

A NEW DISTRIBUTION RECORD AND PREY ITEM FOR *OXYRHOPUS FITZINGERI* (REPTILIA: DIPSADIDAE) IN AREQUIPA, SOUTHERN PERU

UN NUEVO REGISTRO DE DISTRIBUCIÓN Y PRESA PARA *OXYRHOPUS FITZINGERI* (REPTILIA: DIPSADIDAE) EN AREQUIPA, SUR DE PERÚ

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Fitzinger's False Coral Snake, *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* (Tschudi, 1845) is a nocturnal snake that inhabits semiarid ecosystems (Schmidt & Walker, 1943; Carrillo & Icochea, 1995; Torres-Carbajal et al., 2019) and feeds on lizards and rodents (Guzmán & Flores, 2009). It is classified within the Pseudoboini tribe, Dipsadinae subfamily, family Dipsadidae (Vidal et al., 2010; Grazziotin et al., 2012). Although very little is known about this species, its conservation status is defined as Least Concern in the IUCN Red List (Perez & Quiroz-Rodriguez, 2016). Its current distribution extends from southwestern Ecuador to the Lomas of Atiquipa in Arequipa, southern Peru, and from 10 m to approximately 1830 m elevation (Pazmiño-Otamendi, 2019; Luque-Fernandez & Villegas, 2017; Schmidt & Walker, 1943). *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* has two subspecies, *O. fitzingeri frizzelli* distributed from the north coast of Peru to southwest Ecuador and *O. fitzingeri fitzingeri* distributed along the central coast of Peru (Schmidt & Walker, 1943). Knowledge of this snake's ecology is quite limited, especially in southern Peru, as it is a species that went undetected for a long time. Herein we report a range extension and a new prey item for the species, based on a casual encounter during herpetological surveys. The identification of the individuals followed Schmidt and Walker (1943), Guzmán and Flores (2009) and local herpetologists' expertise. The distribution map (Fig. 1) shows the species occurrences taken from Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) (GBIF, 2020).

An individual *O. fitzingeri* was recorded on 24 December 2019 at 04:00 h in Chaluane, southeast Andaray district, Condesuyos province, Arequipa Department (15.92343° S, 72.90594° W; WGS 84; elev. 1659 m) (Fig. 1). The total length of the individual was approximately 1000 mm. It was found ingesting a lizard in an arid, rocky area (Fig. 2). The snake's sex could not be determined. This is the second report of the species in the Arequipa region and represents the southernmost occurrence in Peru. Furthermore,

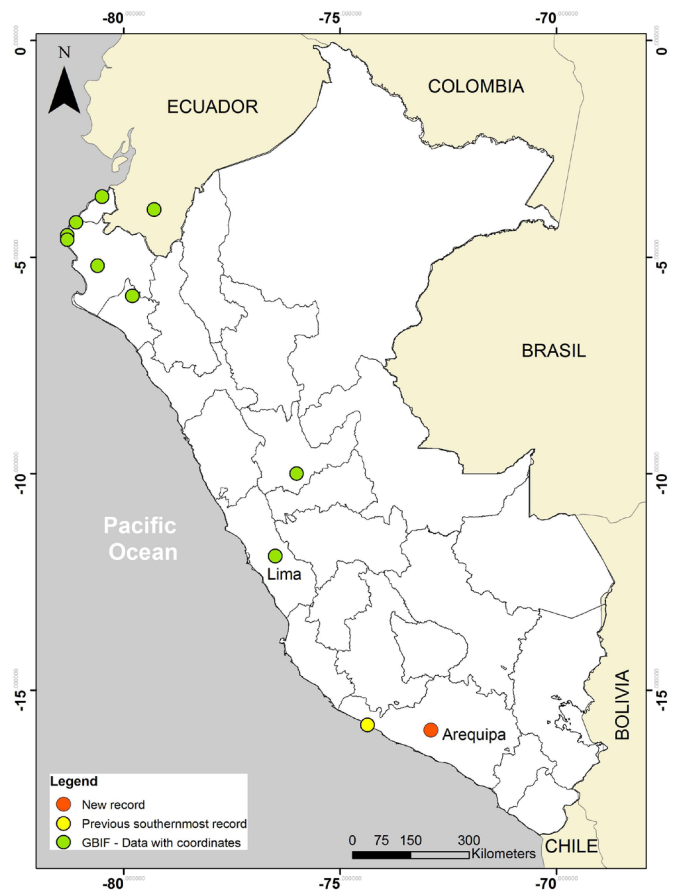


Figure 1. Mapa de ubicación del nuevo registro (punto rojo) de *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* ubicado aproximadamente a 155 km al sureste del registro más meridional previo (punto amarillo) y otros reportes (puntos verdes).

Figure 1. Location map of the new record (red dot) of *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* recorded approximately 155 km to the southeast of the previous southernmost record (yellow dot) and others reports (green dots).



Figura 2. *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* registrado el 24 de diciembre del 2019 alimentándose de un individuo de *Microlophus* sp. usando el método de constricción.

Figure 2. *Oxyrhopus fitzingeri* registered on 24 December 2019 feeding on an individual of *Microlophus* sp. using the constriction method.

the lizard was identified as *Microlophus* sp. (Squamata: Tropiduridae) and was observed being ingested head-first.

This record extends the documented distribution range of *O. fitzingeri* by approximately 155 kilometers to the southeast from the last locality reported by Luque-Fernandez and Villegas (2017). The reported individual is likely to be part of the subspecies *O. f. fitzingeri* due to its proximity to the closest population on the central coast of Peru, though this individual was not identified at the subspecies level. On the other hand, knowledge about the feeding ecology for this species is limited. Guzmán and Flores (2009) report that *O. fitzingeri* feeds on rodents and lizards. Other species of the genus *Oxyrhopus* include lizards from the same family in their diets (see Gaiarsa et al., 2013; Costa et al., 2014). Finally, it is possible that this species occurs in other locations in Arequipa such as coastal hills, the interior of a coastal valley in the region, and other southern regions of Peru.

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