

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Wilson, Larry David. 1988. *Tantilla canula*.

***Tantilla canula* (Cope)**

Tantilla vermiformis: Cope, 1866: 126 (in error).

Tantilla canula Cope, 1876: 144. Type-locality, "Yucatan" [México].

Syntypes, National Museum of Natural History 24881-82, male and female, respectively, collected by Arthur Schott, date of collection unknown (examined by author).

Homalocranium breve: Günther, 1895: 150.

Homalocranium canulum: Günther, 1895: 153.

Homalocranium canula: Boulenger, 1896: 222.

Tantilla brevis: Schmidt, 1941: 480.

Tantilla canula canula: Neill and Allen, 1961: 95.

Tantilla canula brevis: Neill and Allen, 1961: 95.

• **Content.** No subspecies are recognized.

• **Definition and Diagnosis.** "A species of *Tantilla* with a tan to dark brown (usually tan to pale brown) ground color, with or without a pale middorsal stripe, which, if present, may occupy as little as a spot on the anterior end of each middorsal scale or as much as the middorsal row and adjacent halves of the paravertebral rows. The head pattern consists of pale markings on the snout and parietals (almost absent in darker specimens), which may be so extensive as to almost cover the entire top of the head. The temporal and

postparietal region is usually a shade darker in color than the dorsum of the body. The venter is immaculate cream. Ventrals and subcaudals range from 103 to 114 and 32 to 44, respectively" (Wilson, 1982).

Tantilla canula may be distinguished from all congeners by having a usually tan to pale brown dorsal ground color with or without a muted pale middorsal stripe, a pale venter, head pattern consisting of pale markings on the snout and parietals, and 103-114 ventrals.

• **Descriptions.** Confusion has surrounded the discrimination of this species. Wilson (1982) discussed the matter and provided a description, which should be consulted for interpretation of previous descriptions.

• **Illustrations.** Wilson (1982) provided black-and-white photographs of the head and anterior body of this species and the whole body.

• **Distribution.** *Tantilla canula* occurs at "low elevations of the Yucatan Peninsula in the Mexican states of Campeche, Quintana Roo, and Yucatán and the northern portion of the Guatemalan department of El Petén" (Wilson, 1982), as well as Belize (Wilson 1986).

• **Fossil Record.** None.

• **Pertinent Literature.** Most of the literature on this species deals with reports of new material, descriptions, and appearance of the name in various lists (see synonymy in Wilson, 1982). Neill and Allen (1961) recognized two subspecies, *canula* and *brevis*, but their analysis was flawed by lack of information on the holotype and only specimen of *brevis* and confusion of this species with *Tantilla lintoni*. Wilson (1982) provided a synonymy, description, discussion of ecological and geographic distribution, and an unraveling of the taxonomy of the species. Wilson (1986) discussed the status of the enigmatic *Homalocranium breve* and placed this name in the synonymy of *T. canula*.

• **Etymology.** The name *canula* is derived from the diminutive of the Latin *canna*, meaning "a reed or cane," in allusion to the slender, elongate shape of the body of this snake.

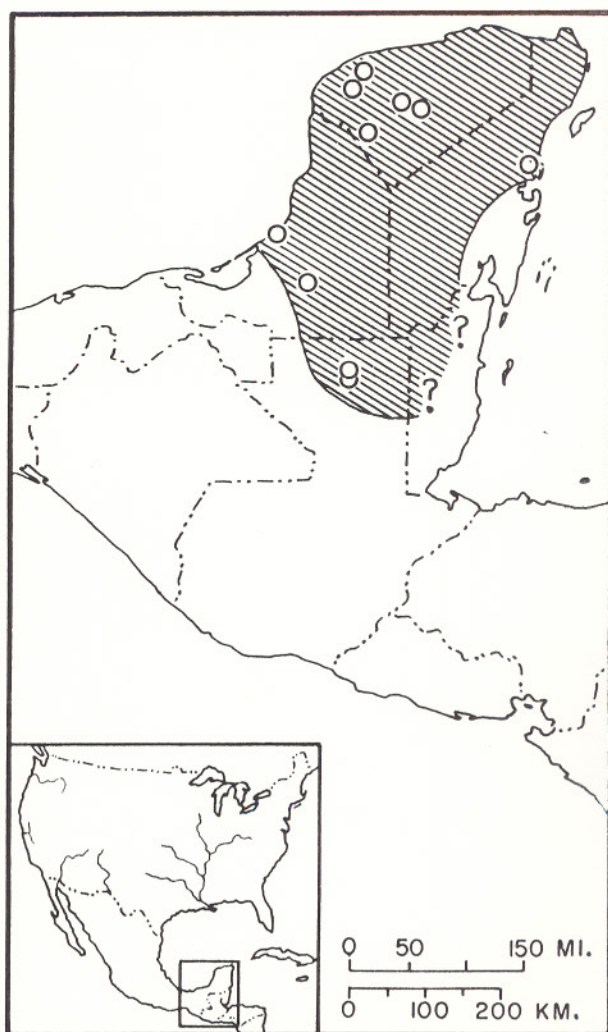
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Map. Known distribution of *Tantilla canula*; type locality too indefinite to plot.