

# REPTILIA: SQUAMATA: SERPENTES: COLUBRIDAE UROMACER OXYRHYNCHUS

## Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

SCHWARTZ, ALBERT AND ROBERT W. HENDERSON. 1984. *Uromacer oxyrhynchus*.

## *Uromacer oxyrhynchus* Duméril and Bibron

*Uromacer oxyrhynchus* Duméril and Bibron, 1854:722. Type-locality, "Senegal" (in error). Holotype, Mus. Nat. Hist. Natur., Paris, 8672 (collector and date of collection unknown) (not examined by authors).

• CONTENT. No subspecies have been described.

• DEFINITION. A species of the colubrid snake genus *Uromacer* with an elongate body and head, the head scales accordingly modified. Ventrals are 192–212 in males, and 195–204 in females; subcaudals are 185–214 in males, and 184–207 in females; total ventral scales (ventrals + subcaudals) are 379–417 in males, and 382–410 in females (data from Cochran, 1941:343–344). Coloration is polychromatic, either 1) green above and below (females only), or 2) dorsum green with a tan venter, the chin and anterior-most ventrals pale green (males and females), or 3) (much more rarely) tan both above and below, usually without any green throat coloration. There is a longitudinal, basically white line on scale rows 1 and 2, this line often has some yellow pigmentation on scale row 2, the line itself at times pale or fairly bright yellow and at times edged with black. The ventral tan coloration is vaguely to prominently streaked with short longitudinally oriented dark brown dashes to give a "wooden" appearance. There are 19 scales at midbody, reducing to 11 in males and 13 in females. There are 1 or 2 loreals.

• DESCRIPTIONS. The original description (Duméril and Bibron, 1854) is complete, giving details of form, scutellation, teeth, osteological characters, and coloration (from a preserved specimen). Boulenger (1894:116–117) described the species, based on two males and one female. Mertens (1939) provided data on 7 females from the República Dominicana. Cochran (1941) presented a brief description of the species, based on a female from Laguna, República Dominicana, and scale counts on a long series of specimens from both Haiti and the República Dominicana. Horn (1969) discussed the polychromatism in the species and briefly diagnosed *U. oxyrhynchus*. Schmidt (1921) had previously identified a specimen from Los Quemados as *U. frenatus* because of its non-green color and despite its very low scale counts for that species; he also reported four *U. oxyrhynchus* from northeastern República Dominicana.

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Duméril and Bibron (1854) provided an illustration (pl. 83, fig. 1). Mertens (1939, 1940) included a photograph of a female, in a typical in-habitat pose, from Moca, República

Dominicana. Cochran (1941:342) provided drawings of dorsal, ventral, and lateral views of the head. Horn (1969) included a photograph of the lateral view of the head of a specimen from Bombardopolis, Haiti. Henderson and Binder (1980) provided photos illustrating head shape (Figs. 4 and 5) and one depicting a *U. oxyrhynchus* after catching an anole (Fig. 12).

• DISTRIBUTION. Schwartz and Thomas (1975) gave the distribution of *U. oxyrhynchus* as "widespread north of the Cul de Sac-Valle de Neiba plain, and occurring south of that plain west to Miragoâne on the northern coast of the Tiburon Peninsula and near Jacmel on its southern coast, and south to Oviedo on the Península de Barahona; Ile de la Tortue; Isla Saona." It is also known from Isla Catalina. Elevational distribution from sea level to 1220 m. Schwartz (1980) considered *U. oxyrhynchus* a north island species (*sensu* Williams, 1961) which has invaded the south island with moderate success.

• FOSSIL RECORD. None.

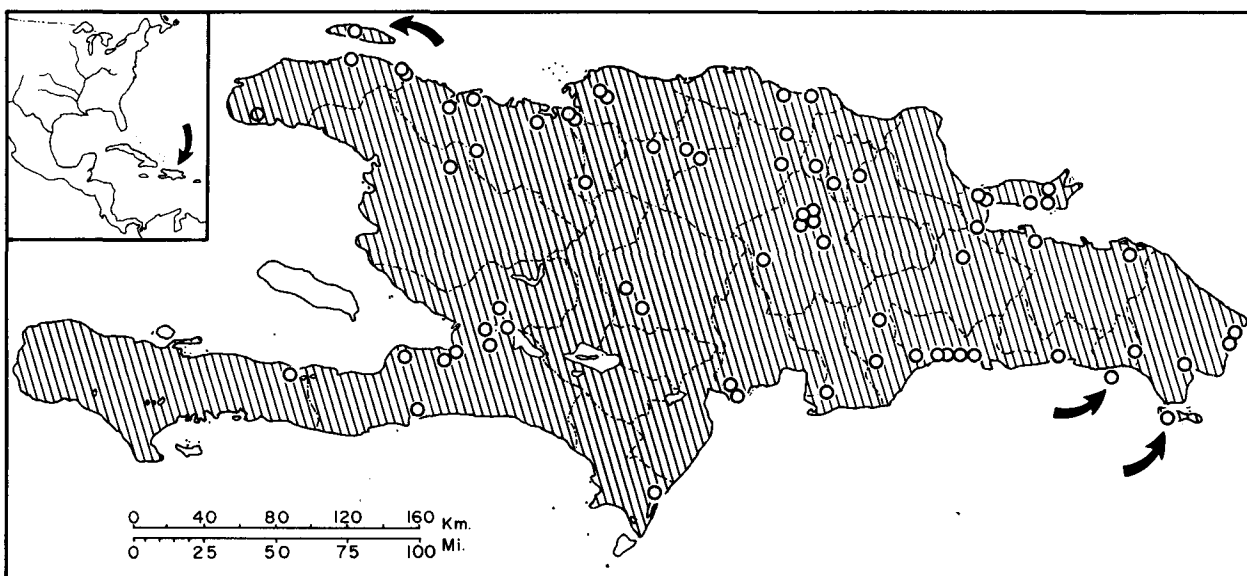
• PERTINENT LITERATURE. The basic systematic literature is noted above. Works dealing with other topics include those on: evolution, phylogeny and/or zoogeography (Horn, 1969; Maglio, 1970; Henderson and Binder, 1980; Schwartz, 1980); skull morphology (Maglio, 1970); polymorphism (Horn, 1969); head and body proportions (Henderson and Binder, 1980; Henderson et al. 1981; Henderson, 1982b); habitat (Mertens, 1939; Henderson and Binder, 1980; Henderson et al. 1981 [including photograph]); diet (Mertens, 1939; Horn, 1969; Henderson and Binder, 1980; Henderson et al. 1981; Henderson, 1982b; Henderson and Horn, 1983); foraging and prey stalking (Henderson and Binder, 1980; Henderson et al. 1981; Henderson, 1982b); thermoregulation (Henderson, 1982a); defensive behavior (Henderson and Binder, 1980); daily activity patterns and time budget (Henderson et al. 1982); keratophagy (Groves and Altamari, 1977); predation (Wiley and Wiley, 1981); and longevity (Bowler, 1977).

• REMARKS. Examination of long series of *U. oxyrhynchus* strongly suggests that there are several subspecies involved, differing in number of ventrals and color of the lateral longitudinal stripe. There is apparently no taxonomic significance to the occurrence of the unicolor tan morph. Horn (1969) considered *U. dorsalis* (= *U. f. dorsalis*) to be the closest relative to *U. oxyrhynchus*.

• ETYMOLOGY. The name *oxyrhynchus* is from the Greek meaning "sharp-nosed," in allusion to the elongate head and sharp snout of these snakes.

## COMMENT

Specimens of *U. oxyrhynchus* were collected under National Science Foundation grants G-7977 and B-03603 to the senior author.



MAP. Solid circles mark type-localities, hollow circles other localities.

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