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A new species of lizard genus *Potamites* from Ecuador (Squamata, Gymnophthalmidae)

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Abstract

Potamites flavogularis **sp. nov.** is described from the Napo and Tungurahua Provinces around 1800 m elevation in eastern Ecuador. The new species is closely related, sibling, and sympatric to *Potamites cochranæ* to which it has been previously confused. It is characterized by the absence of isolated basal flounces of spines and presence of calcareous spinules on flounces of the hemipenis, a short (1,30–1,41 times SVL) and slightly compressed tail without tubercles, tympanum slightly recessed, subimbricate ventral scales, lateral body scales lacking conspicuous enlarged tubercles, four longitudinal rows of dorsal tubercles, 6 transverse series of ventral scales, absence of intercalated scales along sides of tail, and absence of tubercles on sides of neck and gular regions. Like their congeners, the new species was found close to vegetation surrounding streams in primary and secondary forests.

Key words: *Potamites*, New species, Gymnophthalmidae, Cercosaurinae, Ecuador

Resumen

Potamites flavogularis **sp. nov.** es descrita de las provincias de Tungurahua y Napo, alrededor de 1800 m de elevación, en las estribaciones orientales del Ecuador. Esta nueva especie se encuentra estrechamente relacionada, emparentada, y en simpatria con *Potamites cochranæ*, con la que ha sido anteriormente confundida. Se caracteriza por la ausencia de bordes basales aislados de espinas y la presencia de espínulas calcáreas en los bordes de los hemipenes, una cola corta (1,30–1,41 SVL) y ligeramente comprimida, sin tubérculos, tímpano ligeramente hundido, escamas ventrales sub-imbricadas, escamas laterales del cuerpo sin tubérculos notables o conspicuos, con cuatro hileras longitudinales de tubérculos dorsales, 6 series transversas de escamas ventrales, ausencia de escamas intercaladas a lo largo de los lados de la cola y ausencia de tubérculos a los lados del cuello y en la región gular. Al igual que sus congéneres, la nueva especie fue encontrada cerca de la vegetación que rodea los arroyos en bosques primarios y secundarios.

Introduction

The genera *Neusticurus* Duméril & Bibron 1839 and *Potamites* Doan & Castoe 2005 are one of the most striking examples of convergence in body form among neotropical lizards. Almost all species are characterized by extremely heterogeneous dorsal scalation consisting of enlarged keeled tubercles intermixed with flat scales or granules. Similarity is still greater because both are semiaquatic, lack basal spines on the hemipenis and tubercles in the tail and for these reasons they were until recently included in the genus *Neusticurus*. In the last revision, two