

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

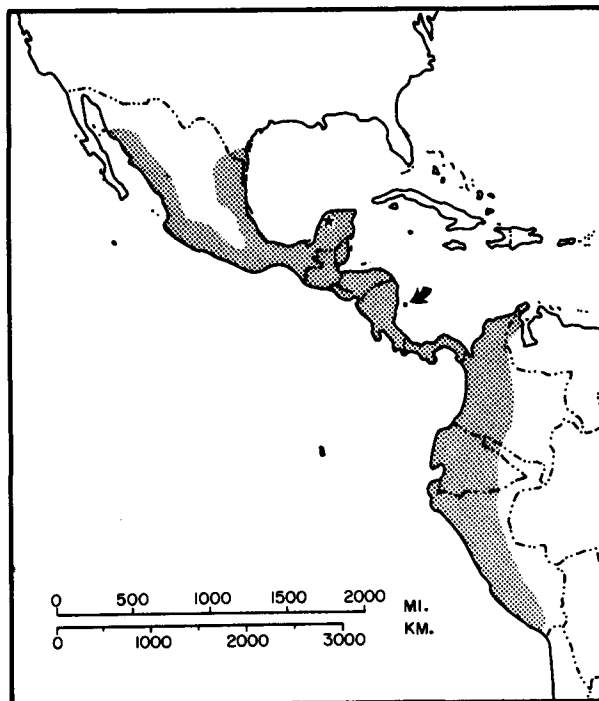
WILSON, LARRY DAVID. 1975. *Drymobius*.***Drymobius* Fitzinger
Neotropical Racers***Drymobius* Fitzinger, 1843:26. Type-species *Herpetodryas margaritifera* Schlegel, 1837, by original designation.*Crossanthera* Cope, 1893:481. Type-species *Dendrophidion melanotropis* Cope, 1875, by original designation.

- CONTENT. Four species are recognized: *D. chloroticus*, *D. margaritifera*, *D. melanotropis*, and *D. rhombifer*.

- DEFINITION. A colubrid snake genus characterized by: normal head scutellation consisting of an unmodified rostral followed by two internasals, two prefrontals, two supraoculars, one frontal, two parietals, a divided nasal, one loreal, one preocular, two postoculars, no suboculars, usually 2 + 2 temporals, usually 9 supralabials with the 4th, 5th, and 6th entering orbit, infralabials usually 9, 10, or 11, with 5 in contact with anterior chin shields; keeled dorsal scales with 2 apical pits, in 17 rows at midbody and 15 posteriorly, with vertebral row not enlarged; dorsal scale row reduction characterized by one lateral reduction; ventrals 143 to 171, not notched or keeled; anal plate divided; subcaudals 84 to 138, paired, not notched or keeled; maximum total length to about 134 cm; maxillary teeth 22 to 36, all solid, gradually becoming much larger and stouter posteriorly; hypapophyses present only on anterior vertebrae; hemipenis slightly bilobed with single, straight sulcus spermaticus ending in naked apex, each organ covered distally with papillate calyces, middle of organ covered with subequal spines, base of organ naked or with small, scattered spinules; adult dorsal color pattern of three basic types—uniform, dark dorsal blotches on paler ground color, or numerous pale spots on a darker ground color; ontogenetic pattern change or not.

Drymobius differs from its close relatives *Dryadophis* and *Drymoluber* in possessing keeled, rather than smooth, scales and from *Dendrophidion* in having a greater number of flounced calyces and spines on the hemipenis (Stuart, 1932).

- DESCRIPTIONS. Stuart (1932) gave a brief, general descrip-



MAP. Shaded area indicates the composite range of the four species. The star indicates a fossil locality, and the arrow marks the only insular occurrence.

tion of the genus based on the two species (*margaritifera* and *rhombifer*) then included. He also described the hemipenial structure in those two species. Villa (1968) and Wilson (1970) described the hemipenis in *D. margaritifera* and *D. chloroticus*, respectively. Wilson (1970) discussed maxillary structure and tooth numbers in *D. chloroticus*.

- ILLUSTRATIONS. Members of this genus are illustrated in the following works: *D. chloroticus*—Wilson (1970); *D. margaritifera*—Schmidt and Davis (1941), Wright and Wright (1957), Conant (1975), Alvarez del Toro (1960), and Villa (1968); *D. rhombifer*—Ruthven (1922) and Taylor (1954). *Drymobius melanotropis* has not been illustrated. Stuart (1932) diagrammed the hemipenes of *D. margaritifera* and *D. rhombifer* and Wilson (1970) illustrated the maxilla and hemipenis of *D. chloroticus*.

- DISTRIBUTION. The genus ranges from southern Texas on the Atlantic versant and southern Sonora, México on the Pacific, largely avoiding the Meseta Central of México, south throughout Central America and into northern South America (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Perú). The members of this genus inhabit a wide variety of habitats ranging from pine savannas and tropical lowland rainforest to thorn forest at lower elevations and to pine woods and cloud forest at higher elevations (Ruthven, 1922; Wilson, 1970, 1975; Wilson and Meyer in ms. on Honduran snakes). The only insular record is for the Corn Islands, Nicaragua (Villa, 1968).

- FOSSIL RECORD. Langebartel (1953) tentatively referred some trunk vertebrae of early post-Pleistocene age from a cave at Actun Spukil, Yucatán, México to *D. margaritifera*.

- PERTINENT LITERATURE. Stuart (1932, 1933) outlined the current limits of the genus, including four species. Wilson (1970) discussed infrageneric groups within *Drymobius*, variation in *D. chloroticus* and *D. melanotropis*, and information on the natural history of *D. chloroticus*. Smith (1942) and Villa (1968) treated the subspecies of *D. margaritifera*. *Drymobius rhombifer* has not been reviewed. Other important references are listed elsewhere in this account and in Wilson (1975).

- KEY TO SPECIES. A number in parentheses following the species name refers to a Catalogue account number.

1. Dorsum with a series of pale-centered dark rhomboidal blotches on a paler ground color *D. rhombifer*
— Dorsal coloration not as above 2
2. Dorsal pattern reticulate, each scale dark with a paler center, or dorsum crossed by dark, diffuse blotches or bands on a paler ground color *D. margaritifera* (172)
— Dorsal coloration not as above 3
3. Dorsum uniform green (occasionally brown or gray); subcaudals 107 to 125 *D. chloroticus* (171)
— Dorsum green; keels of median three dorsal rows black; subcaudals 91 to 94 *D. melanotropis* (173)

- ETYMOLOGY. The name *Drymobius*, of masculine gender, is derived from the Greek *drymos*, meaning "a forest" or "oakwood," and the Greek *bios*, meaning "life" or "livelihood." *Drymobius* is a "forest creature."

COMMENT

Scott (1969) has suggested that "the *Dendrophidion-Drymobius-Dryadophis-Drymoluber* complex is still not divided along taxonomically tenable lines." He goes on to state that "*D. rhombifer* appears to be related to *Dryadophis* or *Drymoluber*; the other *Drymobius*, with *Dendrophidion*, form a Middle American group." It is my impression that there is some merit to these suggestions and that certainly the matter requires further study. No significant work has been done on the generic partitioning of this group since that of Stuart (1932, 1933, 1941). At that time there were 15 species partitioned among these four genera; now there are 25.

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