

REPTILIA: SQUAMATA: BOIDAE

EUNECTES DESCHAUENSEEI

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Dirksen, L. and R.W. Henderson. 2002. *Eunectes deschauenseei*.

Eunectes deschauenseei Dunn and Conant
de Schauensee's Anaconda

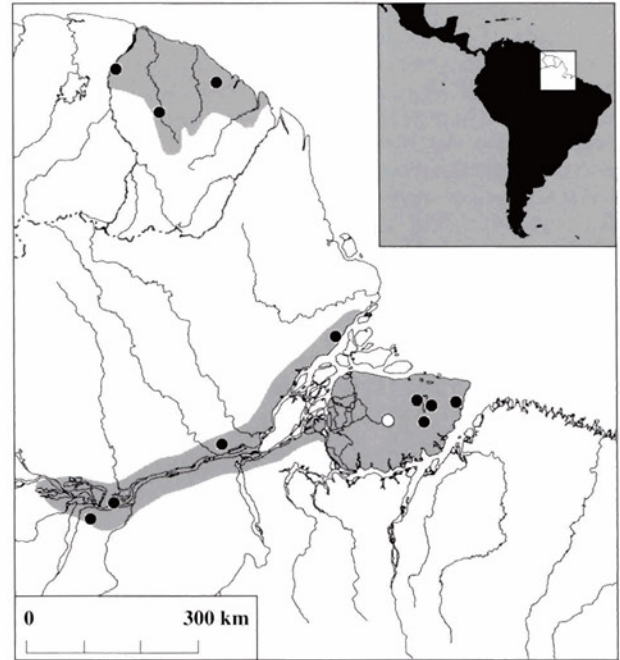
Eunectes deschauenseei Dunn and Conant, 1936: 505. Type locality, "very probably collected on the island of Marajó," Pará, Brasil. Holotype, Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia (ANSP) 20891, female, snout-vent length 2200 mm, collected 6 October 1924 by R.M. de Schauensee (examined by LD).

• **CONTENT.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **DEFINITION AND DIAGNOSIS.** *Eunectes deschauenseei* is a medium-sized, semi-aquatic boid with maximum total length of 1920 mm in males and 3001 mm in females. Dorsal scale



FIGURE 1. *Eunectes deschauenseei* from the area of Santa Cruz do Arari, Ilha de Marajó (photograph by L. Dirksen).



MAP. Distribution of *Eunectes deschauenseei*: the circle is in the approximate center of Ilha de Marajó, the probable type locality. Other known localities are marked with dots.

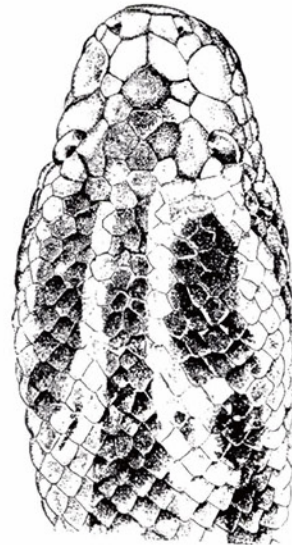


FIGURE 2. Head markings of *Eunectes deschauenseei* (from Müller 1970, used with permission).



FIGURE 3. Holotype of *Eunectes deschauenseei* (ANSP 20891) (photograph by L. Dirksen).

rows at midbody are 43–54 (\bar{x} = 47.3). Ventrals are 214–236 (\bar{x} = 224.3) and subcaudals number 49–62 (\bar{x} = 56.4). Some subcaudals are divided, but usually <25%. Supralabials are 12–16 (usually 13–15) and infralabials are 16–20 (usually 17–19). The rostral is about twice as wide as high. Three nasals surround the nostrils, with the anteriormost in contact. Two regular prenasals are twice as high as wide. The single loreal is the largest head scale. Oculars number 5–8 (1 supraocular, 1 preocular, 1–3 suboculars, and 2–4 postoculars). The other large dorsal head scales are irregular in size and number and may be fused. Five to six scales of approximately equal size surround the frontal. The anal plate (= cloacal scute) is undivided. All scales are smooth. Cloacal spurs are smaller in females than in males.

The dorsal ground color is yellow or brownish-yellow. The pattern consists of a series of dorsal black oval blotches, which are occasionally triangular, and smaller, more laterally situated, irregular black blotches. The venter is cream colored. In comparison, the sister species *Eunectes notaeus* exhibits smaller and more numerous blotches dorsally, and the smaller lateral blotches usually form rings below the dorsal blotches. The presence of five black head stripes distinguishes *Eunectes deschauenseei* from *Eunectes murinus* (four head stripes).

• **DESCRIPTIONS.** Descriptions of *Eunectes deschauenseei*, other than the holotype, are in Belluomini et al. (1959), Müller (1970), Petzold (1982, 1995), Chippaux (1986), Schmidt (1985), Starace (1998), and Dirksen (1999a, 2002).

• **ILLUSTRATIONS.** A black and white photograph of the holotype, when it was alive, was included in the original description (Dunn and Conant 1936). The same picture was used in Petzold (1982, 1995). Photographs are in Matz (1981), Schmidt (1985), Starace (1998), Dirksen et al. (1998), and Dirksen (1999a, b, 2002). Head and habitat pictures are in Dirksen (1999a, 2002). X-ray pictures of the hind limbs are in Dirksen (2002). A lithographic drawing of the head is in Müller (1970).

• **DISTRIBUTION.** *Eunectes deschauenseei* occurs in the Brazilian states of Amapá and Pará and in French Guiana. The distribution in Pará and Amapá is between Santarem and the mouth of the Amazon, including Ilha de Marajó. Only three localities are documented for French Guiana, two in swampy coastal regions. The species also may occur in Suriname, as one locality is near the Suriname-French Guiana boundary (see **Map**). This semi-aquatic species lives in swampy, often seasonally flooded areas.

Distribution maps are in Waller (1988), Waller and Micucci (1993), Henderson et al. (1995), Dirksen and Böhme (1998a), O'Shea (1999), Rivas (1999), and Dirksen (2000, 2002). Locality maps for French Guiana are in Chippaux (1986) and Starace (1998) and for the whole area of distribution in Dirksen (1999, 2002). Stimson (1969), Peters and Orejas-Miranda (1970), Petzold (1982, 1995), and Trutnau (1982) restricted distribution to Marajó. The species also is mentioned for Brasil in Belluomini et al. (1959), Müller (1970, 1971), and Yuki and Santos (1996). *Eunectes deschauenseei* has often been described as a rare species.

• **FOSSIL RECORD.** None.

• **PERTINENT LITERATURE.** Dirksen (2002) provided the most comprehensive information about the species in his monographic review of the genus *Eunectes* and is usually not mentioned again below. In addition, the following topics have been addressed: **distribution and habitats** (Belluomini et al.

1959; Stimson 1969; Müller 1970; Peters and Orejas-Miranda 1970; Matz 1981; Hoogmoed 1982; Petzold 1982; Trutnau 1982; Chippaux 1986; Waller 1988; Waller and Micucci 1993; Henderson et al. 1995; Yuki and Santos 1996; Starace 1998; Dirksen and Böhme 1998a, 1998b; McDiarmid et al. 1999; Rivas 1999; Dirksen 1999a, 2000; Colares 2000; Henderson 2002), **taxonomy, systematics, and/or phylogenetics** (Amaral 1944, 1948; Kluge 1991; Waller and Micucci 1993; Dirksen and Böhme 1998b; Dirksen 1999a; McDiarmid et al. 1999), **food and diet** (Petzold 1982, 1995; Starace 1998; Dirksen 1999a), **behavior** (Petzold 1982, 1995; Schmidt 1985; Starace 1998; Dirksen 1999), **balling-posture behavior** (Dirksen et al. 1998), **reproduction and growth** (Belluomini et al. 1959; Petzold 1982, 1995; Dirksen 1999a), **hemipenial structure** (Dirksen 2002), **osteology** (Kluge 1991, see also **Remarks**; Dirksen 2002), **microdermatoglyphics** (Hoge and Santos 1953), and **sexual dimorphism** (Belluomini et al. 1959, Dirksen 1999a, Starace 1998). The species is included in the **checklist** by Frank and Ramus (1995) and the "encyclopedia" of Obst et al. (1984).

• **REMARKS.** Kluge (1991) did not observe any differences between the skulls of *E. deschauenseei* and *E. notaeus* and designated them sister species. However, an examination of the skin and the locality data of the *E. deschauenseei* material examined by Kluge (USNM 135453, 135454) indicated that he examined *E. notaeus* skulls misidentified or mislabeled as *E. deschauenseei*.

Griffin (1916) and Gomes (1918) reported *E. notaeus* from the lower Rio Amazonas. Griffin's specimen (CM R 379) since has been determined to be *E. deschauenseei*. Surely, the *E. notaeus* of Gomes (1918) was *E. deschauenseei*, which was not described until 1936.

• **ETYMOLOGY.** The name *deschauenseei* is derived from R.M. de Schauensee, who collected the holotype in 1924, in all probability on Ilha de Marajó in the mouth of the Amazon, and later forwarded it to the Philadelphia Zoo. The snake is called Sucuri or Sucuriju by the local people (Dirksen 2002).

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