Abstract

The record of Gondwanan Mesozoic lizards is very poor. Among the few species described for this region there is Tijubina pontei, an Early Cretaceous lizard from the Crato Formation (late Aptian) of northeast Brazil. Its description is very brief and lacks most of its diagnostic characters and clear delimitation from other lizard species. Here, a full redescription of the holotype is provided. T. pontei is demonstrated to be a valid species and a new diagnosis is provided with reference to Olindalacerta brasiliensis, a contemporary species of the Crato Formation. It lacks the posteroventral and posterodorsal processes of the dentary; the tibial/fibular length equals the femoral length and its posterior dentary teeth are robust, cylindrically based, unsculptured and bear no cuspids. The systematic position of T. pontei still needs further clarification, but preliminary analyses indicate that it lies in a rather basal position among the Squamata, similarly to O. brasiliensis.

Keywords

Brazil, Crato Formation, fossil lizard, Lower Cretaceous, Tijubina pontei.