



# First Record of the Glossy Swampsnake (*Liodytes rigida*) from Elmore County, Alabama

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The Glossy Swampsnake, *Liodytes rigida* (Say 1825), is a small, semiaquatic natricine that occurs from southeastern Virginia south to northern Florida and as far west as eastern Texas (Powell et al. 2016). *Liodytes rigida* occurs in a wide variety of wetland habitats throughout its range, including ponds, lakes, swamps, streams, floodplains, canals, and drainage ditches (Enge 1997; Gibbons and Dorcas 2004). The species has also been reported from sandjack oak uplands (Fitch 1949), deciduous woodlands (Ford et al. 1991), and mesic flatwoods (Enge 1997).

In Alabama, *L. rigida* is found throughout the Coastal Plain, Red Hills, and Fall Line Hills, where it is highly secretive and rarely observed (Guyer et al. 2019). Several counties where *L. rigida* occurs or is presumed to occur have limited or absent locality information (GBIF 2023; Fig. 1). Further, most records of *L. rigida* in Alabama are over 40 years old, with more recent records being primarily restricted to the southern part of the state (GBIF 2023; Fig. 1). We herein report the first record of *Liodytes rigida* from Elmore County, Alabama.

At 2140 h on 16 May 2025, AMG encountered a juvenile *L. rigida* (SVL 170 mm; Fig. 2) in Elmore County, Alabama, USA (32.52310, -86.01009), about 14 km north of the nearest voucher specimen in Macon County (AUM 10401), which was collected on 29 June 1968. The snake was in a saltwater-pool skimmer (Fig. 2) following a week of rainy conditions. The temperature was 22.8° C at the time of capture. After taking photographs and collecting a tail tip, the snake was released at a creek near the site of capture. Photographs and tail tip were deposited in the Auburn University Museum of Natural History (AHAP-D 2870) and the identity of the species was verified by David Laurencio and Dr. Daniel A. Warner.

## Acknowledgements

We thank David Laurencio and Dr. Daniel A. Warner for verifying the identity of the species and Dr. Arik M.

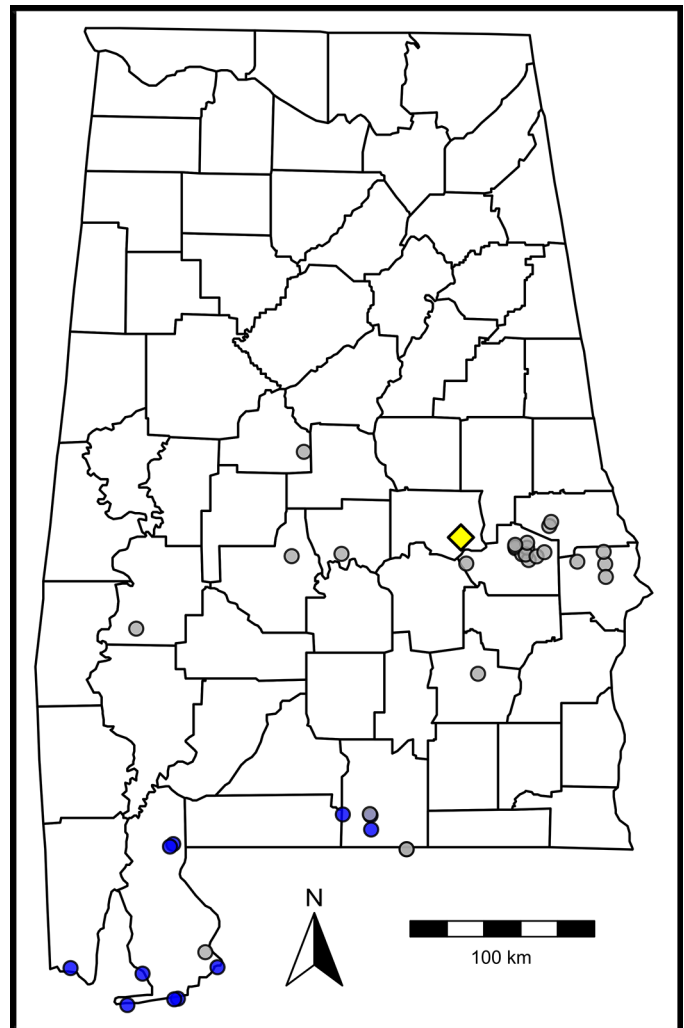


**Figure 1.** Map showing known localities of the Glossy Swampsnake (*Liodytes rigida*) in Alabama. Gray circles indicate records prior to 1985. Blue circles indicate records from 1985 and later. The yellow diamond indicates the location of the observation reported herein. Data sourced from GBIF (2023). Guyer et al. (2019) included three additional records of *L. rigida* from Mobile County that are not depicted here, as those records were likely sourced from a dataset that is not included on GBIF.



**Figure 2.** A juvenile Glossy Swampsnake (*Liodytes rigida*) (left) encountered on 16 May 2025 in Elmore County, Alabama, USA, and the pool skimmer (right) where the snake was found. Photographs by Ava M. Gibson.

Hartmann and Alexander D. McKelvy for providing feedback on our map.

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