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SECOND RECORD OF THE MOUNTAIN CAECILIAN *GYMNOPIS SYNTREMA* (AMPHIBIA: GYMNOPHIONA: DERMOPHIIDAE) FOR MEXICO IN TRES LAGUNAS, LACANJÁ CHANSAYAB, OCOSINGO, CHIAPAS

SEGUNDO REGISTRO DE LA TAPALCUA *GYMNOPIS SYNTREMA* (AMPHIBIA: GYMNOPHIONA: DERMOPHIIDAE) PARA MÉXICO EN TRES LAGUNAS, LACANJÁ CHANSAYAB, OCOSINGO, CHIAPAS

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Gymnopis syntrema (Cope, 1866) is an amphibian that usually does not exceed 270-300 mm in total length. The head is rather pointed in dorsal view and the posterior end of the body is broadly rounded with practically no tail. Eyes are poorly developed and not obvious, being in life no more than small dark spots. The sensory tentacle is just in front of the eye, and the orbit is covered not only by skin but also by the squamosal bone. The tentacular foremen is located near the center of the maxillary bone. A single

Figura 1. Individuo de *Gymnopis syntrema* encontrado en el Santuario del Cocodrilo, Tres Lagunas, Ocosingo, Chiapas. Foto: Ana Irís Melgar-Martínez.

Figure 1. An individual of *Gymnopis syntrema* found in the Santuario del Cocodrilo, Tres Lagunas, Ocosingo, Chiapas. Photo: Ana Iris Melgar-Martínez.

Figura 2. Vista general del tipo de hábitat y ecosistema en donde *Gymnopis syntrema* fue encontrada en el Santuario del Cocodrilo, Tres Lagunas, Ocosingo, Chiapas. Foto: Eduardo Chankin Chankayum.

Figure 2. A general view of the type of habitat and ecosystem where *Gymnopis syntrema* was found in the Santuario del Cocodrilo, Tres Lagunas, Ocosingo, Chiapas. Photo: Eduardo Chankin Chankayum.

splenial tooth is on each ramus of the lower jaw so that there are two series of teeth (dentary and splenial). Mountain caecilians have 128-132 primary annuli and 63-93 secondary annuli for a total of 193-206. The head and anterior part of the body are usually pink. Posterior to the head is a gradual suffusion of gray pigment that becomes darker over most of the body. The area around the vent is usually pink. In this species, the annular grooves are pale pink or whitish. Some specimens have a mostly gray body with pinkish coloration confined to the lower surface of the head (Campbell, 1998).

The known distribution of *G. syntrema* includes central and eastern Guatemala (Sierra de las Minas), Belize (Maya Mountains), and in the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve, Municipality of Ocosingo, Chiapas, Mexico, from 300 to 1,000 m a.s.l. (Frost, 2023). The first record of the species for Mexico was reported by González-Hernández et al. (2014); they found a single individual in the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve, in the Selva Lacandona region in southeastern Mexico. The specimen was collected in May 2012 in a mature forest at the beginning of the rainy season. In this way, they mention that the known distribution of the species was extended 88 km to the west of its nearest locality in Guatemala (González-Hernández et al., 2014). *Gymnopis syntrema* is a non endemic species to México and its conservation status has been evaluated as Data Deficient (DD) by the IUCN and it is not listed by the Nom 059 of SEMARNAT (2019). By its part the Environmental Vulnerability Score (Johnson et al., 2015) situate it in 16, placing in it in the medium portion of the high vulnerability category.

In this note, we present new scientific evidence of the presence of *G. syntrema* in Mexico. During the excavation process for the construction of a pond for crocodiles in the Environmental Management Unit "Santuario del Cocodrilo Tres Lagunas" (16.842138° N, 91.145472° W; 373 m a.s.l.), AIMM and ECC carried out the discovery of 3 specimens of *G. syntrema*. Verified by David Lazcano. The event took place on August 23, 2022. An additional individual (Fig. 1) was registered in the same area during the monitoring carried out from August 26 to 30, 2023, resulting in a total of 4 individuals. The animals were not sexed or measured and were immediately released after photodocumentation. The surrounding type of vegetation is tropical evergreen forest (Fig.

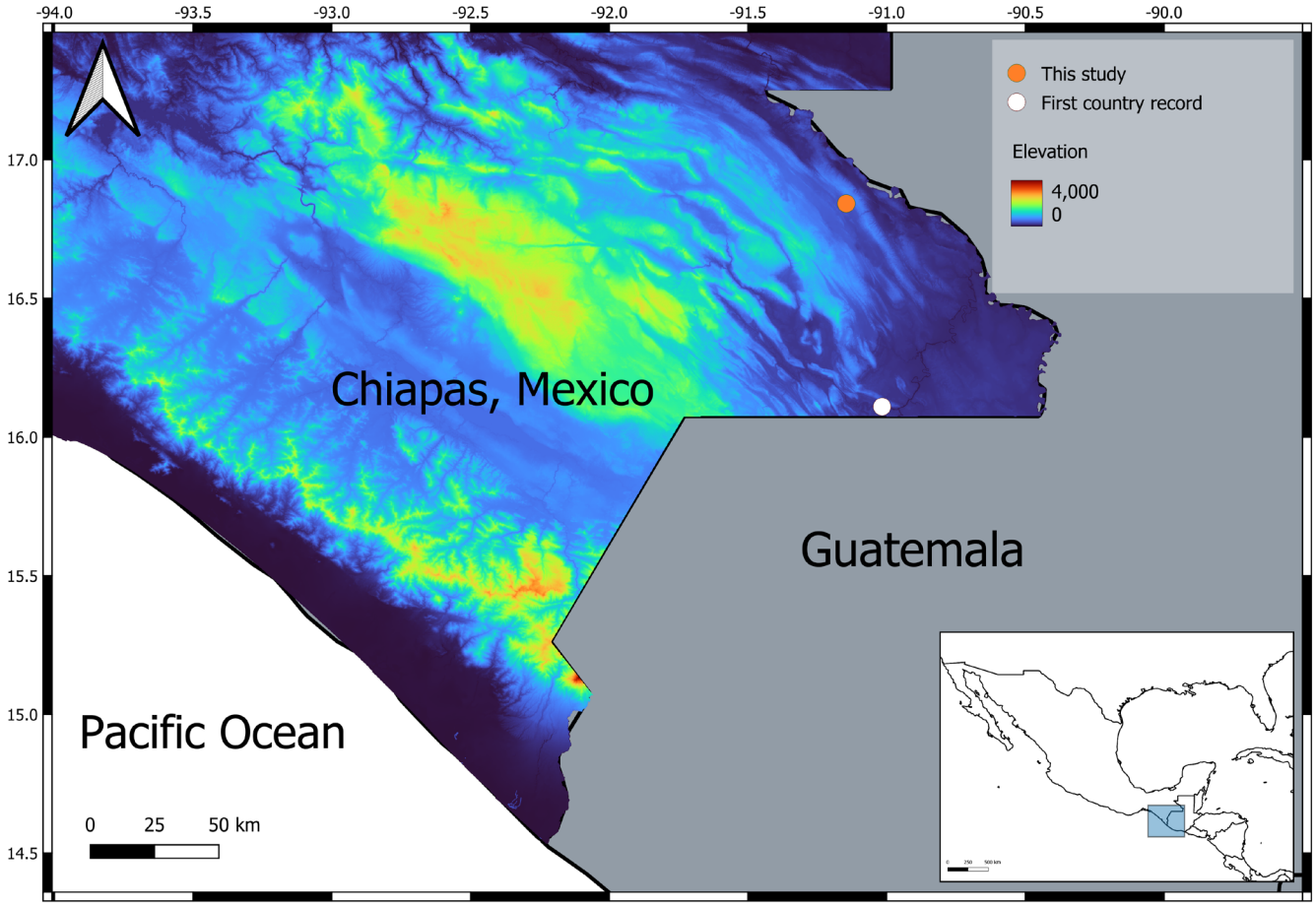

Figure 3. Second record of the Mountain Caecilian *Gymnopis syntrema* for Mexico. **/Figura 3.** Segundo registro de la cecilia de montaña *Gymnopis syntrema* para México.

2). The distance between this new location and the previous one within Mexico (Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve) is 83 kilometers to the north in a straight line. This record represents the second at the country level and confirms the presence of the species in Mexico (Fig. 3).

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