



## A new species of *Dipsas Laurenti* from the Atlantic Forest of Brazil (Serpentes: Dipsadidae)

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### Abstract

*Dipsas sazimai* **sp. nov.** is described from the Atlantic Forest of Brazil. The new species is distinguished from all congeners by showing anterior portion of body with rounded dorsal blotches wider than interblotches; median and posterior portion of body with blotches higher than long and narrower than interblotches; posterior body blotches lighter than anterior blotches; posterior blotches with conspicuous white edge in paraventral region; tiny and vertically oriented streaks in the interblotches from the posterior half of body; 187–209 ventral scales; 107–129 subcaudal scales; and the first blotch not reaching the rictus. Based on characters of external morphology and color pattern we suggest the new species is related to taxa of the recently proposed *Dipsas incerta* species group.

**Key words:** *Dipsas sazimai* new species; altitudinal variation; *Dipsas incerta* species group; taxonomy

### Resumo

*Dipsas sazimai* **sp. nov.** é descrita da Mata Atlântica do Brasil. A nova espécie é distinta de outras espécies do gênero por apresentar a porção anterior do corpo com manchas dorsais arredondadas mais largas que os intervalos; porção média e principalmente posterior do corpo com manchas mais altas do que largas e mais estreitas que os intervalos; manchas posteriores mais claras que as anteriores, manchas posteriores com os bordos brancos na região paraventral; a partir da metade posterior do corpo intervalos com listras delgadas e orientadas verticalmente; 189–207 ventrais; 107–129 subcaudais; a primeira mancha não alcança região rictal. Baseado em caracteres de morfologia externa e padrão de coloração sugerimos que a nova espécie é relacionada aos táxons do recém proposto grupo de espécies de *Dipsas incerta*.

### Introduction

The snail-eating snake genus *Dipsas* Laurenti, 1768 is currently allocated in the family Dipsadidae (Pinou *et al.*, 2004; Vidal *et al.*, 2007; Hedges *et al.*, 2009). Peters (1960) provided an extensive taxonomic revision of the genus recognizing seven species groups based on color pattern. Peters & Orejas-Miranda (1970) recognized 28 species and presented a key to the genus. After this work, several studies focused on different groups of *Dipsas* (Fernandes *et al.*, 2002; Cadle & Myers, 2003; Passos *et al.*, 2004; Passos *et al.*, 2005) in order to clarify the systematics of this taxonomically complex genus. Recently, Harvey (2008) and Harvey & Embert (2008) presented comprehensive revisions of these snakes with emphasis on South American forms providing, among other results, a diagnosis to the genus based on characters of squamation and hemipenis, a redefinition of Peter's (1960) species groups, and a key to South American taxa.

The genus *Dipsas* is speciose in Central America and mainly in Andean South America (MacCulloch & Lathrop, 2004). Considering taxa occurring in Atlantic Forest of South America, the taxonomic status of some