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Dorsal surface of Rhinopis drummond-hayi from Namumukula, Sri Lanka. The smoothly iridescent scales of the burrowing uropeltid snakes have a wide, freely overlapping surface formed of a β-keratin grid. Its regular ridges near 2500 angstroms apparently reduce its free surface energy, keep dirt from sticking to the surface, and keep friction low. Consequently these animals may move along their soil tunnels with minimum effort (about × 70). See page 1348 [C. Gans and D. Baic, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor]
Editor's Summary

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