

# LIVING WORLD

Journal of the Trinidad and Tobago  
Field Naturalists' Club

[admin@tffnc.org](mailto:admin@tffnc.org)

ISSN 1029-3299



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
**FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB**

## On the Heat Sensitivity of the “Luminous Lizard” *Proctoporus shrevei*

John Lum Young, Paul Comeau, Adrian Hailey, Dan Jaggernauth,  
Bobby Oumdath and Victor Quesnel

Lum Young, J., Comeau, P., Hailey, A., Jaggernauth, D., Oumdath, B., and Quesnel, V. 2005.  
On the Heat Sensitivity of the “Luminous Lizard” *Proctoporus shrevei*. *Living World, Journal of  
The Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club*, 2005, 61-61.

---

## NATURE NOTE

---

### On the Heat Sensitivity of the “Luminous Lizard” *Proctoporus shrevei*



*Proctoporus shrevei* (Photo: Graham L. White)

*Proctoporus shrevei* is a Trinidad endemic lizard found in the Northern Range at altitudes mostly above 600 m though there have been a few reports of some at lower altitudes. Usually called the “Luminous Lizard”, its body length is about 50 mm and tail about 85 mm. Adult males have a row of five or six ocelli on each side of the body and these have been reported as luminous by the discoverer of the lizard, Ivan Sanderson (1939). Since then others have failed to duplicate Sanderson’s original observations, but the lizard continues to attract attention from scientists and the general public.

On 12 April, 2004 the writers caught a male *P. shrevei* on the edge of a stream at an elevation of about 700 m on the route to Soho Cave in the Aripo Valley. It remained enclosed in the palm of the hand less than two minutes but went into a comatose state and had to be revived by pouring some cold water over it from the stream. It survived the return trip and was subsequently kept in captivity for several months.

Recently, Knight *et al.* (2004) reported that *P. shrevei* typically occupies a microclimatic range of 20-23°C and will die if kept at temperatures above 24°C. Trials by one of us (VQ) have shown that a thermometer bulb grasped in the hand will record a

temperature rise from 30.3 to 35.2°C in one minute. If, however, the hand had been immersed in water at 26.1°C for two minutes, the temperature on holding the thermometer will dip and return to near 30°C in one minute. Thus, it would seem that our lizard when held in the hand went into heat-stroke, and this result should serve as a warning to others to handle captured lizards of this species as little as possible, if they are to remain alive.

#### REFERENCES

- Knight, C. M., Gutzke, W. H. N. and Quesnel, V. C.** 2004. Shedding light on the Luminous lizard (*Proctoporus shrevei*) of Trinidad: A brief natural history. *Caribbean J. of Science*, 40: 422-426.  
**Sanderson, I. T.** 1939. *Caribbean Treasure*. New York: The Viking Press. 292 p.

**John Lum Young, Paul Comeau, Adrian Hailey,  
 Dan Jaggernauth, Bobby Oumdath and  
 Victor Quesnel**

*E-mail: jlumyoung@trinidadexpress.com*