

SMITH 1943). These snakes could therefore pose a threat to the autochthonous small vertebrate fauna of the islands where they have been introduced. Although it is presently unknown whether *L. capucinus* will colonize undisturbed habitats on these various islands, the potential consequences of the introduction of such exotic predators on island ecosystems should not be underestimated (FRITTS & RODDA 1998).

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Record of the Black-striped Snake, *Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus* (KREFFT, 1864), from Papua, Indonesia

The genus *Rhinoplocephalus* MÜLLER, 1885 contains six species of small to moderately sized elapid snakes found in the coastal and adjacent regions of Australia (COGGER 2002). Two of these, the Carpentaria Snake *Rhinoplocephalus boschmai* (BRONGERSMA & KNAAP-VAN MEEUWEN, 1964) and the Black-striped Snake *Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus* (KREFFT, 1864) also occur in southern New Guinea: The type locality of *R. boschmai* is Merauke in the southeast of the Province of Papua, Indonesia, and this species is suspected to also occur in adjacent parts of Papua New Guinea (O'SHEA 1996), in addition to its more extensive range in eastern Queensland, Australia (COGGER 2002). *Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus*, on the other hand, inhabits the coast and adjacent ranges of northeastern Australia from Cape York Peninsula to southern Queensland and has been collected in southern Papua New Guinea (Western Province: southern Trans-Fly, Orimo River to Bensbach River: O'SHEA 1996), but has so far not been recorded from the Indonesian Province of Papua (DE ROOIJ

1917; DE HAAS 1950; SUPRIATNA 1995; ISKANDAR & COLIJN 2001).

In April and August 1998, two live *R. nigrostriatus* were collected in the vicinity of Merauke, Province of Papua, Indonesia, by native collectors. In their external phenotype, both snakes closely resembled Australian and Papua New Guinean specimens of *R. nigrostriatus* as described and illustrated in the literature (COGGER 2002; O'SHEA 1996). One of the specimens was preserved and deposited in the herpetological collection of the Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main, Germany (SMF 81869). It documents a range extension of approximately 100 km NW from collecting localities in Papua New Guinea (O'SHEA 1996: 213) and represents a new province and country record for Papua and Indonesia, respectively.

Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus is an extremely slender, cylindrical snake with a narrow, flattened head which is only slightly distinct from the neck, and a long tail. The maximum total length of *R. nigrostriatus* is reported to be 615 mm (O'SHEA 1996: 138), and based on their small size and the unavailability of information on their venom and toxins or cases of snakebite, these snakes are believed to be unlikely to effectively envenom humans (O'SHEA 1996), and not considered to belong to the dangerous species in Australia (SUTHERLAND & TIBBALLS 2001).

Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus has been described as being a secretive, nocturnal snake which feeds principally on lizards and is usually found sheltering under logs or ground litter in sclerophyll forests and woodlands (COGGER 2002). Maintained in captivity under a western Javan climate regime, the specimen from Merauke exhibited considerable activity during the day which was reminiscent of that of a diurnal forager. It also rapidly hunted down and swallowed unidentified small skinks during the day, and defended itself by swift strikes when cornered. Under identical conditions, specimens of *R. boschmai* from the same area were strictly nocturnal in agreement with the literature (COGGER 2002), and inoffensive.

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KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Elapidae: *Rhinoplocephalus nigrostriatus*; venomous snakes; geographical distribution; new country record; Merauke, Papua, Indonesia; Papua New Guinea; New Guinea; Australia

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New distributional records of amphibians in the Andes of Ecuador

During herpetological field studies in the Andes of Ecuador, research associates of the Universidad San Francisco de Quito discovered new locations where poorly-known amphibians occurred. Little information is available for Ecuadorian amphibians and the present contribution is part of a series that intends to enhance our knowledge about the amphibians in order to promote their conservation.

Two specimens of *Eleutherodactylus sobetes* LYNCH, 1980 (DFCH- USFQ 0902, 0912) were collected at the Bosque Protector Río Guajalito, km 56 of the road Quito-San Juan-Chiriboga-Las Palmas, province of Pichincha (00°14'S / 78°49'W, 1.900 m, February 2000) by D. F. CISNEROS-HEREDIA and A. LEÓN. These specimens represent vouchers for the second locality of the species (previously known just from the type locality, LYNCH & DUELLMAN 1997), extending its range ca. 15 km to the west. Both specimens were collected near a ravine in an old secondary evergreen low montane forest at

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