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LEPTOTYPHLOPS ANTHRACINUS, A NEW BLIND
SNAKE FROM EASTERN ECUADOR

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AMONG the extensive collections of snakes from Ecuador, sent to the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, by William Clarke-McIntyre, are eight specimens of a large, black *Leptotyphlops* which is apparently undescribed. I am indebted to Mrs. Helen T. Gaige for the privilege of describing these specimens. To Dona Heloisa Alberto Torres, director, and Senhor Antenor Leitão de Carvalho, herpetologist, of the Museu Nacional do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, I extend my thanks for permission to examine comparative material of *Leptotyphlops macrolepis* in their institution.

Leptotyphlops anthracinus, new species

HOLOTYPE.—University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, No. 90816; an adult male (?), collected at an elevation of 1800 meters near Baños, in eastern Ecuador, August, 1939, by W. Clarke-McIntyre.

PARATYPES.—Seven specimens as follows: U.M.M.Z. Nos. 92531, 88897, and 92532, same locality as holotype; U.M.M.Z. Nos. 90817, 92533–35, 1100 meters, Abitagua, Río Pastaza Valley, eastern Ecuador.

DIAGNOSIS.—A large, stout *Leptotyphlops* allied to *macro-*

lepis, differing from it principally in having about 45 fewer median dorsal scales and a uniform black coloration.

DESCRIPTION.—Head flattened, 5.6 mm. in width, slightly broader than neck. Total length, 246 mm.; tail, 22 mm.; diameter of body, 6 mm. Scales in 14 rows around the body, 10 rows around the middle of the tail. Median dorsal scales from tip of rostral to caudal spine, 185; median subcaudals, 18, wider than lateral and dorsal caudals; tail terminating in a conical scale provided with a sharp spine. Rostral narrow, slightly constricted at level of nostril, where it measures 1.3 mm. in width, not extending posteriorly to anterior margin of eyes, barely contacting first postrostral scale. Three small subequal median scales following the first postrostral scale, fifth and subsequent median dorsal scales widened. Nasal completely divided, the superior part extending beyond the anterior edge of eye. First labial about two-thirds the height of second, which extends to level of lower margin of eye, its posterior border directly below center of eye. Labio-ocular large, with a posterior projection which is in contact with a temporal scale between the fourth labial and anterior parietal. Supra-oculars nearly in contact with each other behind frontal. Parietals in 2 pairs of about equal size. Lower labials, 5.

Violet black, except for naso-labials and lower half of rostral, which are dark brown, and the first 3 pairs of lower labials, which are yellowish white.

VARIATION.—The scutellation of the head does not vary appreciably within the series except in the relation of the fourth upper labial to the anterior parietal. In the entire series these scales fail to touch on 3 sides of the head (including both sides of the holotype), are so approximate as to be indeterminate on 3 sides, and are in distinct contact on the remaining 10 sides. The maximum length of the suture between the fourth labial and the anterior temporal is about one-half the diameter of the eye. Color variation is negligible. Body scutellation and proportions are summarized in Table I.

In Table I it will be noted that the specimens fall into 2 groups on the basis of dorsal number, subcaudal number, and

relative tail length. It is presumed that these are sexual differences, and that the last 3 specimens with high dorsal and low subcaudal counts and short tails are females. The 2 juveniles in the series are markedly stouter than are the adults. The value of the proportions as differential specific characters will probably prove most reliable in comparisons between series of similar sex and size.

Recently, Dunn¹ described 2 new Colombian *Leptotyphlops* (*dugandi* and *joshuai*), in which the head scutellation is simi-

TABLE I

VARIATION IN *Leptotyphlops anthracinus*

The first 5 specimens are believed to be males; the last 3 females.

U.M.M.Z. Number	Median Dorsals	Sub-caudals	Total Length (mm.)	Total Length Tail Length	Total Length Diameter	Locality
90816	185	18	246	11.2	41.0	Baños, Holo-type
92531	187	19	171	12.7	42.8	Baños
92532	184	17	293	12.2	39.1	Baños
92533	182	17	262	12.2	43.7	Abitagua
92535	184	18	95	14.6	31.7	Abitagua
88897	189	15	233	16.6	42.4	Baños
90817	189	15	280	16.5	37.3	Abitagua
92534	188	15	96	16.0	32.0	Abitagua

lar to that of *macrolepis* and *anthracinus*. The 4 species are compared in Table II. The data presented for *macrolepis* are derived from Dunn's description² of a Colombian specimen; 3 specimens (U.M.M.Z. Nos. 60814, 60815, and 48175) from Caracas and Maracay, Venezuela, and Mamatoca, Colombia, respectively; and 2 specimens in the Museu Nacional do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro (Nos. 385 and 386), from Ipecuhitan Maues, Amazonas, and São Manoel, Rio Cururú, upper Rio Tapajos, Amazonas.

A specimen from Jerico, Colombia, U.M.M.Z. No. 84093, is referred to *joshuai* Dunn. In the original description no men-

¹ Emmett R. Dunn, "A Review of the Colombian Snakes of the Families Tylopidae and Leptotyphlopidae," *Caldasia*, 11(1944): 47-55, 10 figs.

² *Ibid.*

TABLE II
COMPARISON OF SPECIES ALLIED TO *Leptotyphlops macrolepis*

Species	No. Specimens	Median Dorsals	Sub-caudals	$\frac{\text{Total Length}}{\text{Tail Length}}$	$\frac{\text{Total Length}}{\text{Diameter}}$	Coloration
<i>macrolepis</i>	6	230-242	18-21	13.2-16.2	40.4-59.3	7 $\frac{2}{2}$ dorsal rows brown, 5 $\frac{2}{2}$ ventral rows with brown pigment at scale overlap, forming rows of brown spots
<i>anthracinus</i>	8	182-189	15-19	11.2-16.6	31.7-43.7	Uniform black, anterior lower labials light
<i>dugandi</i>	2	172-184	10-12	18.3-29.0	33.0-36.3	7 dark brown dorsal stripes, rostral and nasals white
<i>joshuai</i>	2	185-191	?	10.6-19.1	33.8-38.3	7 $\frac{2}{2}$ dorsal rows black or dark brown, 5 $\frac{2}{2}$ ventral rows white, top of head buff

tion is made of head coloration. The present specimen has the top of the head buff-colored, shading behind the second pair of parietals into the dark brown dorsal.

The uniform black of *anthracinus* is markedly different from the coloration of these other 3 members of the *macrolepis* group, which have the venter white or striped, and the dorsum lighter. *L. macrolepis* is equally distinct from the others in its more numerous median dorsal scales. *L. dugandi* is a very short-tailed species.

