

ON A SUPPOSED SKIN IMPRESSION OF *PROCOLOPHON*

by

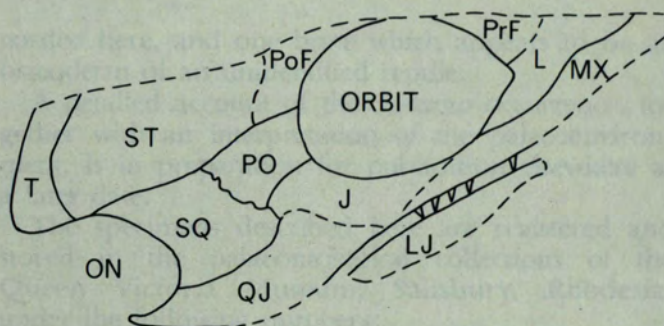
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Van Heerden (1974) described and figured what he took to be an impression of the skin of *Procolophon* found with a typical assemblage of natural moulds of that animal. The stereophotographs in his Plate 4 seemed, however, to show sutures and the impressions of a few tiny sharp pointed teeth. Examination of the original shows that this is indeed the case. The accompanying explanatory sketch (fig. 1), which may be read in conjunction with Van Heerden's published photographs, shows that the pattern of dermal bones is typically amphibian and quite unlike that of *Procolophon*, as too are the teeth. The conclusion is reached that the specimen (QR 1597) shows normal bones of the skull and is not a skin impression.

In the collection of the Bernard Price Institute there are at least three small skulls pertaining to an as yet undescribed amphibian, which have been collected in association with *Procolophon* (B.P.I. Nos 1366, 2507, 2510). It was possible to split some of the extremely hard matrix off 2507, and after removing adhering bone with dilute HCl an impression was obtained identical to that attributed by Van Heerden to *Procolophon*.

The purpose of this note is simply to dispel the illusion of the existence of a piece of *Procolophon* skin, which, had it existed, would have held important implications.

I thank Jacques van Heerden for the loan of the specimen.



1 cm

Figure 1.

REFERENCE

- VAN HEERDEN, J. (1974). A short note on some natural casts of the cotylosaurian reptile *Procolophon*. *Navors. nas. Mus. Bloemfontein* 2(12), 417-428.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

J	jugal
L	lachrymal
LJ	lower jaw
MX	maxilla
ON	otic notch
PoF	postfrontal
PrF	prefrontal
PO	postorbital
QJ	quadratojugal
SQ	squamosal
ST	supratemporal
T	tabular