SEAVR 2018: 006-007
ISSN: 2424-8525
Date of publication: 15 January 2018
Hosted online by ecologyasia.com

Southeast Asia Vertebrate Records
Mammals • Reptiles • Amphibians • Fishes

Tail bifurcation in *Eutropis indeprensa* on Palawan Island, Philippines

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Observer: Alexander C. Dalabajan.
Photograph by: Alexander C. Dalabajan.
Subject identified by: Emerson Y. Sy.

Location: Barangay Villa Libertad, Municipality of El Nido, Palawan Province, Palawan Island, Philippines. (11° 12.337'N, 119° 25.030'E; WGS 84).
Elevation: 6 metres
Habitat: Remnant, relatively intact lowland forest, 250 metres from a beach.
Date and time: 03 March 2016, noon.

Identity of subject: Red-lipped Sun Skink, *Eutropis indeprensa* (Reptilia: Squamata: Scincidae).

Description of record: An adult *Eutropis indeprensa* with a bifurcated tail was observed while it was foraging on a wooden walkway within a minimally disturbed forest area near a beach. The anterior portion of the tail appears to be intact and measures around 15 mm in length, while the regenerated posterior portion comprises an 'upper tail' of 27 mm and a 'lower tail' of 31 mm. (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. © Alexander C. Dalabajan

Remarks: *Eutropis indeprensa* is a moderate-sized (snout-vent length = 45.6–66.6 mm), diurnal, ground-dwelling skink occurring in the Philippines (Calauit, Caluya, Camiguin, Cebu, Leyte, Mindanao, Mindoro, Negros, Palawan, Panay and Samar) and northern Borneo (Brown and Alcala, 1980; Gaulke, 1999; Gaulke, 2011). *Eutropis indeprensa* is a species complex with highly conserved (i.e. unchanged) external morphology (Barley et al., 2013).

Among lizards, tail autotomy is a well-documented, anti-predator behaviour which may also be influenced by habitat/microhabitat and foraging behaviour (Bateman and Fleming, 2008). Lizards capable of tail regeneration following autotomy occasionally exhibit abnormal tail development. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of tail bifurcation for this species.

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