

St., and Gray St. and its extension. Nests were counted, and an effort was made to find every nest during the season which lasted for seven months, from December 1953 to July 1954.

The kiskadee breeds at least two or three times a season, and seems, as a rule, to raise all its broods in one nest. However, I believe that of the birds in the area, two pairs each built two nests. This belief is based on the proximity of the nesting sites for each of these pairs of nests, and the fact that in each pair, one nest appeared only after the other had disappeared. Twenty-two nests were counted, built, it is thought, by twenty pairs of birds.

From a map of Port-of-Spain the area studied was calculated to be 0.0685 sq. miles, or nearly 44 acres. Thus, the density of the breeding population was 0.46 pairs per acre. Put another way, the average size of the territory was 2.2 acres. This compares with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres for the English robin,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  to  $14\frac{3}{4}$  acres for the song-thrush in Finland, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  acres for the American song sparrow and the Californian wren-tit<sup>(1)</sup>.

The area of Port-of-Spain is 3.7 sq. miles<sup>(2)</sup>, fifty-four times greater than that studied. Thus, a rough estimate of the number of breeding pairs in Port-of-Spain is 1080. This figure is probably too high, since much of the city is unsuitable for nesting, whereas the selected area is particularly favourable.

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#### REFERENCES

- (1) Lack, D. The Life of the Robin. Pelican Books, 1953. pp. 143-144.
- (2) Government of Trinidad & Tobago, Annual Statistical Digest No. 4, 1935-1952.

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#### A new lizard record for Trinidad

In 1949 Dr. E. McCallan, then of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, kindly sent me a number of specimens of Trinidad lizards. Among them were two specimens of *Gymnophthalmus lineatus* (Linnaeus) from St. Augustine. Although this species is common in South America and its occurrence in Trinidad is not in the least surprising it is not listed in Parker's account of the lizards of Trinidad. I was therefore interested to find, during a recent visit, that it is common in Port-of-Spain. It probably occurs in nearly every yard in the city.

*Gymnophthalmus* belongs to the family *Tejidae* which is already known to be represented in Trinidad by six genera: the ground lizards *Ameiva*, *Cnemidophorus* and *Kentropyx*; the matte *Tupinambis*; the small burrowing *Scolecosaurus* and the interesting mountain form *Proctoporus*. It differs from all the other Trinidadian tejjids in that there are no mobile eyelids; the eye is covered by a fixed transparent spectacle. In this it resembles geckos (and snakes) with which it could not possibly be confused. The combination of spectacle over the eye and large smooth overlapping scales on the back suffices to distinguish *Gymnophthalmus* from all other Trinidadian lizards.

*Gymnophthalmus lineatus* is a small lizard reaching a total length of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches of which the trunk measures about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The limbs are somewhat short in relation to the length of the trunk; there are only four toes on the fore-foot, the hind-foot has the usual five. There are three

rows of broad dorsal scales within the broad light dorsal stripe, there is a double row of broad scales beneath the belly. In addition to the spectacle these characters afford a striking distinction from the skink *Mabuya*, to which *Gymnophthalmus* bears a superficial resemblance. The colouration is in shades of bronze like an old penny. On top of the head, down the back as a broad stripe and onto the tail is light bronze; the sides of the head, trunk and tail are dark bronze. There are fine speckles on the dorsal side of the tail. The underside is whitish.

I found these lizards in fairly dry litter in contrast to the damp situations in which *Scolecosaurus* was found. These nimble lizards are not easy to catch as they wriggle away through the litter.

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### **Cyclorotating Eyes in the Tadpole of *Phyllomedusa burmeisteri***

Some snakes, fishes and turtles have eyes which can rotate about an axis passing through the centres of the two eyeballs<sup>(1)(2)</sup>. The best name for this phenomenon seems to be cyclorotation. I had the opportunity of observing it in the tadpoles of the large green frog, *Phyllomedusa burmeisteri* (Boul.)<sup>(3)</sup> In this animal the observations are easily made, since, although the pupil is round, a "nick" which projects into the iris is readily seen and serves as a marker. This "nick" points vertically downwards, whatever the position of the head, so long as the animal is not upside down.

From photographs of the tadpole with its head pointing both upwards and downwards actual measurement showed that the angle of rotation is at least 125°, greater than the angles previously recorded: 65° for the copperhead snake<sup>(1)</sup>, 120° for a goldfish and 70° for a turtle<sup>(2)</sup>. When the tadpole turns on its back, the eye is locked in position with the "nick" pointing ventrally.

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#### REFERENCES

- (1) Scientific American 190: 1001, 1954.
- (2) Scientific American 191: 116, 1955.
- (3) Parker, H. W. A list of the frogs and toads of Trinidad. Tropical Agriculture 10: 8, 1933.

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### **Record of a Beaked Whale from Balandra**

On January 5th, 1953, we found the skull and some vertebrae of a beaked whale on the beach at Sena Bay, Balandra. Photographs were taken and sent to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) for identification. From the pictures the whale was provisionally identified as *Mesoplodon bidens*. As this is a rather rare species we were asked by the curator if we would consider selling the specimen to the museum but we preferred to donate it and sent it to London. There it was identified as *Mesoplodon gervaisi*, an exceedingly rare species which is represented in the British Museum only by our specimen and one other, ours being the first.

The discovery of the Trinidad specimen was reported in the London newspapers at the time. It was then the seventh to be discovered but two other specimens were subsequently found in Jamaica and recorded<sup>(1)</sup> before