Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.


Crotalus scutulatus (Kerrickott) Mojave rattlesnake


Crotalus scutulatus: Yarrow, 1875:533.

- Content. Two subspecies are recognized: salvini and scutulatus.

- Diagnosis. A species of Crotalus distinguished from its congeners by the following characteristics: minimum scale rows between supraoculars usually 2, rarely 3; usually 2 large plates between the anterior portion of the supraoculars followed by 3 smaller ones; presence of a definite suture on top of the head dividing the scales in front of the supraoculars from those between them, with a reduction of the number of scales in front of the suture; postnasals not in contact with upper precocals and contact not prevented by upper loreal, which is absent; postocular pale stripe usually only 1 scale wide, passing backward above the angle of the mouth; dorsal body blotches bordered by a complete row of pale, unicolored scales; tail conspicuously ringed by dark and white bands, the dark tail bands considerably narrower than the white ones; color of the dark tail bands changing from brown proximally to black distally.


- Illustrations. Shaw and Campbell (1974) provided a color photograph. Black and white photographs are in Gloyd (1940), Rann (1965), Klauber (1972) and Armstrong and Murphy (1979). Cope (1900), Gloyd (1940) and Klauber (1972) provided line drawings. Black and white photographs of hybrids are in Cook (1955) and Klauber (1972). Black and white photographs of the hemipenis and of pattern aberrations are in Gloyd (1940) and Nickerson and Mays (1968), respectively. Kochva and Gans (1966) provided black and white photomicrographs of the main and accessory venom glands.

- Distribution. Crotalus scutulatus ranges from the Mojave Desert in southern California, the southern tip of Nevada, and extreme southwestern Utah southeastward through much of Arizona, northern Sonora, extreme southern New Mexico, the Big Bend region of Texas and northeastern Coahuila, and southward to the southern edge of the Mexican Plateau. In much of the United States it is most common in low flat deserts with scattered vegetation below 1524 meters. It occurs from sea level to 2439 meters. In Mexico it is much more of a highland form, most commonly found from 1829 to 2439 meters.

- Fossil record. Crotalus scutulatus has been reported from Paleocene deposits in the Distrito de Zumpango, Mexico, Mexico (Brattstrom, 1955).


- Etymology. The name scutulatus (Latin) means “diamond- or lozenge-shaped” and refers to the dorsal pattern. The name salvini honors Osbert Salvin, 19th century explorer and ornithologist, who co-initiated and for a time sponsored the expeditions during which the type-specimen was collected.

1. Crotalus scutulatus scutulatus (Kerrickott) Mojave rattlesnake

Caudisona scutulata Kerrickott, 1861:207. See species synonymy.

Crotalus adamsi scutulatus Cope, 1875:33.

Crotalus atrox: Stejneger, 1895:436 (part).


Crotalus scutulatus scutulatus Gloyd, 1940:200.

- Diagnosis. Differs from C. s. salvini in the following characters: row of pale, unicolored scales bordering dorsal body blotches; dark postorbital stripe extending to angle of mouth or beyond; distal dark tail bands black, in contrast to posterior body blotches; upper part of proximal lobe of rattle matrix black (except in juveniles).

2. Crotalus scutulatus salvini Günther Huamantlan rattlesnake


Crotalus scutulatus salvini Gloyd, 1940:201.

- Diagnosis. Differs from C. s. scutulatus in the following characteristics: dorsal body blotches without pale borders; dark postorbital stripe not extending as far as angle of mouth; distal dark tail bands not black, not in contrast to posterior body blotches; upper part of proximal lobe of rattle matrix only slightly, if at all, darkened.

MAP. Solid spots indicate type-localities; open circles mark other records. The star represents a Pleistocene fossil locality. Question marks indicate uncertain range boundaries.
LITERATURE CITED


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