



# A New Departmental and Elevational Record for the Villavicencio Coralsnake, *Micrurus medemi* Roze 1967 (Squamata: Elapidae), in Colombia

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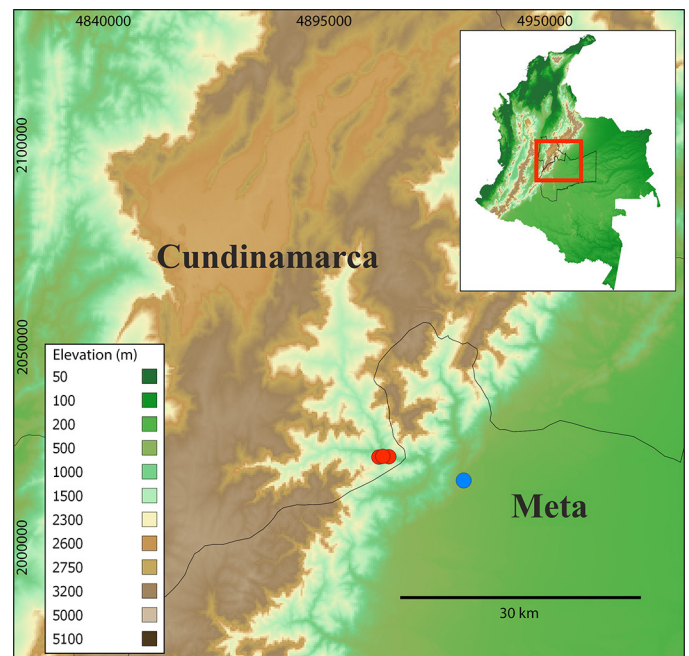
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The Villavicencio Coralsnake (*Micrurus medemi*) is a Colombian endemic with a distribution centered around the type locality at Villavicencio, Meta, Colombia, at elevations of 400–1,400 m asl (Bolívar 2019; Caicedo and Lynch 2015). These semifossorial snakes are associated with surface litter in low montane forest (Campbell and Lamar 2004), where they are known to feed on South American Coffeesnakes (*Ninia atrata*) (Roze 1996) and probably prey on a variety of small reptiles (Campbell and Lamar 2004). Little else is known about natural history. That lack of knowledge and a very limited distribution resulted in classification as Endangered (EN) in the Colombian Red Book of Reptiles (Morales-Betancourt et al. 2015) and as Critically Endangered (CR) on the IUCN Red List (Calderon et al. 2019). Herein we provide the first accurate records for the Department of Cundinamarca (Colombia) (Fig. 1) and a new elevational record for the species.

We found the first individual (Fig. 2A) on 30 May 2021 in the village of Conucos, Municipality of Guayabetal, Cundinamarca (4.20258°N, -73.82421°W) at an elevation of 1,577 m asl where cattle graze in an area dominated by grasses (Poaceae and Cyperaceae). We encountered a second individual (Fig. 2B) on 18 June 2021 in leaf litter in a forest in the village of Chirajara Baja, Municipality of Guayabetal, Cundinamarca (4.20335°N, -73.80157°W) at an elevation of 1,322 m asl. Both were recorded during visual encounter surveys (VES) (Crump and Scott 1994) and documented only with photographs. Photographic vouchers have been deposited in the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM VZP 1043–4). We recorded a third individual (Fig. 2C) on 16 November 2021 near a rural dwelling in the village

of San Antonio, Municipality of Guayabetal, Cundinamarca (4.204213°N, -73.815228°W) at an elevation of 1,187 m asl. The latter individual was delivered alive to the National Institute of Health (INSV-SR-OO286). The identity of all three snakes was confirmed by Dr. Santiago Ayerbe-González (Herpetological and Toxinological Research Group [GIHT], University of Cauca, Popayán, Cauca, Colombia).



**Fig. 1.** Map of central Colombia showing documented localities for the Villavicencio Coralsnake (*Micrurus medemi*). The type locality at Villavicencio, Meta, Colombia, is indicated by the blue dot and our new records in Guayabetal, Cundinamarca, Colombia, are marked by red dots.



**Fig. 2.** Villavicencio Coralsnakes (*Micrurus medemi*) from Conucos (A), Chirajara Baja (B), and San Antonio (C), Guayabetal, Cundinamarca, Colombia. Photographs by Didier Antonio Mancera-García.

These three individuals are new departmental records for Cundinamarca and the first snake extends the known elevational range for the species to 1,577 m asl.

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