

NOTAS

NEW LOCALITY RECORD OF *PSOMOPHIS GENIMACULATUS* (SQUAMATA, DIPSADIDAE) IN ARGENTINA

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RESUMEN: Se presenta un nuevo registro de *Psomophis genimaculatus* (Boettger, 1885). Esta serpiente está categorizada como insuficientemente conocida en Argentina. Se colectó un espécimen en Campo Largo, Provincia de Chaco, Argentina, cubriendo un vacío en el área de distribución de la especie entre los puntos extremos de su rango de distribución en Argentina.

ABSTRACT. A new locality record of *Psomophis genimaculatus* is presented. This snake is categorized as data deficient in Argentina. One specimen was found in Campo Largo, Chaco Province, Argentina and it covers a gap in the species distribution area between the extreme range points in this country; begin the southwestern most record of the species.

Palabras Claves: Distribución, Registro, *Psomophis genimaculatus*, Dipsadidae, Campo Largo, Chaco.

Key Words: Distribution, Record, *Psomophis genimaculatus*, Dipsadidae, Campo Largo, Chaco.

The South American genus *Psomophis* comprises three species, *P. joberti* (Sauvage, 1884), *P. obtusus* (Cope, 1863) and *P. genimaculatus* (Boettger, 1885). The last two are present in Argentina (Scrocchi and Giraudo, 1997; Giraudo and Scrocchi, 2002).

Scrocchi and Giraudo (1997) noted that *Psomophis* species situation was confusing in herpetological literature since its creation, both from the point of view taxonomic as the concerning its geographical distribution. In this way the gender first included species that at some point belonged to the genera *Liophis* and *Rhadinaea* or were treated as insertae sedis (Dixon, 1980), remains its geographical distribution also controversial. Thus, while first Argentinean snakes lists (Koslowky, 1898; Serié, 1936; Abalos and Mischis, 1975) the two aforementioned species appear cited to the country, were subsequently excluded by Williams and Francini (1991). However other authors as Cei (1993) and Vuotto (1995) cited only to *P. obtusus*.

Due to this situation Scrocchi and Giraudo (1997) revised material from Argentina and neighbouring countries, analyzing its distribution and external morphological characters.

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These authors referred five specimens of *P. genimaculatus* from the “Chaco” phytogeographic region of northern parts of Argentina. Three of these specimens from the East of Salta province are deposited in the Herpetological Collection of the Miguel Lillo Institute (FML 02614, 02613, 02674). Another one, collected in the western part of the Formosa province, is deposited in the Herpetological Collection of the Universidad Nacional del Nordeste (UNNEC 04938). The fifth specimen is labeled with “Corrientes” without further data, and stored in the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales “Bernardino Rivadavia” (MACN s/n). The authors suppose that this information probably corresponds to Corrientes city, the capital of the province.

Lions and Alvarez (1997) published the first record of *P. genimaculatus* from the Formosa Natural Reserve, Bermejo Department belonging to the western “Chaco” phytogeographic region (Cabrera, 1976).

Recently Nenda (2007) found a further specimen of *P. genimaculatus* (MACN 38836) in Comandancia Frias, General Güemes Department, in the northwestern part of Chaco province.

Summarizing, there are few records of *P. genimaculatus* in Argentina, therefore its conservation status in this country remains data deficient (Scrocchi *et al.*, 2000).

Here we present a new locality record of *P. genimaculatus* from Chaco province.

It is based on a single female juvenile specimen; which was collected in Campo Largo (26°45'18"S, 60°43'37"W), Independencia Department, on December 29th, 2005 by Jose Luis Acosta and Cinthia Calamante.

This specimen, presents snout vent length (SVL) 147,5 mm and tail 33,35 mm length and is now deposited in the Herpetological Collection of the Universidad Nacional del Nordeste (UNNEC-08644) (Fig.1).



Fig. 1: *Psomophis genimaculatus*. Campo Largo, Chaco (UNNEC-08644). Photograph by Victor Zaracho.

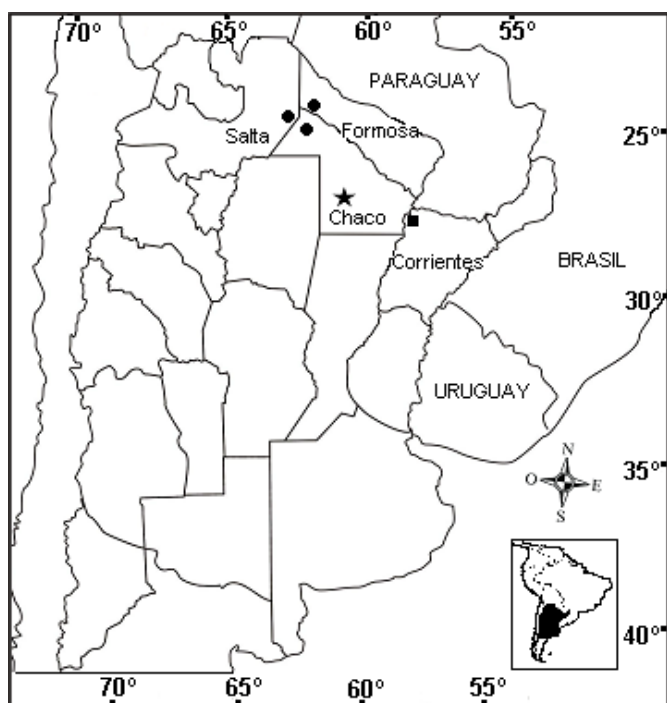


Fig. 2: Geográfica distribución de *Psomophis genimaculatus* en Argentina basada en Girauo and Scrocchi (1997), Lions and Alvarez (1997) and Nenda (2007). The black square indicates the probable location of Corrientes. The star indicates the new record from Campo Largo, Chaco province.

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The individual was caught under a tree trunk on a hot and cloudy morning time. Temperature was 28.2°C, and there was a heavy rain before. The habitat was a xerophytic dry forest, seriously affected by deforestation (due to agricultural use), and belongs to the transitional zone between the semi-arid western and the wet eastern Chaco province (Cabrera, 1976).

This record extends the known distribution range of the *P. genimaculatus* about 280km to the southeast (compared to the specimen found in Comandancia Frias; Nenda, 2007) and about 200 km to the west (Corrientes; Scrocchi and Girauo, 1997) filling a gap in the distribution of the species (Fig. 2)

This recently found specimen of *P. genimaculatus* shows typical scale patterns (Myers and Cadle, 1994): 17-17-15 dorsal rows; 1 loreal; 1 preocular; 2 postoculars; 1-2 temporals, 8 supralabials; 4th and 5th touching eye; 10 infralabials; 198 ventrals; a divided anal scale; and 57 subcaudals.

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