

Dipsas articulata (COPE, 1868) in Nicaragua

During a herpetofaunal survey (24 April - 10 May 2001) at Refugio Bartola (10°58.37'N, 84°20.35'W; 30 m a.s.l.; ca. 50 airline km WSW San Carlos) in SE Nicaragua, 70 species of amphibians and reptiles were documented. On 30 April 2001 at approximately 9:45 pm at trail marker "Blue 10" an adult male of *Dipsas articulata* (COPE, 1868) was encountered coiled up on a tree trunk partly covered by a vine about 1.5 m above the ground in tall primary forest. This represents the first country record of this species in Nicaragua. The closest known locality for this species is in Costa Rica at Rio Jimenez, Limon Province (Jay SAVAGE in litt. 8 June, 2001), about 105 airline kilometres SSW.

The specimen (figs. 1, 2) was deposited in the collection of the Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Germany (SMF 81010). It is an adult male as indicated by its everted hemipenes; snout-vent length 460 mm, tail length 220 mm; 201

ventrals; 119 subcaudals; nasal divided; loreal single; no preocular; 3 (right) - 2 (left) postoculars; 1 subocular (below postoculars); 3 primary, 3 secondary, and 4 tertiary temporals; 10 supralabials (4th supralabial reduced on left side), 5th and 6th supralabials in contact with eye; 11 (right) - 12 (left) infralabials, first pair in contact behind mental, 4 (right) - 5 (left) infralabials in contact with first pair of chin shields; no mental groove, 3 pairs of chin shields; dorsals smooth in 15-15-15 rows, scales in vertebral row slightly enlarged relative to paravertebrals; anal plate entire (terminology for scalation characters follows PETERS 1960). The coloration in life (capitalized names of colours and colour codes [the latter in parentheses] are those of SMITHE 1975-1981) was recorded as follows: Dorsal and lateral surfaces of body and tail dirty white with Sepia (119) dark bands (17 bands on body, 13 bands on tail) and with medial Cinnamon (123A) longitudinal stripes between dark bands; nuchal region Yellow-Ocher (123C); ventral surfaces of body and tail dirty white with a shade of Pale Horn colour (92); iris Warm Sepia (221A).



Fig. 1: *Dipsas articulata* (SMF 81010) from Bartola, Nicaragua.

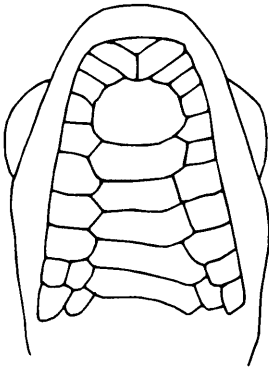


Fig. 2: *Dipsas articulata* (SMF 81010). Ventral head (unpaired chin shields shaded).

Jay SAVAGE (in litt. 8 June, 2001) informed us that he had received from Jaime VILLA a specimen of *D. articulata* that supposedly had been collected in Nicaragua. VILLA had exact locality data of this snake but he never provided this information. The specimen was later sent to Los Angeles County Museum (Los Angeles, California) by SAVAGE. As presently understood, two species of *Dipsas*, *D. articulata* and *D. bicolor* (GÜNTHER, 1895) occur in southeastern Nicaragua which is the only instance of documented overlapping geographic distributions in species of *Dipsas* in Central America (PETERS 1960).

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REFERENCES: PETERS, J. A. (1960): The snakes of the subfamily Dipsadinae.- Misc. Publ. Mus. Zool. Univ. Michigan, Ann Arbor; 114: 1-224. SMITHE, F. B. (1975-1981): Naturalist's colour Guide. Part 1. colour Guide. 182 colour swatches. New York (American Museum of Natural History), pp. 23.

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Notes on *Phyllobates lugubris* O. SCHMIDT, 1857 in Nicaragua

Phyllobates lugubris O. SCHMIDT, 1857 is distributed from extreme SE Nicaragua to W Panama (SIVERSTONE 1976; CALDWELL 1994). Its occurrence in Nicaragua was mentioned by CALDWELL (1994), a reference overlooked by KOEHLER (1999). During a herpetofaunal survey (24 April - 10 May 2001) at Refugio Bartola (10° 58.37'N, 84°20.35'W; 30 m a.s.l.; ca. 50 airline km WSW San Carlos) in SE Nicaragua, *P. lugubris* was documented (fig. 1).

Individuals of this frog were located along a small rainforest stream in tall primary forest at the Refugio, in a gully cut by the stream in otherwise fairly level terrain. The forest is typical lowland Caribbean rainforest with about 4 m of annual precipitation, and is minimally disturbed. The uneven canopy is around 30 - 40 m tall, with emergent trees to nearly 50 m. The vegetation is uniformly dense to the canopy, but reasonably open at ground level and with high plant species diversity; the estimated floral diversity of the two square kilometres of the Refugio is about 1,100 species, with lianas, epiphytes and subcanopy palms well represented. The subdominant canopy tree *Dipteryx panamensis* is more common here than is *Pentaclethra*, the reverse of their abundances at the La Selva Station in Costa Rica, some 70 km SSW (MCDADE et al. 1994).

At trail marker "Red-dot 18" five calling males were located in a 27 m stretch of the stream, here 1 - 2 m wide, and these were quite regularly spaced at 5.5, 6, 5.5 and 10 m intervals. Calling locations were on the banks, and averaged 1.3 m from the edge of the stream (range 0.7 - 2 m) and 0.5 m above stream level (range 0.23 - 0.9 m). Males were heard subsequently calling at this location over several days, at all hours of the day, and also at other streamside locations (e.g., Red-dot 12, Orange 15). Apparently the frog is reasonably common in the narrow gully bottoms along small streams throughout the forest. Both males captured carried tadpoles, one a single large tadpole and the other many small tadpoles. Calling frogs were located 4 May 2001 shortly after rain

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