

On the osteology of a distinctive specie of the genus *Leptodactylus*: *Leptodactylus laticeps* (Boulenger, 1917) (Anura, Leptodactylidae)

MARÍA LAURA PONSSA.

Instituto de Herpetología. Fundación Miguel Lillo. Miguel Lillo 251. 4000- San Miguel de Tucumán. Argentina. E-mail: mlponssa@arnet.com.ar

Abstract

The osteology of *Leptodactylus laticeps* is described. This species is the most distinctive member of the *pentadactylus* species group, and possibly of the genus *Leptodactylus*, based on external morphology, skin secretions and some aspects of its life history. This paper notes some characters that differ from or were previously overlooked in, description of the *Leptodactylus*. These are: 1) arrangement cotylar type II, 2) sacral diapophyses expanded, 3) nasals contiguous or in contact with frontopriets, and 4) an anterior ramus parasphenoid which can or cannot reach the palatines. Some characters could be useful for species diagnoses and/or phylogenetic studies, such as elongation of the pars facialis of maxilla, maxillary teeth found almost reaching quadratojugal or extending beyond quadratojugal, nasals with posterolateral projections very prominent, nasals almost or in contact with each other; high number of vomerine teeth, tip of palatines not acute, and an alary process of premaxilla which is oriented slightly postero-dorsally.

Key words: *Leptodactylus laticeps*, osteology

Introduction

Leptodactylus laticeps is one of the 64 species of *Leptodactylus* currently recognized (Frost 2004). This species is the most distinctive member of the *pentadactylus* species group based on external morphology (Heyer 1979). It is characterized by a skin pattern that no other member of the group possesses. The dorsum has a warning color, with bright red-black spots on a whitish background. In the preserved specimens, the black squares have cream areas within and are separated by white areas (Heyer 1979). Also skin secretions can provoke allergic reactions, likely due to a high content of histamine derivatives (Ceï 1980), unknown in other species of the *pentadactylus* group. *Leptodactylus laticeps* inhabits the deep holes created by social rodents (*Lagostomus*).