



# Two New Prey Items for Baird's Patch-nosed Snake (*Salvadora bairdi* Jan 1860), in West-central Puebla, Mexico

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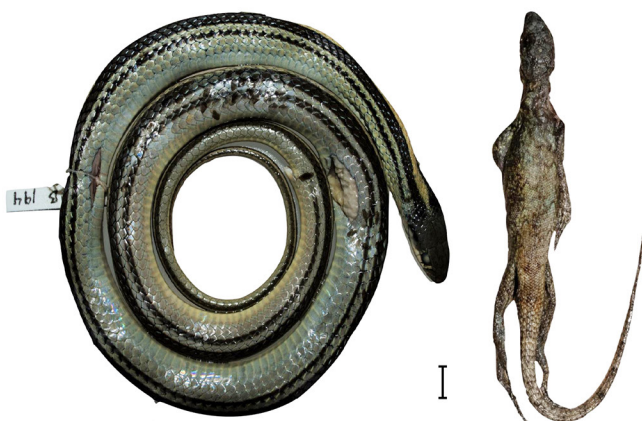
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Baird's Patch-nosed Snake (*Salvadora bairdi*), a colubrid snake native to north-central Mexico (Hernández-Jiménez et al. 2021), is found along the Sierra Madre Occidental and the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt at elevations of 1,500–3,200 m asl, where it occurs in a variety of habitats, including temperate zones dominated by pine forests, subalpine grasslands, and semi-arid regions with xerophilous forests (Heimes 2016). Diurnally active, *S. bairdi* is an active generalist predator (Lemos-Espinal and Dixon 2013) with a diet that consists primarily of lizards, snakes, and small mammals (Setser et al. 2009; Carbajal-Márquez et al. 2014; Heimes 2016).

At 1431 h on 21 August 2022, we captured an adult female *Salvadora bairdi* (MZFC37313; SVL = 57 cm, TL = 19.5 cm, weight = 48 g) (Fig. 1) in a pine-dominated area in

San Pedro Cholula, Puebla, Mexico (19.06328, -98.34018; 2,293 m asl). When captured, the snake had a distinct bulge at mid body. When preparing the specimen, we examined its stomach contents and found an adult Graphic Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus grammicus*) (MZFC37314, SVL = 14 cm; weight = 7 g) (Fig. 1), equal to 24% of the snake's length and 14.5% of its weight.

At 1637 h later that same day, we captured a subadult male *Salvadora bairdi* (MZFC37315; SVL = 23.1 cm, TL = 7.9 cm; weight = 4 g) (Fig. 2) near the location where AYCB 194 was found (19.06662, -98.33771; 2,246 m asl). When preparing the specimen, we found a partially digested Eastern Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis gularis*) in the snake's stomach. We were unable to relate the dimensions of the prey with those of the snake due to its condition (Fig. 2).



**Figure 1.** An adult female Baird's Patch-nosed Snake (*Salvadora bairdi*) (MZFC37313 (left); a Graphic Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus grammicus*) (MZFC37314) found in the stomach of the snake (right). Scale bar = 1 cm. Photographs by Luis Fernando Hidalgo Licona.



**Figure 2.** A juvenile male Baird's Patch-nosed Snake (*Salvadora bairdi*) (MZFC37315) (left); an Eastern Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis gularis*) found in the stomach of the snake (right). Scale bar = 1 cm. Photographs by Luis Fernando Hidalgo Licona.

Four species of *Salvadora* (*S. grahamiae*, *S. deserticola*, *S. mexicana* and *S. lineata*) are known to feed on lizards in the genera *Sceloporus* (*S. scalaris*, *S. melanogaster*, and *S. jalapae*) and *Aspidoscelis* (*A. gularis*, *A. exsanguis*, *A. marmoratus*, and *A. tessellatus*) (Ramírez-Bautista et al. 2000; Lemos-Espinal and Dixon 2013; Heimes 2016; Buford et al. 2018; Bañuelo-Alamillo et al. 2019; Cruz et al. 2019). Since *S. bairdi* is diurnally active and exhibits generalist feeding habits, that it takes lizards in these genera is not surprising (de la Torre-Robles et al. 2023). However, given the species' extensive elevational range, further studies are necessary to gain a deeper understanding of its dietary habits and to explore potential geographic variations in its trophic niche.

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