



A new rock dwelling frog of the genus *Eleutherodactylus* (Amphibia: Leptodactylidae) from Eastern Cuba, with comments on other species with similar habits

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Abstract

A new species of the genus *Eleutherodactylus* (subgenus *Euhyas*) is described from the limestone region at the north slope of the Sierra Maestra, Eastern Cuba. It is a large, rock dwelling species with enlarged digital discs and mottled dorsum. It closely resembles *E. bresslerae*, differing from it by a combination of external characters, chromosome patterns, and vocalization. Comparisons are also made with *E. ricordii*, *E. acmonis*, and some other Cuban members of the genus that share similar habits.

Key words: *Eleutherodactylus*, *Euhyas*, Cuba, new species, rock/cave ecomorph

Introduction

Cuba is inhabited by sixty species of amphibians of which 95% are endemics. The 85% of this anuran fauna are frogs of the giant genus *Eleutherodactylus*. Notwithstanding that the first Cuban amphibian was described 168 years ago, and that monumental contributions were made by Albert Schwartz in the 1950's and early 60's, is still surprising that one quarter of the frog fauna of this island had been described in the last fifteen years by Hedges *et al.* (1992), Estrada *et al.* (1997), Estrada and Alonso (1997), Estrada and Hedges (1996 a, b; 1997 a, b, c; 1998), Díaz *et al.* (2001, 2003, 2005), and Díaz and Fong (2001). The mountains of the eastern region have the highest diversity of amphibians, and most of the recent discoveries are from there. More than half of Cuban frogs and toads have quite limited distributions that, together with the habitat loss, make them much endangered (Hedges and Díaz, 2004).

Cuban rock/cave dwelling frogs of the genus *Eleutherodactylus* are all members of the subgenus *Euhyas* (*sensu* Hedges, 1989) and may be included in two recognized species assemblages (as defined by Schwartz, 1958 a, b): the *E. ricordii* group (*E. blairhedgesi*, *E. bresslerae*, *E. etheridgei*, *E. greyi*, *E. guanahacabibes*, *E. klinikowskii*, *E. zugi erythroproctus*, *E. pezopetrus*, *E. pinarensis*, *E. thomasi*, and *E. tonyi*), and the *E. symingtoni* group (*E. symingtoni* and *E. zeus*). In October of 2003, one specimen of an evidently undescribed frog with petricolous habits was collected in the karstic mountains at the north slope of Sierra Maestra, eastern Cuba. Two years later, more individuals were found, confirming the earlier discovery. The new taxon is described herein, and cytogenetic, morphological, and acoustical comments on other species are also provided.