

## Sub-adult Blotched Forest Skink *Sphenomorphus praesignus* at Fraser's Hill, Peninsular Malaysia

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**Photograph by:** Dickson Ng.

**Subject identified by:** Kelvin Lim.

**Location:** Fraser's Hill, Pahang, Peninsular Malaysia.

**Elevation:** 1300 metres.

**Habitat:** Lower montane forest.

**Date and time:** 26 March 2016, 18:30 hrs.

**Identity of subject:** Blotched Forest Skink, *Sphenomorphus praesignus* (Reptilia: Squamata: Scincidae).

**Description of record:** A *Sphenomorphus praesignus*, with an estimated snout-vent length of 8 cm, was observed perching on the trunk of a tree 75 cm from the ground (Fig. 1), along a quiet, forest trail. It stayed immobile for 15 minutes whilst photographs were taken.



Fig. 1.

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**Remarks:** The subject is identified as *Sphenomorphus praesignus* based on the orange-brown colouration of the head, limbs and anterior part of the body (where faint banding is evident), and the presence of black blotches on

the side of the neck and anterior portion of the flanks. The size of the subject, the banded tail, and the intensity of the black blotches on the neck implies a sub-adult (Grismer, 2011: Fig 501).

*Sphenomorphus praesignus* is a well documented, diurnal member of the lizard fauna of Fraser's Hill and similar upland areas of northern Peninsular Malaysia in the states of Perak, Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang (Grismer, 2011). The species is typically secretive, and in the daytime is most often glimpsed at the entrance to some hiding place, such as a small, disused burrow or tree crevice. It is unusual to see the species by day clinging to tree trunks, although it has been seen at night, again at Fraser's Hill, resting some metres from the ground on the trunk of a large tree (N. Baker, pers. comm.).

**References:** Grismer, L. L. (2011). *Lizards of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, and their Adjacent Archipelagos. Their Description, Distribution, and Natural History*. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main. 728 pp.