



# First Record of the Collared Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon pliolepis*) from the Peninsula de Osa, Costa Rica

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The genus *Trimetopon* is endemic to lower Central America (Savage 2002; Köhler 2008). With the recent discovery of Barbour’s Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon barbouri*) at Bahía Drake on the Peninsula de Osa (Gómez et al. 2020), all six currently recognized species occur in Costa Rica.

The Collared Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon pliolepis*) (Fig. 1) is a nocturnal semi-fossorial species with the broadest distribution in the genus; it is known to occur from southeastern Nicaragua through Costa Rica to southwestern Panama (Savage 2002; Köhler 2008; Gutiérrez Rodríguez and Sunyer 2016). It is rare in Panama, where it is known from only a few

specimens (S. Lotzkat, pers. comm. in Uetz et al. 2020). In Costa Rica, it is known from isolated locations in the Atlantic Lowlands, the Central Valley, and the Tilarán, Central, and Talamanca Mountain Ranges at elevations from 60–1,550 m asl (Leenders 2019).

At 1831 h on 16 November 2020, LAO encountered a Collared Pygmy Snake on a trail in Rancho Quemado, Puntarenas, Costa Rico (8°41'46.58"N, 83°35'32.36"W; elev. 426 m asl). At first we believed it was a Barbour’s Pygmy Snake, but a closer examination revealed that its prefrontals were fused into a single plate (Fig. 2), a feature



**Fig. 1.** Adult Collared Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon pliolepis*) from Rancho Quemado, Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Photograph by Raby Nuñez Escalante.



**Fig. 2.** Details of an adult Collared Pygmy Snake (*Trimetopon pliolepis*) from Rancho Quemado, Puntarenas, Costa Rica: Yellow collar (left), prefrontals fused into a single plate (center), and white venter (right). Photographs by Raby Nuñez Escalante.

found in Collared Pygmy Snakes, Günther’s Pygmy Snakes (*Trimetopon gracile*), and Dunn’s Pygmy Snakes (*T. simile*), but not in *T. barbouri* (Leenders 2019). Other characteristics that distinguish the Collared Pygmy Snake from its congeners are the distinct yellow collar interrupted middorsally by a dark stripe (Fig. 3) and the white venter (Fig. 4), which is yellow in *T. barbouri*. Photographic vouchers have been deposited at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTADC 9680a–e). The identity of this snake was confirmed by Alejandro Solórzano. To the best of our knowledge, this is only the second species of *Trimetopon* known to occur on the Peninsula de Osa.

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