensis capensis (A. Smith) (Specimen: Gabane)

Monopeltis anchietae (Bocage) (Anchieta's Amphisbaenian), *Monopeltis leonhardi* Werner (Kalahari wedge-snouted Amphisbaenian), *Monopeltis sphenorhynchus mauricei* (Parker) (Maurice's Amphisbaenian), *Monopeltis capensis capensis* (Cape Amphisbaenid), *Dalophia pistillum* (Boettger) (Horny-tailed Amphisbaenian), *Dalophia longicauda* (Werner), *Zygaspis quadrifrons* (Peters) (Eastern Amphisbaenian). No category has been found for these curious creatures. Taylor (H.A. R.79) records the Shangaan term *Nyoka hasi-Amphisbaenidae*; Burrowing snakes ...”.

IIIC) Suborder: Serpentes (Snakes) — *Dinoga*. (“*Noga*, *n.*, plural *dinoga*, A snake; a serpent” (Brown 1925: 229)). This category is applied to all the families of the suborder Serpentes, though the status of the Typhlopidae and Leptotyphlopidae is ambiguous.

Superfamily: Typhlopoidea (Blind Snakes) — Boseleka, Sing: *Seleka*.

IIICi) Family: Typhlopidae (Typical Blind Snakes) — *Modudu*, Sing: *modudu*.



Typhlops lalandei Schlegel. (Species 51, specimen: Lobatse).

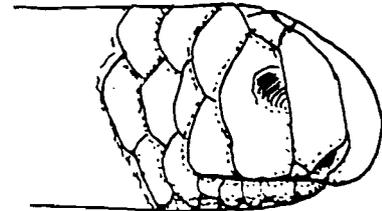
52 *Typhlops lalandei* Schlegel
(Dealalnde's Blind Snake) — *Modudu* (Broadley 1983: 43).

53 *Typhlops schlegelii schlegelii* Bianconi, *Typhlops schlegelii mucroso* (Peters), *Typhlops schlegelii petersii* (Bocage)

(Schlegel's Blind Snake), (Zambezi Blind Snake), (Western Schlegel's Blind Snake) — *Seleka* (“a small red snake, harmless” (Brown 1925: 542)).

The category *Seleka* has both broader generic and specific interpretations. Thus Brown (1925: 278) defines “*Seleka*, *n.*, plural *boseleka*, An earthworm; a species of small harmless snake; ...”, and Campbell (1980:631) “Blind or Earth Snake *Seleka* (non-poisonous)”. FitzSimons' (1962: 71) records the South Sotho term *Khutsana ya naha*, literally “the orphan of the desert or bush” for *Typhlops lalandei*. Categories for *Typhlops bibronii* (A. Smith) (Bibron's Blind Snake), *Typhlops boylei* FitzSimons (Boyle's Blind Snake), and *Typhlops schinzi* Boettger (Beaked Blind Snake) have not been recorded.

IIICii) Family: Leptotyphlopidae (Slender Blindsnakes, Worm- or Thread-snakes).



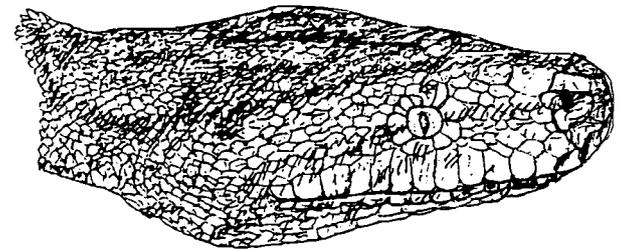
54 *Leptotyphlops scutifrons scutifrons* (Peters)
(Peter's Worm or Thread Snake) — *Seleka*?

55 *Leptotyphlops longicaudus* (Peters)
(Long-tailed or Flesh-pink Worm or Thread Snake) — *Seleka*?

The category *Seleka* may be used to cover several Worm-like reptile species. (See notes on Family Typhlopidae, III).

Superfamily: Booidea

IIICiii) Family: Boidae (Pythons and Boas)



Subfamily: Pythoninae (Pythons) — *Ditlware*, Sing: *Tlware*.

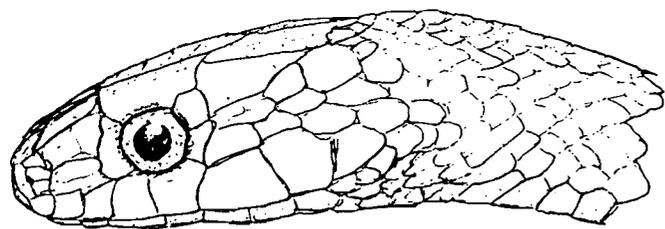
Python sebae natalensis A. Smith. (Species 55, specimen: Mochudi, after Auerbach 1985: 32).

56 *Python sebae natalensis* A. Smith
(Common African or Southern African Rock Python) — *Tlhware*, *Noga ya potsane*. (Python, *tlhware*; boa constrictor, *tlhware*, a very large snake (river), said to bleat like a dik, *noga ea potsane* (Brown 1925: 543)), (“*Python sebae natalensis* Hlware, Tlhware (North and South Sotho, Tswana); *Noga ya potsane* (Tswana); *Leja pela* (North Sotho)” (Broadley 1983:64)). This is perhaps the most confusing Setswana retpile taxon, for several names are attributed to *Python sebae natalensis*. Many traditions and beliefs centre on the African Python, and the single species therefore has many cultural categories. As the word *Tlhware* (Plural: Dithlware) has a common root throughout the Bantu family of languages in Southern Africa, it is the obvious convenient category. The category *Leja pela* (“*Python sebae natalensis*... *Leja pela* (North Sotho)”) (Broadley 1983: 64) is used by some Bakgatla to describe an undetermined taxon.

Superfamily: Colubroidea (Typical Snakes) — *Dinoga*, Sing: *Noga*.

III Civ) Family: Colubridae (Typical Harmless and Back-fanged Snakes).

Subfamily: Lycodontinae (Old World Swamp Snakes and others).



Psammophis sibilans brevirostrus Peters. (Species 63, specimen: Manyana).

57 *Lycodonomorphus rufulus* (Lichtenstein)
(Common Brown Water Snake) — *Tlhatlhametsi*
(“*Tlhatlhametsi*, *tlahametsi*? (Tswana)”) (Broadley 1983: 76)).

58 *Pseudaspis cana* (Linnaeus)
(Mole Snake) — *Tshosabosigo*? (“Mole Snake
Tshosabosigo (non-poisonous)”) (Campbell 1983: 186)).

59 *Psammophylax variabilis variabilis* Günther
(Grey-bellied skaapesteker) — *Mosenene*?

60 *Psammophylax tritaeniatus* (Günther)
(Striped Skaapstekker) — *Mosenene*

61 *Psammophis leightoni trinasalis* Werner
(Fork-marked Sand Snake) — *Mosenene*

62 *Psammophis jallae* Peracca
(Jalla’s Sand Snake) — *Mosenene*

63 *Psammophis subtaeniatus subtaeniatus* Peters
(Western Stripe-bellied or Yellow-bellied Sand Snake) — *Mosenene*.

64 *Psammophis sibilans brevirostrus* Peters
(Short-snouted Grass Snake) — *Monyofi*

65 *Psammophis phillipsi* (Hallowell)
(Olive Grass Snake) — *Monyofi*?

66 *Psammophis angolensis* (Bocage)
(Angolan or Pygmy Sand Snake) — *Mosenene*?
Moselenyane. (“*Bushsnake Mosilinyane*
(poisonous)”) (Campbell 1980: 632)).

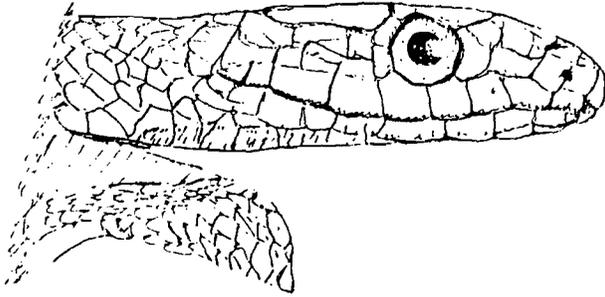
67 *Aparallactus capensis* A. Smith
(Cape Black-headed Centipede-eater) — *Magalane*?
(“A yellowish snake, black about the mouth,
magalane”) (Brown 1925: 543)).

No categories were recorded for *Lamprophis fuliginosus fuliginosus* (Boie) (Common Brown House Snake), *Lycophidion capense capense* (A. Smith) (Cape Wolf Snake), *Mehelya capensis capensis* (A. Smith) (Cape File Snake), *Mehelya nyassae* (Günther) (Nyasa File Snake), *Natriciteres olivacea* (Peters) (Olive Marsh Snake), *Hemirhagerhis nototaenia nototaenia* (Günther) (Eastern Bark or Mopani Snake), *Ramphiphis oxyrhynchus rostratus* Peters (Eastern Brown or Rufous Beaked Snake), *Dipsina multimaculata* (A. Smith) (Dwarf Beaked Snake), *Dromophis lineatus* (Dumeril and Bibron) (Lined Olympic Snake), *Ambloydipsas ventrimaculata* (Roux) (Kalahari Purple-glossed Snake), *Ambloydipsas polylepis polylepis* (Bocage) (Common Purple-glossed Snake), *Xenocalamus mechowii inornatus* Witte and Laurent (Elongate Quill-snouted Snake), *Xenocalamus bicolor bicolor* Günther (Variable Quill-snouted Snake), *Prosymna sundevallii sundevallii* (A. Smith) and *Prosymna sundevallii lineata* (Peters) (Southern or Sundevall’s Shovel-snout and Lineolate Shovel-snout), and *Prosymna bivittata* Werner (Twin-striped Shovel-snout). The subfamily Lycodontinae includes both venomous and non-venomous snakes. The only venomous member of the group capable of inflicting severe envenomation is *Atractaspis bibronii* A. Smith (Southern or Bibron’s Stiletto Snake). Although this taxon has been referred to as *Phika* (“Burrowing Adder *Phika* (poisonous)”) (Campbell 1980: 632)), the category *Phika* is generally described as a highly-venomous arboreal snake. The category *Mosenene* effectively includes all the striped Sand Snakes of the genera *Psammophylax* and *Psammophis*: (“*Phammophis sibilans sibilans* (Linnaeus) *Monyofi*, *monyofu*? *Mosenene*, *Mosenyane* (Tswana)”) (FitzSimons 1962: 227), (*Psammophis subtaeniatus subtaeniatus* Peters *Noga ya phohu* (Tswana) (Broadley 1983: 140), (“Thin striped black and white or garter

snake, *mosenene, mosenenyane*" (Brown 1925: 543), (A yellow-coloured snake, *noga ea phohu* Brown 1925: 543).

Striped Sand Snakes, especially *Psammophis subtaeniatus subtaeniatus*, are referred to as *mosenene*. *Noga ya phohu* means literally Eland Snake, and seems to refer to more uniformly coloured members of the genus *Psammophis*.

Subfamily: Colubrinae (Terrestrial and Arboreal Harmless and Back-fanged Snakes).



Philothamnus semivariiegatus semivariiegatus (A. Smith). (Species 71, specimen: Lobatse).

68 *Philothamnus hplogaster* (Günther)
(Green Water Snake or South-eastern Green Snake) — *Kgogedi*?

69 *Philothamnus ornatus* Bocage
(Ornate Green Snake) — *Kgogedi*?

70 *Philothamnus angolensis* Bocage
(Angolan Green Snake) — *Kgogedi*?

71 *Philothamnus semivariiegatus semivariiegatus*
(A. Smith) (Spotted or Variegated Bush-snake) — *Kgogedi*?

72 *Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia* (Laurenti)
(Red-lipped or Herald Snake) — *Magalane*? ("A yellowish snake, black about the mouth, *magalane*" (Brown 1925: 543)).

73 *Dispholidus typus typus* (A. Smith).
(Boomslang) — *Logwere* (*Dispholidus typus typus* .. *Logwere* (Tswana) (Broadley 1983: 252)).

74 *Thelotornis capensis capensis* A. Smith and
Thelotornis capensis oatesii (Günther)
(Southern Vine, Twig or Bird Snake, Oates' Vine,
Twig or Bird Snake) — *legonyana, logonnyana* -
plural: *Magonyana*.

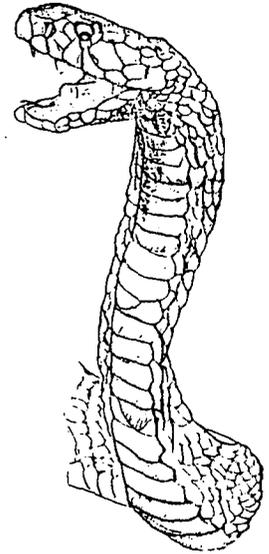
75 *Dasypeltis scabra* (Linnaeus)
(Common or Rhombic Egg-eating Snake) — *Ralegonyane* (*Dasypeltis scabra* (linnaeus) ... *Ralegonyane* (Broadley 1983: 262), *Leso-la-mae*?

No categories were recorded for *Meizodon semiornatus* (Peters) (Semiornate Snake), *Crotaphopeltis barotseensis* Broadley (Barotse Water Snake) or

Telescopus semiannulatus semiannulatus A. Smith
(Eastern Tiger-snake).

The Subfamily Colubrinae is composed of non-venomous and venomous snakes. The Vine Snakes (*Thelotornis*) and the Boomslang (*Dispholidus typus*) are capable of causing fatal envenomation. The deadly Boomslang (*Dispholidus typus typus*) is known in Sekgalagadi as *Legotswe*.

IICv) Family: Elapidae (Cobras, Mambas and Allies)



Naja mossambica
Peters. (Species 79
specimen: Lobatse

Subfamily: Elapinae

76 *Aspidelaps scutatus scutatus* (A. Smith)
(Shield-nosed Snake) — *Magalane*? (A yellowish snake, black about the mouth, *magalane* (Brown 1925: 543)).

77 *Naja haje annulifera* Peters and (*Naja haje annulifera* ... *Masumo* (South Sotho); *Kake* (Tswana) ... (Broadley 1983: 287)), (Cobra (all varieties) *Kake* (poisonous) (Campbell 1980: 632)). *Leso-la-mae*?

78 *Maja nivea* (Linnaeus)
(Cape or Yellow Cobra) - *Kake*?

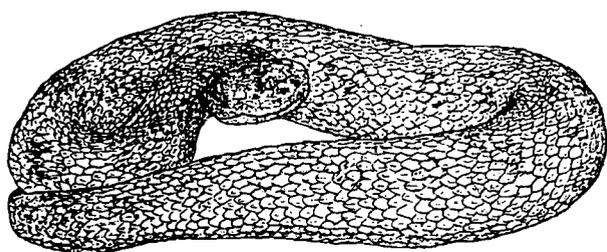
79 *Naja mossambica* Peters
(Mozambique Spitting Cobra) — *Kake* (*Naja mossambica* ... *Kake* (Tswana) (Broadley 1983: 295) *Peetla*? ("Peetla. Ringhals ... *Sepedon hammachates* ..." *Pedi* — (Quinn 1959: 127)), ("Peetla Cobra of genus *Naja*" North Sotho (Watson 1983: 232)). *Phika*?

80 *Dendroaspis polylepis* (Günther)
(Black or Black-mouthed Mamba) — *Mokwepa* (*Dendroaspis polylepis* ... *Mokopa* (Tswana) (Broadley 1983: 297), *Phika*? ("Phika Unidentified. Described by informants as a spotted *mamba* (genus *Dendroaspis*) of the hills or mountains" (Schapera 1971:)).

No categories were recorded for *Elapsoidea semiannulata boulengeri* Boettger (Zambezi Garter

Snake), *Elapsoidea sundevallii fitzsimonsi* Loveridge. (Kalahari Garter Snake), and the Ring-necked Spitting Cobra (*Hemachatus haemachatus* (Lacepede)) has not been recorded from Botswana. The Family Elapidae comprises venomous snakes, and species numbers 75-78 are all capable of delivering a lethal bite. The term Kake is both generic (Cobras) and specific in some instances. The term *Leja-pela* (*Python sebae natalensis* ... Leja-pela (North Sotho) (Broadley 1983: 64)) has been applied to members of the Elapidae by Bakgatla informants.

III C vi) Family Viperidae (Adders and Vipers)
Subfamily Viperinae



Bitis caudalis (A. Smith) (Species 80, specimen: Tshabong)

81 *Bitis caudalis* (A. Smith)
("Horned Adder or Common Single-horned Adder) *Shaushuane*, *sheusheuane* (a small black and white snake or viper, *sheusheuane*; *shaushauane*" (Brown 1925: 543)), (*Bitis caudalis* ... Shaushauane, sheushewane (Tswana) (Broadley 1983: 313)), ("Horned Adder *Shaushwane* (poisonous). *Sheushauane* (poisonous)" (Campbell 1980: 632)).

82 *Bitis arietans arietans* (Merrem)
(Common Puff-Adder) *Lebolobolo* (*Bitis arietans arietans* ... *Lebolobolo* (Tswana and North Sotho) ... (Broadley 1983: 324)), ("Puff Adder *Lebolobolo* (poisonous)" (Campbell 1980: 632)).

No category was found for *Causus rhombeatus* (Lichtenstein) (Rhombic Night Adder). *Sheusheuane* is said to be onomatopoeic, an imitation of the hiss of *Bitis caudalis*. A Sekgalagadi taxon for *Bitis caudalis* is *Sekomatatau*. A Sekgalagadi category for *Bitis arietans arietans* is *Legube*, similar to the South Sotho term *Lerabe* (plural *marabe*) (Broadley 1983: 324), though the root of the word *Lebolobolo* is common to many Southern African languages. Members of the family Viperidae have enlarged fangs in the front of the mouth, and all are venomous. The Puff-Adder (*Bitis arietans arietans*) has a potentially lethal venom.

Index to Systematic List of Reptile Taxa
(Scientific, English, Setswana)

- Acontias percivali occidentalis* — III A iv
Acontinae — III A, III A iv
Adders — III C vi
African Python — III C iii 54
Agama aculeata aculeata — III A ii, III A ii 27
a. armata — III A ii 27
atra — III A ii 24
arricollis — III A ii 25
hispida makarikarika — III A ii 23
kirkii — III A ii 26
Agamas — III A, III A ii
Agamid Lizards — III A ii
Agamidae — III A ii
Alligators — II A i
Amblydipsas polylepis polylepis — III C iv
ventrimaculatus — III C iv
Amphisbaenidae — III B i
Amphisbaenia — III B
Amphisbaenians — III, III B
Anapsida — Re. I ("Solid-skulled reptiles" inc. *Testudines*).
Amphisbaenids — III B i
Anchietae's Amphisbaenid — III B i
Anchietae's Cobra — III C v 77
Angolan Green Snake — III C iv 70
Angolan Sand Snake — III C iv 66
Anguimorpha — Re. III A vii ("Fold-tongue Lizards" inc. *Varanidae*).
Aparallactus capensis — III C iv 67
Arboreal Girdled Lizard — III A v 40
Arboreal Lizards — III A, III A ii
Archosauria — Re. II ("Ruling Reptiles" inc. *Crocodylia*).
Asp — III C v 77
Aspidelaps scutatus scutatus — III C v 76
Atractaspis bibronii — III C iv
Back-fanged Snakes — III C iv
Bakwena — (Tswana clan) II A i 9
Banded Cobra — III C v 77
Banded Garter Snake — III C v
Bark Snake — III C iv
Barking Gecko — III A i 11
Barotse Water Snake — III C iv
Beaked Blind Snake — III C i
Beaked Snakes — III C iv
Bell's Hinged Tortoise — I A i, I A i 3
Bibron's Blind Snake — III C i
Bibron's Burrowing Adder — See Stiletto Snakes
Bibron's Burrowing Viper — See Stiletto Snakes
Bibron's Mole Adder — See Stiletto Snakes
Bibron's Mole Viper — See Stiletto Snakes
Bibron's Stiletto Snake — III C iv
Bibron's Thick-toed Gecko — III A i 19
Bird Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
Bitis arietans arietans — III C vi 82, also see III A iv, III A iv 32
caudalis — III C vi, III C vi 81

- Black and Yellow Sand Lizard — III A vi 44
 Black-headed Centipede-eater — III C iv 67
 Black-lined Plated Lizard — III A v 36
 Black Mamba — III C v 80
 Black-mouthed Mamba — III C v 80
 Black-necked Agama — III A ii 25
 Black-necked Spitting Cobra — III C v 79
 Blind Snakes — III C i, III C ii
 Blue-tailed Koppie Skink — III A iv 29
 Boas — III C iii
 Bogopane — III A vii
 Boidae — III C iii
 Bolekgaola tshega — III A vi, III A vi 41-49
 Bomantseane — III A, III A iv, III A iv 29-34, III A ii 24, 26, 27
 Bommampharing — III Ai 10-22, III A ii 23-27, III A v 50
 Bomokgantitswane — III A iv 34
 Bommamagotogotwane — III A ii, III A ii 23-27
 Booidea — Re. III C iii
 Boomslang — III C iv 73, III C iv
 Boseleka — III C i, III C ii
 Boyle's Blind Snake — III C i
 Bradfield's Dwarf Gecko — III A i 12
 Brown House Snake — III C iv
 Brown Mamba — III C v 80
 Brown Water Snake — III C iv 57
 Burrowing Adder — See Stiletto Snakes
 Burrowing Viper — See Stiletto Snakes
 Bush Snakes — III C iv 68-71
 Bushveld Cobra — III C v 77
 Cape Amphisbaenian — III B i
 Cape Black-headed Centipede-eater — III C iv 67
 Cape Cobra — III C v 78
 Cape Dwarf Gecko — III A i 13
 Cape File Snake — III C iv
 Cape Ground Skink — III A iv 30
 Cape Rough-scaled Sand Lizard — III A iv 48
 Cape Terrapin — I B i 4
 Cape Thick-toed Gecko — III A i 18
 Cape Three-striped Skink — III A iv 30
 Cape Wolf-snake — III C iv
 Caprivi Rough-scaled Sand Lizard — III A vi 49
Causus rhombeatus — III C vi
 Centipede-eater — III C iv 67
Chamaeleo dilepis dilepis — III A iii, III A iii 28
 Chamaelonidae — III A iii
 Chameleons — III A iii
Chondrodactylus angulifer angulifer — III A i
 Chobe Dwarf Gecko — III A i 14
 Cobras — III C v, III C v 77-79
 Colubridae — III C iv
 Colubrinae — III C iv, III C iv 68-75
 Colubroidea — III C iv
Colopus wahlbergii wahlbergii — III A i 16
 Common African Python — III C iii 56
 Common Brown Water Snake — III C iv 57
 Common Egg-eating Snake — III C iv 75
 Common House Snake — III C iv
 Common Puff-Adder — III C vi 82
 Common Purple-glossed Snake — III C iv
 Common Single-horned Adder — III C iv, III C iv 81
 Common Striped Skink — III A iv 34
 Common Variegated Skink — III A iv, III A iv 32
 Cordylidae — III A v
 Cordylinae — III A c, III A v 40
 Cordylus — III A, III A v, III A v 40
Codylus tropidosternum jonesii — III A v 40
vittifer — III A v
 Crocodiles — II A
 Crocodylians — II
 Crocodylia — II
Crocodylus cataphractus — II A i
niloticus — II A i, III A i 9
Crotaphopeltis barotseensis — III C iv
hotamboeia — III C iv
 Cryptodira — I A
Cycloderma frenatum — I B
Dalophia longicauda — II B i
pistillum — III B i
Dasypeltis scabra — III C iv 75
 Demon Adder — III C vi
Dendroaspis polylepis — III C v 80
 Digagabi — Re. I ("Reptiles")
 Dikwena — III A i
 Dipolo — III A viii 51
 Delalande's Blind Snake — III C i 52
 Dikhudu — I
 Dikhudubane — I B i
 Dikhudu tsa lefatshe — I A i
 Dikhudu tsa lewatleng — I
 Dikhudu tsa metsi — I B i
 Dikudu — See Dikhudu
Dipsina multimaculata — III C iv
 Dinoga — III C
Dispholidus typus typus — III C iv, III C iv 73
 Ditlhwane — III C iii, III C iii 56
Dromophis lineatus — III C iv
 Dwarf Beaked Snake — III C iv
 Dwarf Geckos — III A i 12-14
 Eastern Amphisbaenian — III B i
 Eastern Bark Snake — III C iv
 Eastern Brown Snake I III C iv
 Eastern Striped Swamp Snake — III C iv
 Eastern Tiger Snake — III C iv
 Egg-eating Snake — III C iv 75
 Egyptian Cobra — III C v 77
 Elapidae — III C iv
 Elapinae — III C iv, III C iv 76-80
Elapsoidea semiannulata boulengeri — III C v
sundevallii fitzsimonsi — III C v
 Elongate Quill-snouted Snake — III C iv
 Eusuchia — II A
 Eurasian Arboreal and Agamid Lizards — III A ii
 File Snake — III C iv
 FitzSimon's Garter Snake — III C v
 Flap-necked Chameleon — III A iii, III A iii 28

- Flat Lizards — III A v, III A v 39
 Fleck-bellied Skink — III A iv
 Flesh-pink Thread Snake — III C ii 55
 Flesh-pink Worm Snake — III C ii 55
 Fork-marked Sand Snake — III C iv 61
 Front-fanged Snakes — III C v, III C iv
 Garter Snakes — III C v
 Geckos — III A i 10-22
 Geelslang — III C v 78
 Gekkonidae — III A i
 Gekkota — III A (Geckos and allies)
Geochelone pardalis babcocki — I A i 1
 Gerrhosaurinae — III A v
Gerrhosaurus flavigularis — III A v 38
 multilineatus auritus — III A v, III A v 37
 nigrolineatus — III A v 36
 validus validus — III A v 35
 Gharials — II A i
 Giant Rock Plated Lizard — III A v 35
 Girdled Lizards III A v, III A v 40
 Golden Cobra — III C 5 78
 Golden Plated Lizard — III A v 37
 Gopane — III A viii, III A viii 50
 Gracile Limbless Skink — III A iv
 Grass Snakes — III C iv 61-66
 Green Water Snake — III C iv 68
 Grey-bellied Skaapsteker — III C iv 59
 Ground Geckos — III A i, III A i 16
 Ground Skinks — III A iv 31
 Harmless Snakes — III C i, III C ii, III C iv
 Hasi — I B
Heliobolus lugubris — III A vi 44
Hemachatus haemachatus — III C v
Hemidactylus mabouia mabouia — III A i 10
Hemirhagerhhis nototaenia nototaenia — III C iv
 Hewitt's Hinged Terrapin — I B i 7
 Herald Snake — III C iv 72
 Hinged Terrapins — I B i 5-8
 Hlware — III C iii 54
Homopholis wahlbergii — III A i 15
Homopus — I A i
 Horned Adder — III C vi 82
 Horny-tailed Amphisbaenian — III B i
 House Geckos — III A i 15
 House Snakes — III C iv
Ichnotropis capensis — III A vi 48
 grandiceps — III A vi 49
squamulosa — III A vi 47
 Iguania — Re: III A, III A ii ("Arboreal Lizards")
 Jalla's Sand Snake — III C iv 62
 Jones' Arboreal Girdled Lizard — III A v,
 III A v 40
 Kake — III C v, III C v 77-79
 Kalahari Garter Snake — III C v
 Kalahari Plated Lizard — III A v 37
 Kalahari Purple-glossed Snake — III C iv
 Kalahari Wedge-snouted Amphisbaenian — III B i
 Kgadubane — I B
 Kgakgana — I A i 2, I A i 3
 Kgantlampane — III A ii
 Kgatlapane — III A ii
 Kgantlape — III A ii
 Kgatlampane — III A ii 23-27
 Kgatwane — III A, III A vii, III A vii 50
 Kgatwe — III A
 Kgogedi — III C iv 68-71
 Kgwadibane — I B
 Kgwate — III A viii 50
 Khudu — I
 Khudubane — I B i 4-8
 Khudu-kgomo — I A i 1
 Khudutlou — I A i 1
 Khutsana ya naha — III C i, III C i 52
 Kirk's Rock Agama — III A ii 26
Kinixys belliana spekii — I A i, I A i 3
 Koppie Skink — III A iv 29
 Kudu — Re: Khudu
 Kudubane — Re: Khudubane
 Kwena — II A i, II A i 9
 Lacertidae — III A vi
Lamprophis fuliginosus fuliginosus — III C iv
 Lecomanemane — III A v 35, 37
 Lebolobolo — III C vi 82 (Sekgalagadi) —
 III A iv 32
 Legonyana — III C iv, III C iv 74
 Leguaans — III A viii
 Legube — III C vi, III C vi 82
 Legwere — III C iv, III C iv 73
 Leja Pela — III C iii 54, III C v 80
 Lekgaola tshega — III A vi, III A vi 41-49
 Lelobu — III A iii, III A iii 28
 Leopard Tortoise — I A i 1
 Lepidosauria — Re: III ("Scaly Reptiles")
 Leptotyphlopidae — III C ii
Leptotyphlops longicaudus — III C ii 55
 scutifrons — III C ii, III C ii 54
 Lerabe — III C vi, III C vi 82
 Lesholobitha — III A v 35
 Leso-la-mae — III C iv 75, III C v 77
 Letsomanemane — III A v 35, 37
Limnophis bicolor bangweolicus — III C iv
 Lined Olympic Snake — III C iv
 Lineolate Shovel Snout — III C iv
 Lizards — III, III A
 Lodobu — III A iii, III A iii 28
 Logonyana — III C iv, III C iv 74
 Logwere — III C iv, III C iv 73
 Long-lobed Skink — III A iv 33
 Long-tailed Thread-snake — III C ii 55
 Long-tailed Worm Snake — III C ii 55
Lygodactylus bradfieldi — III A i 12
 capensis capensis — III A i 13
 chobiensis — III A i 14
Lygosoma sundevallii sundevallii — III A iv
 Lygosominae — III A iv
Lycodonomorphus rufulus — III C iv 57
 Lycodontinae — III C iv
Lycophidion capense capense — III C iv

- Mabalobolo — III C vi, III C vi 82
Mabuya capensis — III A iv 30
occidentalis — III A iv 31
quinquetaeniata margaritifera — III A iv 29
spilogaster — III A iv
Mabuya striata punctatissima — III A iv 34
s. sparsa — III A iv 34
s. striata — III A iv 34
s. wahlbergii — III A iv 34
varia — III A iv, III A iv 32
variegata punctulata — III A iv 33
Magalane — III C iv 67, 72; III C v 76
Magonyana — III C iv, III C iv 74
Magotogotwane — III A ii 23-27
Makgadikgadi Spiny Agama — III A ii 23
Mambas — III C v, III C v 80
Mamparini — III A i 10-22, III A ii 23-27,
III A v 40
Mankgwagwarape — III A ii 27
Mantseane — III A, re: III A iv 29-34
Mantseane tsa ditlhare — III A ii
Marabe — III C vi, III C vi 82
Marsh Snakes — III C iv
Marsh Terrapin — I B i 4
Masumo — III C v 77
Maurice's Amphisbaenian — III B i
Mehelya capensis capensis — III C iv
nyassae — III V iv
Meizodon semiornatus — III C iv
Mmagotogotwane — III A ii, III A ii 23-27
Mmamagotogotwane — III A ii, III A ii 23-27
Mmapharing — III A i, III A i 10-32, III A ii 23-27,
III A v 40
Modicwe — III A iv 32, 33
Modudu — III C i, III C i 52
Mogatsa noga — III A v, III A v 35-38
Mokgantitswane — III A iv 34
Mokgatutswa — III A iv 32, 33, 34
Mokopa — III C v 80
Mokwepa — III C v 80
Mole Adder — See Stiletto Snakes
Mole Snake — III C iv 58
Mole Vipers — See Stiletto Snakes
Monitor Lizards — III A vii
Monopeltis anchietae — III B i
capensis capensis — III B i
leonhardi — III B i
sphenorhynchus mauricei — III B i
Monyofi — III C iv 63, 64
Mopani Skink — III A iv 34
Mopani Snake — III C iv
Mosenene — III C iv 59-63, 66
Mosilinyane — III C iv 66
Mountain Agama — III A ii 24
Mountain Tortoise — I A i 1
Mozambique Spitting Cobra — III C v 79
Naja haje anchietae — III C v 77
h. annulifera — III C v 77 *mossambica* — III
C v, III C v 77
nivea — III C v 78
Namaqua Sand Lizard — III A vi 45
Natriciteres olivacea — III C iv
Ngami Hinged Terrapin — I B i 6
Night Adder — III C vi
Nile Crocodile — II A i, II A i 9
Nile Monitor — III A viii 51
Noga — III C, III C iv
Noga ea putsane — III C iii 54
Noga ya putsane — III C iii 54
Ntseane — III A, III A iv 29-34
Nucras intertexta — III A vi 41
taeniolata ornata — III A vi 42
tessellata — III A vi 43
Nyasa File Snake — III C iv
Nyoka hasi — III B i
Oates' Twig Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
Oates' Vine Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
Ocellated Sand Lizard — III A vi 46
Old World Runners — III A vi
Old World Swamp Snakes — III C iv
Olive Grass Snake — III C iv 65
Olive Marsh Snake — III C iv
Olympic Snakes — III C iv
Orange River Legless Skink — III A iv
Ornate Green Snake — III C iv 69
Ornate Sandveld Lizard — III A vi 42
Ornate Scrub Lizard — III A vi 42
Pachydactylus bibronii — III A i, III A i 19
capensis capensis — III A i 18
punctatus punctatus — III A i 17
rugosus rugosus — III A i 21
tigrinus — III A i 22
tsodiloensis — III A i 20
Pan Hinged Terrapin — I B i 5
Pata dikgagane — III A ii 24, 25, 26
Panaspis wahlbergii — III A iv
Pedioplanis namaquensis — III A vi 45
lineocellata lineocellata — III A vi 46
Peetla — III C v 79
Pelomedusidae — I B i
Pelomedusa subrufa — I B i 4
Pelusios bechuanicus bechuanicus — I B i 6
rhodesianus — I B i 7
sinuatus — I B i, I B i 8
subniger — I B i 5
Peter's Ground Gecko — III A i 16
Peter's Thread Snake — III C ii 54
Peter's Worm Snake — III C ii 54
Phika — III C iii 56, III C v 77 78 80
Philothamnus angolensis — III C iv 70
hoplogaster — III C iv 68
ornatus — III C iv 69
semivariiegatus semivariiegatus — III C iv,
III C iv 71
Plated Lizards — III A v, III A v 33-38
Platysaurus intermedius nigrescens — III A v 39
i. rhodesianus — III A v 39
Pleurodira — I B

- Polo — III A viii 51
 Polo tsa metsi — III A viii 51
 Polometsi — III A viii 51
Prosymna bivittata — III C iv
 s. sundevallii — III C iv
Psammobates oculifer — I A i 2
Psammophis angolensis — III C iv 66
 jallae — III C iv 62
 leightoni trinasalis — III C iv 61
 phillipsi — III C iv 65
 sibilans brevirostris — III C iv, III C iv 64
 subtaeniatus subtaeniatus — III C iv 63
Psammophylax tritaeniatus — III C iv 60
 variabilis variabilis — III C iv 59
Pseudaspis cana — III C iv 58
Ptenopus garrulus garrulus — III A i 11
 Puff Adder — III C vi 82
 Purple-glossed Snake — III C iv
 Pygmy Sand Snake — III C iv 66
Python sebae natalensis — III C iii 56
 Pythoninae — III C iii
 Pythons — III C iii
 Quill-snouted Snakes — III C iv
 Rainbow Rock Skink — III A iv 29
 Ralegonyane — III C iv 75
 Red-lipped Herald — III C iv 72
 Reptilia — Index of Reptiles
Rhamphiophis oxyrhynchus rostratus — III C iv
 Rhombic Egg-eating Snake — III C iv 75
 Rhombic Night Adder — III C vi
 Ringhals — III C v
 Ring-necked Spitting Cobra — III C v
 River Leguaan — III A viii 51
 River Monitor — III A viii 51
 Rock Agama — III A vii 24, 26
 Rock Leguaan — III A viii 50
 Rock Monitor — III A viii 50
 Rock Plated Lizard — III A v 35
 Rock Python — III C iii 54
 Rock Skink — III A vi 29
 Rough-scaled Sand Lizards — III A vi 47, 48, 59
 Rufous Beaked Snake — III C iv
 Rugose Gecko — III A i 21
 Runners — III A vi
 Sand Lizards — III A vi 44-49
 Sandveld Lizards — III A vi 41-43
 Sauria — III A
 Savanna Monitor — III A viii 50
 Schelegel's Blind Snake — III C i 53
 Scincidae — III A iv
 Scincomorpha — III A, Re: III A iv 29-34
 Scrub Lizards — III A vi 41-43
 Sefelekwe — III A iv 29
 Segagabi — Re: Reptiles
 Seleka — III C i, III C i 53, III C ii 54, 55
 Semiornate Snake — III C iv
 Serpentes — III C
 Serrated Tortoise — I A i 2
 Shaushauane — III C vi 81
 Shaushawane — III C vi 81
 Sheusheuane — III C vi 81
 Sheushewane — III C vi 81
 Shield-nosed Snake — III C v 76
 Short-snouted Sand Snake — III C iv 63
 Shoshong Hills Flat Lizard — III A v 39
 Shovel Snouts — III C iv
 Side-necked Turtles — I B
 Single-horned Adder — III C vi 81
 Skinks — III A, III A iv 29-34
 Skaapstekers — III C iv 59, 60
 Slender Blind Snakes — III C ii
 Snakes — III C
 Southern African Rock Python — III C iii 56
 Southern Brown Mamba — III C v 80
 South-eastern Green Snake — III C iv
 Southern Rock Agama — III A ii 24
 Southern Shovel Snout — III C iv
 Southern Stiletto Snake — III C iv
 Southern Striped Skink — III A iv 34
 Southern Vine Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
 Southwestern Striped Skink — III A iv 34
 Spiny Agama — III A ii 23, 27
 Spitting Cobra — III C v 29
 Spotted Bush Snake — III C iv 71
 Spotted Sandveld Lizard — III A vi 41
 Spotted Sandveld Lizard — III A vi 41
 Spotted Scrub Lizard — III A vi 41
 Spotted Thick-toed Gecko — III A i 17
 Squamata — III
 Stiletto Snakes — III C iv
 Stripe-bellied Sand Snake — III C iv 63
 Striped Limbless Skink — III A iv
 Striped Skinks — III A iv 30, 34
 Striped Swamp Snake — III C iv
 Sundevall's Garter Snake — III C v
 Sundevall's Shovel Snout — III C iv
 Sundevall's Writhing Skink — III A vi
 Swamp Snakes — III C iv
Telescopus semiannulatus semiannulatus — III C iv
 Terrapins — I
 Tesselated Sandveld Lizard — III A vi 43
 Tesselated Scrub Lizard — III A vi 43
 Testudines — I
 Testudinidae — I A i
 Tete Rough-scaled Sand Lizard — III A vi 47
Tetradactylus — III A v
Thelotornis capensis capensis — III C v 74
 c. oatesii — III C iv 74
 Thick-toed Geckos — III A i 17-22
 Thread Snakes — III C ii
 Tiger Snake — III C iv
 Tigroid Thick-toed Gecko — III A i 22
 T'kan T'kan — III A i, III A i 11
 Tladi — III A ii
 Tlantlape — III A ii
 Tlathametsi — III C iv 57
 Tlhathlametsi — III C iv 57
 Tlhware — III C iii, III C iii 56

Tortoises — I, I A
 Transvaal Girdled Lizard — III A v
 Tree Agama — III A ii 25
 Tree Leguaan — III A viii 50
 Tree Monitor — III A viii 50
 Tree Snake — III C iv, III C iv 73
 Trionychidae — I B
 Tropical Amphisbaenians — III B i
 Tropical House Gecko — III A i 10
 Tropical Rough-scaled Sand Lizard — III A vi 47
 Tropical Spiny Agama — III A ii 27
 Tripical Worm Lizard — III B i
 Tshosabosigo — III C iv 58
 Tsodilo Hills Rock Gecko — III A i 20
 Turtles — I
 Twig Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
 Twin-striped Shovel-snout — III C iv
 Typhlopidae — III C i
 Typhlopoidea — Re: III C i, III C ii
Typhlops bibronii — III C i
 boylei — III C i
 lalandei — III C i, III C i 52
 schinzii — III C i
 schlegelii mucroso — III C i 52
 s. petersii — III C i 53
 s. schlegelii — III C i 53
Typhlosaurus garipeensis — III A iv
 gracilis rohani — III A iv
 lineatus lineatus — III A iv
 Typical Snakes — III C iv
 Varanidae — III A vii
Varanus exanthematicus albigularis — III A viii,
 III A viii 50
 niloticus niloticus — III A viii 51
 Variable Quill-snouted Snake — III C iv
 Variable Skink — III A iv 32
 Variegated Bush Snake — III C iv 71
 Variegated Skink — III A iv, III A iv 32
 Velvety House Gecko — III A i 15
 Vine Snake — III C iv, III C iv 74
 Viperidae — III C vi
 Viperinae — III C vi, 81, 82
 Vipers — III C vi
 Wahlberg's House Gecko — III A i 15
 Wahlberg's Snake-eyed Skink — III A iv
 Water Leguaan — III A viii 51
 Water Monitor — III A viii 51
 Water Snakes — III C iv, III C iv 57, 68-71
 Western Black Limbless Skink — III A iv
 Western Ground Skink — III A iv 31
 Western Stripe-bellied Sand Snake — III C iv 63
 White-throated Monitor — III A viii 50
 Wolf Snakes — III C iv
 Worm Snakes — III C ii
Xenocalamus bicolor bicolor — III C iv
 mechowi inornatus — III C iv
 Yellow-bellied Sand Snake — III C iv 63
 Yellow Cobra — III C v 78
 Yellow-throated Plated Lizard — III A v 38

Zambezi Blind Snake — III C i 53
 Zambezi Garter Snake — III C v
 Zambezi Soft-shelled Turtle — I B
 Zambezi Flat Lizard — III A v 39
Zygaspis quadrifrons — III B i

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Appendix

The following categories were recorded in Setswana for amphibians (Class: Amphibia). It was felt that the data was inadequate to include in the indexes. Order: Anura (Frogs) — Digwagwa, singular Segwagwa. (J.T. Brown 1925 : 427).

Sub-order: Diplasiocoela.

Family: Breviceptinae (“Rain Frogs”) — Dinanatswii, singular Senanatswii.

Breviceps adspersus Peters and subspecies. (Common Blasop or Rainfrog).

Invariably identified as Senanatswii. All members of the genus are likely to be placed in the same category. The erroneous belief that these frogs blow themselves up until they burst is common throughout South Africa. The name Senanatswii is apparently onomatopoeic.

Family: Ranidae (“Typical frogs”, river, stream frogs and allies).

Pyxicephalus adspersus Tschudi (Bullfrog or Giant Pyxie). Matlametlo, singular Letlametlo. (J.T. Brown, 1925: 160).

Other terms of practical value are Mekadi, the fat of the Bullfrog (the Bullfrog is relished by many Tswana speakers much as *Rana esculenta* the European Edible Frog is considered a delicacy throughout much of Europe. The Bullfrog belongs to the same family as this species), and the categories for tadpoles. Tadpole may be called Segwagwanyana, (plural: Digwagwanyana, simply diminutives of Digwagwa), Dikwididi or Dikolote. These terms are subject to marked regional variation, and dikolote are also said to be insects.