

## Key to the Blind Snakes of South Australia



*Anilius bicolor*

Mark Hutchinson & Ian Williams

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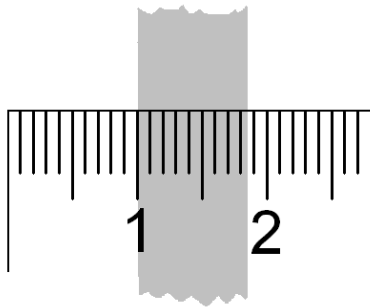
<https://www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/research/item/south-australian-reptile-keys>

## KEY TO THE BLIND SNAKES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*Recent taxonomic work has transferred all native Australian blind snakes, formerly in the genus Ramphotyphlops, into the genus Anilius.*

*Species of blind snakes are difficult to identify, and precise identification depends on scalation features that are often microscopic and difficult to observe. Field identification can make use of body proportions, as some blind snakes are very elongate and slender, others much more robust. If this is combined with the shape of the snout, the six South Australian species can in most cases be identified.*

**Body diameter** is taken at approximately mid-body; the fore-body is often more slender than the rest and the posterior part may be full of eggs or fat stores. The measurement is best made using a clear plastic ruler. Round down.



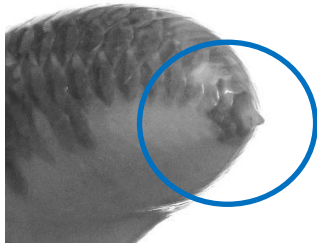
In this case the diameter would be scored as 8 mm.



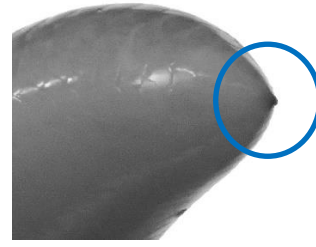
Measure body diameter and count mid-body scale rows about here

*Anilius bicolor*

1. a Terminal spine on tail sits in a small patch of the dark dorsal colouring; snout smooth, no fingernail-like transverse ridge on the rostral scale; body robust, total length 28-35 times the body diameter . . . . . **A. bicolor**
- b Terminal spine on tail surrounded by scales the colour of the belly; snout with a transverse, fingernail-like cutting edge across the front of the rostral; body slender, total length 45-80 times the body diameter. . . . . **2**



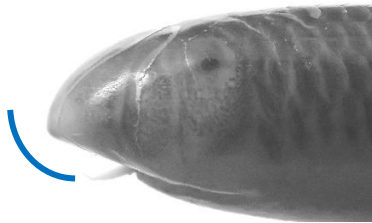
*Anilios bicolor*



*Anilios bituberculatus*

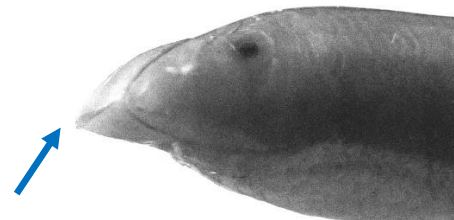
**1a.** Tail spine surrounded the dark dorsal colouring

**1b.** Tail spine surrounded the pale ventral colouring



*Anilios bicolor*

**1a.** Snout rounded, no cutting edge



*Anilios bituberculatus*

**1b.** Snout with moderate to pronounced cutting edge

2. a Viewed from above the outline of the nostril area is angular and projecting, forming 'shoulders' on either side of the rostral scale . . . . . **3**
- b Viewed from above the outline of the nostril area is slightly bulbous or smooth, following the curve of the snout . . . . . **4**



*Anilios bituberculatus*

**2a.** Nasal outline projecting, angular



*Anilios endoterus*

**2b.** Nasal outline smooth

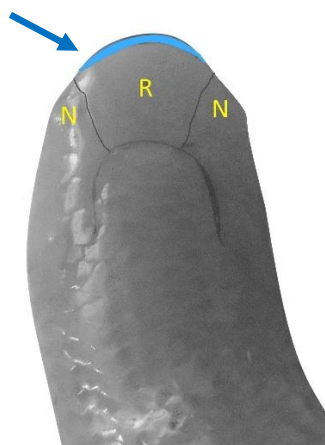
3. a Nasal projections strong, sharply angular; body moderately slender, total length 45-70 times the body diameter; 20 midbody scale rows (MBSR) ..... ***A. bituberculatus***
- b Nasal projections weak, obtusely angular; body extremely slender, total length approx. 80 times the body diameter; 18 MBSR ..... ***A. margaretae***

*Anilius bituberculatus***3a.** Nasal area strongly angular*Anilius margaretae***3b.** Nasal area weakly angular

4. a Snout with a small cutting edge on the rostral scale projecting forwards; body moderately slender, total length 45-65 times the body diameter; widespread over central and northern SA sandy deserts ..... ***A. endoterus***
- b Snout with strong cutting edge on the rostral scale projecting downwards, forming hook-shape when seen in profile; confined to far north of SA ..... **5**

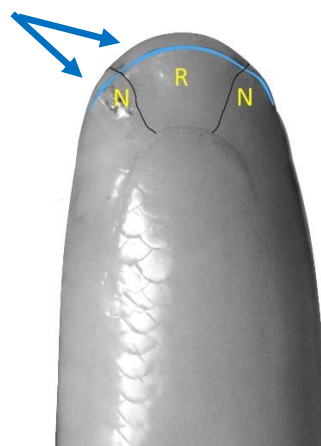
*Anilius endoterus***4a.** Cutting edge weak, projects forward*Anilius centralis***3b.** Cutting edge pronounced, projects downwards

5. a North-eastern corner of SA; cutting edge on the rostral only, not extending on to the nasal scales; body very slender, total length 65-80 times the body diameter ..... ***A. grypus***
- b North-western SA; cutting edge continuous from the rostral to the nasals; body slender, total length 50-65 times body diameter ..... ***A. centralis***



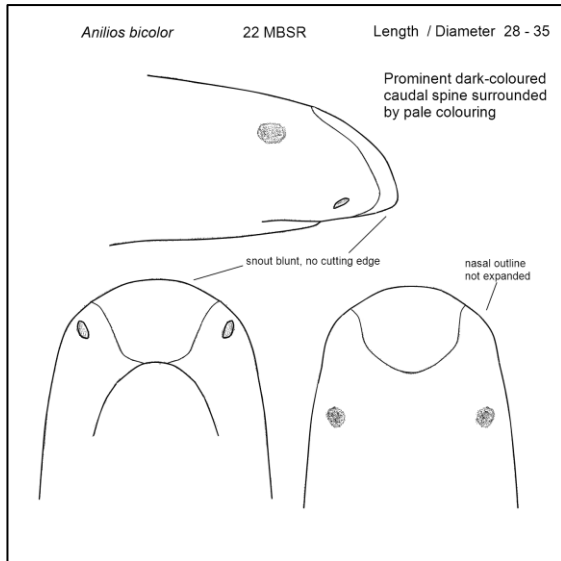
*Anilius grypus*

**5a.** Cutting edge (blue) on rostral scale (R) only

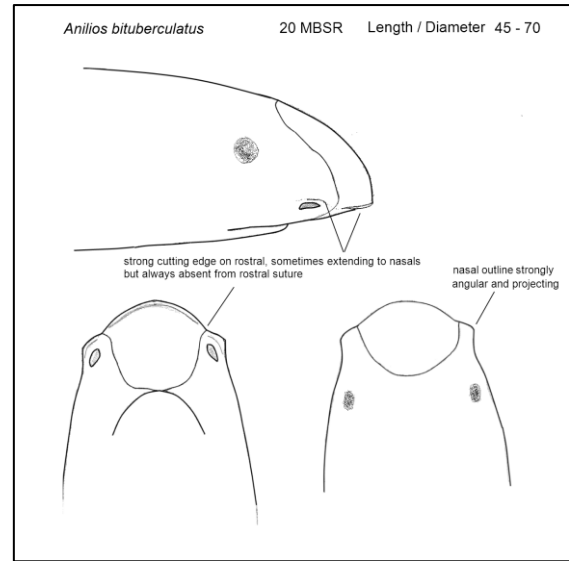


*Anilius centralis*

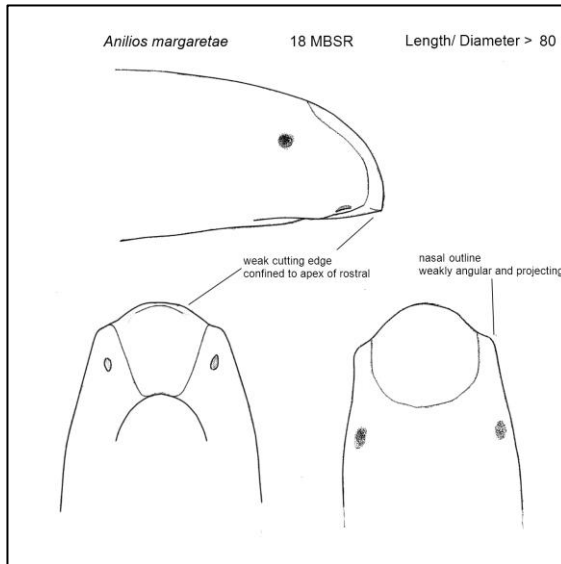
**5b.** Cutting edge (blue) on rostral (R) and on adjacent nasal (N) scales



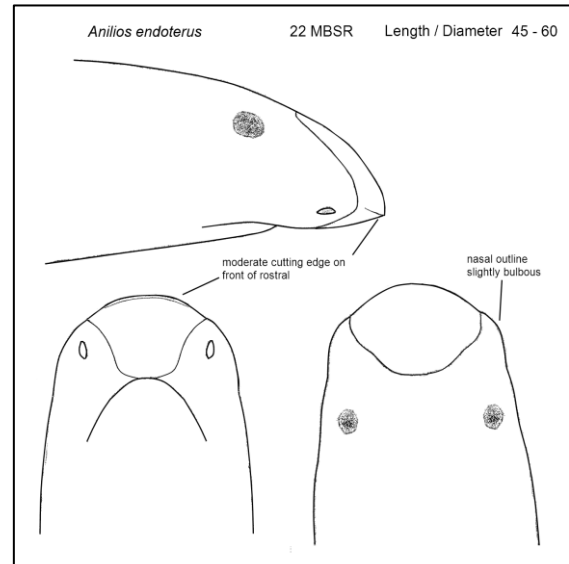
***Anilios bicolor***



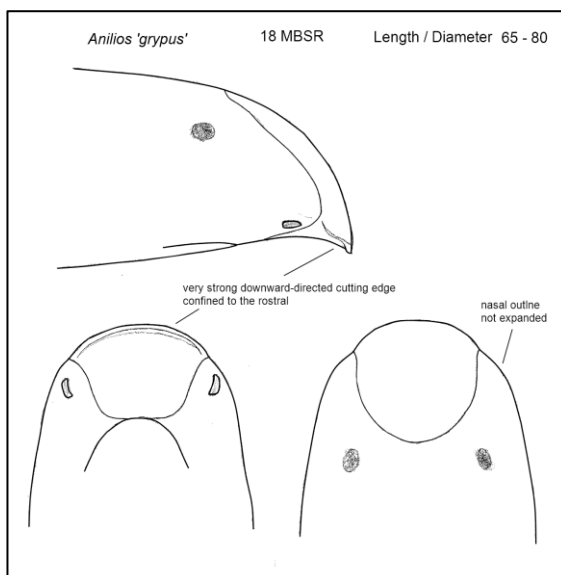
***Anilios bituberculatus***



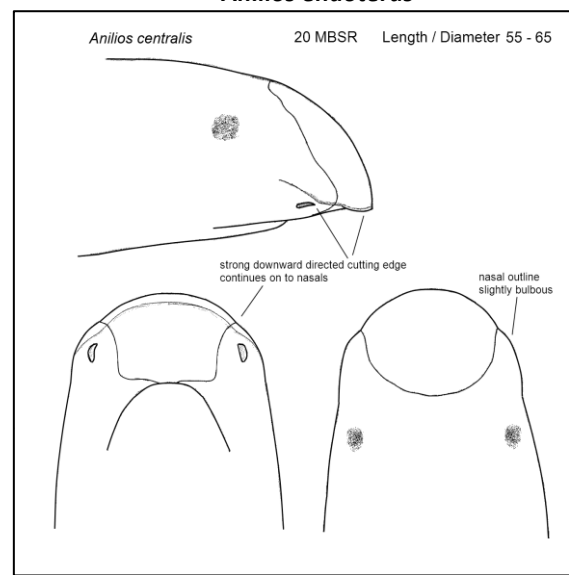
***Anilios margaretae***



***Anilios endoterus***



***Anilios grypus***



***Anilios centralis***