*. . . reprinted from SSAR Herpetological Review 22(2): 42–43 (1991) for gratis distribution by the author. This paper is often overlooked when citing the origin for recognizing as species the fifty-five taxa addressed therein. In 1990, the article was submitted to Martin Rosenberg (then editor of Herpetological Review) and was refereed by at least three anonymous reviewers. After minor marginal corrections and the addition of the word "Viewpoint" to the title, the manuscript was published in 1991. Recipients of this pdf are urged to distribute it to their colleag*ues.

VIEWPOINT: A NEW TAXONOMIC ARRANGEMENT FOR SOME NORTH AMERICAN AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

Subsequent to the discussion by Frost and Hillis (1990) of species and the relevance of species concepts to practical taxonomy, it has become clear to me that a relatively large number of species of amphibians and reptiles in the United States have been camouflaged by the "subspecies" taxonomy that has grown up around what I now think is an out-dated viewpoint.

Besides providing recognition of the real species diversity in nature, a rigorous application of the evolutionary species concept (as discussed in Frost and Hillis, 1990) would also reduce the number of arbitrarily defined subspecies dramatically, although several subspecies complexes (e.g. *Ensatina eschscholtzii, Lampropeltis getula, Lampropeltis triangulum*) undoubtedly contain a number of real species. I realize that in some cases the recognition of an obvious species (e. g. *Ensatina e. klauberi* elevated to *E. klauberi*) might leave the residual binomial (i.e. *Ensatina eschscholtzii*) representing a group of cryptic species of uncertain relationship to each other. However, because no changes can be made in these "agglomerative" taxa without some initial uncertainty, I have not addressed them here.

In my opinion, much of the specific and subspecific taxonomy in use by herpetologists today is arbitrary and lacks historical reality. It is also clear that the non-systematist public is generally unaware of this. The following list of "hidden" species is not exhaustive because of the ambiguity of evidence and information available to me. (Is *Pseudemys rubriventris bangsi* morphologically or genetically distinct from *P. r. rubriventris*?

Current Subspecies Name	Proposed Species Name
Salamanders	
Ambystoma macrodactylum croceum	*Ambystoma croceum*
Cryptobranchus alleganiensis bishopi	*Cryptobranchus bishopi*
Gyrinophilus palleucus gulolineatus	*Gyrinophilus gulolineatus*
Necturus maculosus louisianensis	*Necturus louisianensis*
Plethodon dorsalis angusticlavius	*Plethodon angusticlavius*
Plethodon vandykei idahoensis	*Plethodon idahoensis*
Pseudotriton montanus diastictus	*Pseudontriton diastictus*
Taricha torosa sierrae	*Taricha sierrae*
Frogs and Toads	
Bufo hemiophrys baxteri	*Bufo baxteri*
Bufo microscaphus californicus	*Bufo californicus*
Pseudacris streckeri illinoenis	*Pseudacris illinoensis*
Rana areolata capito	*Rana capito*[1]
Rana sylvatica maslini	*Rana maslini*
Scaphiopus holbrookii hurterii	*Scaphiopus hurterii*
Turtles	
Kinosternon flavescens arizonense	*Kinosternon arizonense*
Kinosternon flavescens spooneri	*Kinosternon spooneri*
Pseudemys concinna gorzugi	*Pseudemys gorzugi*
Pseudemys concinna suwanniensis	*Pseudemys suwanniensis*
Lizards	
Cnemidophorus burti xanthonotus	*Cnemidophorus xanthonotus*
Crotaphytus insularis vestigium	*Crotaphytus vestigium*
Eumeces egregius insularis	*Eumeces insularis*
Eumeces gilberti arizonensis	*Eumeces arizonensis*
Eumeces septentrionalis obtusirostris	*Eumeces obstusirostris*
Holbrookia lacerata subcaudalis	*Holbrookia subcaudalis*
Ophisaurus attenuatus longicaudus	*Ophisaurus longicaudus*
Sceloporus graciosus arenicolous	*Sceloporus arenicolous*
Sceloporus graciosus vandenburgianus	*Sceloporus vandenburgianus*
Uta stansburiana stejnegeri	*Uta stejnegeri*
Xantusia vigilis utahensis	*Xantusia utahensis*
Snakes	
Arizona elegans occidentalis	*Arizona occidentalis*[2]
Carphophis amoenus vermis	*Carphophis vermis*
Cemophora coccinea lineri	*Cemophora lineri*
Coluber constrictor mormon	*Coluber mormon*
Diadophis punctatus acricus	*Diadophis acricus*
Diadophis punctatus amabilis	*Diadophis amabilis*[3]
Drymarchon corais couperi	*Drymarchon couperi*
Elaphe vulpina gloydi	*Elaphe gloydi*
Farancia erytroramma seminola	*Farancia seminola*
Lampropeltis triangulum taylori	*Lampropeltis taylori*
Lampropeltis calligaster occipitolineata	*Lampropeltis occipitolineata*
Lampropeltis pyromelana infralabialis	*Lampropeltis infralabialis*
Lampropeltis zonata multifasciata	*Lampropeltis multifasciata*
Lampropeltis zonata parvirubra	*Lampropeltis parvirubra*
Lampropeltis zonata pulchra	*Lampropeltis pulchra*
Masticophis bilineatus lineolatus	*Masticophis lineolatus*
Micrurus fulvius tener	*Micrurus tener*
Nerodia harteri paucimaculata	*Nerodia paucimaculata*
Pituophis melanoleucus catenifer	*Pituophis catenifer*[4]
Pituophis melanoleucus ruthveni	*Pituophis ruthveni*
Tantilla relicta pamlica	*Tantilla pamlica*
Tantilla rubra cucullata	*Tantilla cucullata*
Tantilla rubra diabola	*Tantilla diabola*
Thamnophis couchii gigas	*Thamnophis gigas*
Thamnophis sirtalis dorsalis	*Thamnophis dorsalis*
Virginia valeriae pulchra	*Virginia pulchra*

1 *Rana capito* would retain the subspecies *R. c. aesopus* and *R. c. sevosa. Rana areolata* would retain the subspecies *R. a. circulosa*. **2** *Arizona occidentalis* would retain the subspecies *A. o. candida. A. o. ebumata*, and *A. o. noctivaga. Arizona elegans* would retain the subspecies *A. e. philipi*. **3** *Diadophis amabilis* would retain the subspecies *D. a. modestus, D. a. occidentalis, D. a pulchellus, D. a. similis,* and *D. a vandenburgii. Diadophis punctatus* would retain the subspecies *D. p. arnyi, D. p. edwardsii, D. p. regalis,* and *D. p. stictogenys*. **4** *Pituophis catenifer* would retain the subspecies *P. c. affinis, P. c. annectens, P. c. deserticola, P. c. pumilis*, and *P. c sayi. Pituophis melanoleucus* would retain the subspecies *P. m. lodingi* and *P. m. mugitus.*

If so, it should be *Pseudemys bangsi*.) None-the-less, based on Conant (1975) Conant and Collins (1991), and Stebbins (1985), the following taxa exhibit two characteristics which reveal their specific distinctness: 1) They are mapped as allopatric (based on the best published evidence available), and 2) they are in some way morphologically (and presumably genetically) distinct.

I would encourage the adoption of the taxonomic arrangement listed above, unless or until data indicate differently. Indeed, some systematists have already recommended a number of the changes proposed above (see Collins, 1990). Not to do so continues the myth of morphologically distinct, allopatric subspecies, thereby diluting the species concept and obfuscating the evolutionary diversity of the North American (north of Mexico) herpetofauna.

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