



New Locality for Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) in Costa Rica

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The six currently recognized species in the genus *Trimetopon*, which are among the shortest dipsadid snakes, have a collective distribution limited to lower Central America (Köhler 2008; Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Sunyer 2016). To date, one species (*T. pliolepis*) is known from Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama; three (*T. gracile*, *T. simile*, *T. viquezi*) from Costa Rica; and two (*T. barbouri*, *T. slevini*) from Costa Rica and Panama. Among the least studied species of snakes, data on the natural history of these reptiles are scarce or lacking for most species (Solórzano 2004; Herse and Ray 2014).

Barbour’s Pygmy Snakes (*Trimetopon barbouri*) (Fig. 1) are small cryptozoic snakes most frequently encountered in leaf litter at elevations from near sea level to over 1,100 m asl (Derry et al. 2015). Until recently, this species was known only from near the Panama Canal (Myers and Rand 1969; Rand and Myers 1990; Köhler 2008) and one specimen in the Florida Museum of Natural History (FMNH

170151) from the Darién Province in eastern Panama. Ray et al. (2013) reported an individual from far eastern Coclé



Fig. 2. Riparian forest habitat where an adult Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) was found in Palmar Norte, Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Photograph by Jared Moreno Chinchilla.



Fig. 1. An adult Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) from Palmar Norte, Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Photograph by Raby Nuñez Escalante.



Fig. 3. Details of an adult Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) from Palmar Norte, Puntarenas, Costa Rica: (A) Prefrontal scales not fused into a large plate and two light spots on the head; (B) distinctive white markings on the face and a striped body; (C) distinctive yellow venter. Photographs by Raby Nuñez Escalante.

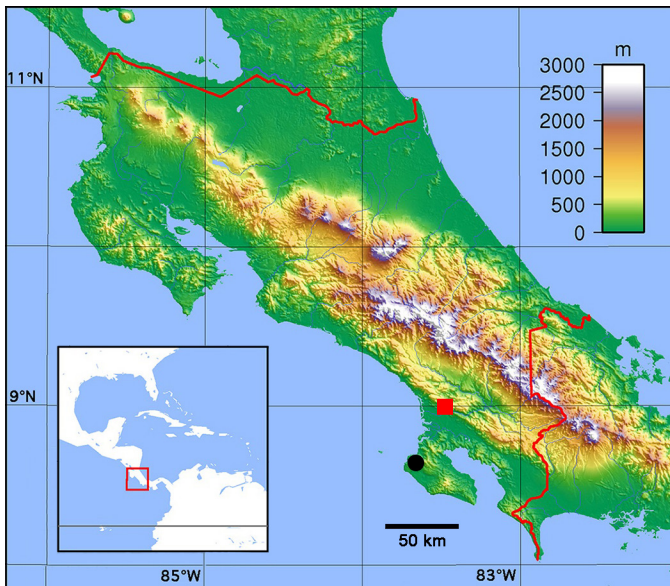


Fig. 4. Map of Costa Rica showing the only previously known Costa Rican locality for Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) marked with a black dot and the new locality reported herein indicated by a red square.

Province, extending the range to central Coclé Province near Parque Nacional G.D. Omar Torrijos H. The species was considered a Panamanian endemic (Jaramillo et al. 2010), until it was discovered on the Peninsula de Osa of Costa Rica (Gómez et al. 2020). We herein report a further range extension for the species.

At 2100 h on 15 December 2020, we encountered an individual moving on a trail along a large stream in a riparian forest located in Palmar Norte, Puntarenas, Costa Rica (8°58'05.1"N, 83°26'36.7"W; elev. 92 m asl) (Fig. 2). We identified the snake as a Barbour’s Pygmy Snake by the presence of two light marks on the edges of the frontal just posterior to eye level (Fig. 3), two nuchal spots (Fig. 3), a striped body, prefrontals not fused into a single plate (Fig. 4), and a yellow venter (Fig. 5). The specimen was deposited in the Museum of Zoology at the University of Costa Rica (MZUCR 23587). Its identity was confirmed by A. Solórzano.

The first Costa Rican record of *T. barbouri* at Bahía Drake on the Peninsula de Osa extended the range of the species 138 km west from the closest reported locality at Serenity Vista, Chiriquí Province, Panama (Gómez et al. 2020). This record extends the known range of the species by over 40 km straight-line distance from Bahía Drake (Fig. 6).

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