



First Record of the Cerro Petlalcala Montane Pitviper (*Cerrophidion petlalcalensis*) in the State of Puebla, México

Rafael Peralta-Hernández

Instituto de Geología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Ciudad Universitaria, Coyoacán, México, D.F., México (phrafa4@gmail.com)

The five currently recognized species in the genus *Cerrophidion* are distributed across high elevation areas from central Veracruz in Mexico to western Panama (Schramer et al. 2018). Three of the five species occur in Mexico, Godman's Montane Pitviper (*C. godmani*) in Oaxaca and Chiapas (Schramer et al. 2018), the Tzotzil Montane Pitviper (*C. tzotzilorum*) restricted to Chiapas (Jadin 2007), and the Cerro Petlalcala Montane Pitviper (*C. petlalcalensis*), which has the northernmost distribution of any species of the genus and is found in the states of Veracruz and Oaxaca (De La Torre-Loranca et al. 2019).

The original description of *Cerrophidion petlalcalensis* was based on five specimens from Cerro de Petlalcala, Veracruz (López-Luna et al. 1999), and its presence has recently been confirmed at five additional localities in the state (De La Torre-Loranca et al. 2019; Peralta-Hernández and Castillo-Juárez 2021) and two sites in Oaxaca (De La Torre Loranca et al. 2019; García-Padilla et al. 2024). These new records indicate that this species occurs in montane cloud and pine-oak forests at elevations of 1,317–2,500 m asl.



Figure 1. A Cerro Petlalcala Montane Pitviper (*Cerrophidion petlalcalensis*) from Ahuatla, Coyomeapan Municipality, Puebla, México. Photograph by Rafael Peralta-Hernández.

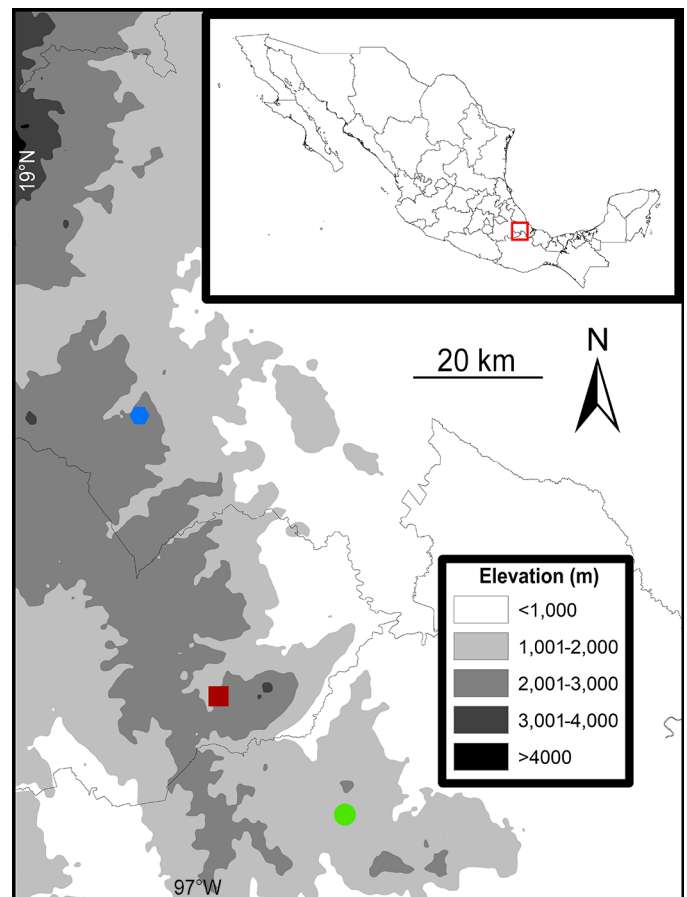


Figure 2. Map showing the new locality for the Cerro Petlalcala Montane Pitviper (*Cerrophidion petlalcalensis*) in Puebla (red square) and the nearest known localities in Oaxaca (green dot) and Veracruz (blue dot), México.

At 1200 h on 19 March 2024, I encountered a *C. petlalcalensis* (Fig. 1) basking in a rocky area along a road in Ahuatla, Coyomeapan Municipality, Puebla, México (18.296542, -96.970168; elev. 2,194 m asl). Vegetation at the site corresponded to pine-oak forest and was relatively well preserved, albeit with some evidence of recent logging.

The identity of the snake was verified by Neftalí Camacho before submitting a photographic voucher to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM PC 3080).

This record fills a gap of 66.1 km between the two closest known localities, Xibtla, Atlahuilco Municipality, Veracruz, and San Andrés Hidalgo, Huautla de Jiménez Municipality, Oaxaca (De La Torre-Loranca et al. 2019; Fig. 2). In addition, this record increases the number of reptilian species in Puebla to 184, 179 of which are squamates (Woolrich-Piña et al. 2017; Canseco-Márquez et al. 2018; Nieto-Montes de Oca et al. 2018; De la Torre-Loranca et al. 2020; Bernal et al. 2022; Contreras-Calvario et al. 2022). It also is the only species in the genus *Cerrophidion* that occurs in the state.

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