

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

CHARLES J. COLE AND LAURENCE M. HARDY. 1983. *Tantilla hobartsmithi*.

***Tantilla hobartsmithi* Taylor
Smith's black-headed snake**

Tantilla nigriceps (not of Kennicott): Van Denburgh and Slevin, 1913:423-424.

Tantilla planiceps (not of Blainville): Stejneger and Barbour, 1917: 105 (part).

Tantilla nigriceps eiseni (not of Stejneger): Woodbury, 1931:107-108.

Tantilla atriceps (not of Günther): Taylor, "1936" [1937]:339-340 (part).

Tantilla hobartsmithi Taylor, "1936" [1937]:340-342. Type-locality, "near La Posa, 10 mi. northwest of Guaymas," Sonora, Mexico (Taylor, "1936" [1937]:340-341). The holotype, University of Illinois Museum of Natural History 25066, an adult male (examined by authors), was collected by Edward H. Taylor, the night of 3 July 1934.

Tantilla utahensis Blanchard, 1938:372-373. Type-locality, "St. George, Washington County, Utah" (Blanchard, 1938:372). The holotype, California Academy of Sciences 55214, an adult female (examined by authors), was collected by V. M. Tanner, date unknown.

Tantilla eiseni (not of Stejneger): Miller and Stebbins, 1964:424-425.

Tantilla planiceps atriceps (not of Günther): Tanner, 1966:134-152.

Tantilla planiceps utahensis: Tanner, 1966:134-152.

• CONTENT. The species is monotypic.

• DEFINITION AND DIAGNOSIS. "Top of head strikingly darker (brown, black) than dorsal body color (beige to light brown); dark head cap not extending ventrolaterally below angle (corner) of mouth; dark head cap extending on middorsal line 0.5-3 scales beyond posterior end of suture between parietals; posterior edge of dark head cap usually convex or straight, followed by light (white, cream) collar 0.5-2 scales wide; no dark band or dark spots along posterior edge of collar; origin of m. retractor penis magnus at level of subcaudals 20-34; retracted hemipenis extending to subcaudals 7-14; hemipenis subcylindrical to clavate when everted, capitate, with two medium to large basal spines; no spinules on hemipenis proximal to basal spine; 16-37 spines

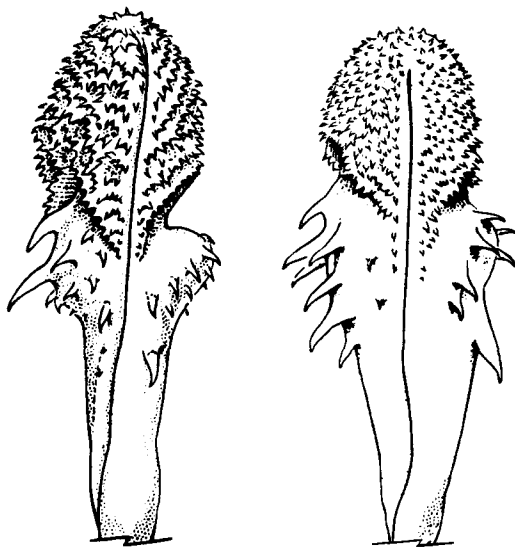
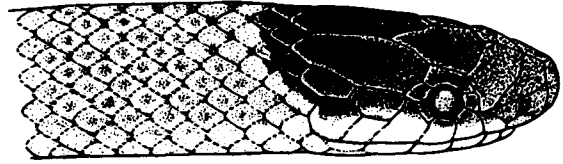


FIGURE 1. Sulcate views of left hemipenes of *T. hobartsmithi* (from Cole and Hardy, 1981:226). Left, based on Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection 25904 (from Texas); right based on American Museum of Natural History 108915 (from Arizona).



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FIGURE 2. Color pattern of head and neck of *Tantilla hobartsmithi*, American Museum of Natural History 107377 (from Cole and Hardy, 1981:210).

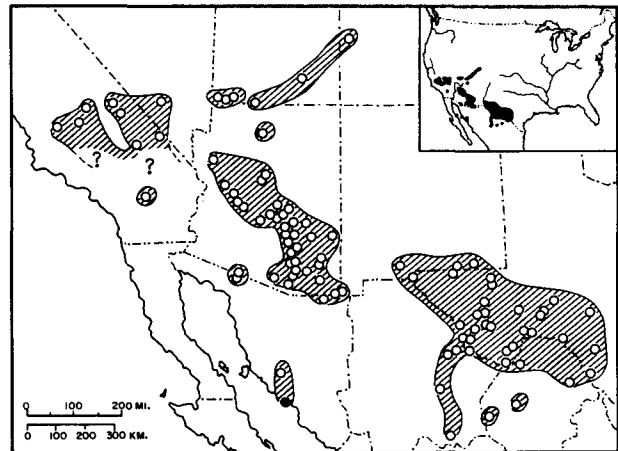
in 1-3 rows (minimum) approximately encircling spinose midsection of hemipenis; supralabials 7; infralabials 6; naris in upper half of nasal; postoculars usually 2; temporals 1 + 1; mental usually touching anterior pair of genials. Most similar to *T. atriceps*; differing strikingly in hemipenis" (Cole and Hardy, 1981:221).

• DESCRIPTIONS. See Cole and Hardy (1981) for a redescription of the holotype (including description of hemipenis); general descriptions of size, coloration, hemipenes, scutellation, maxillae, and chromosomes; and analyses of geographic variation. Conant (1975:222-223) provided a good description (under "*T. atriceps*") also. Eggs were described by Stebbins (1954:452) and Easterla (1975:234), under the names *T. utahensis* and *T. atriceps*, respectively.

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Cole and Hardy (1981) illustrated scutellation and color pattern of the head and neck, geographic distribution, hemipenes, maxillae, and chromosomes. Good black-and-white photographs were presented by Fowle (1965:109, 111; labeled *T. atriceps* and *T. n. nigriceps*, respectively). Tanner (1966, Figs. 1A, B) and Stebbins (1966, pl. 35) both presented drawings of scutellation and color pattern of the head and neck (labeled *T. p. atriceps* and *T. p. utahensis*), as did Stebbins (1954, Fig. 48), labeled *T. atriceps* and *T. utahensis*.

• DISTRIBUTION. The species occurs in Arizona, southern California, western Colorado, southern Nevada, southern New Mexico, southern Texas, and southern Utah, and the Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Sonora (Cole and Hardy, 1981). Although some gaps in the range probably reflect inadequate collecting, others may indicate a relictual distribution pattern. These are highly secretive and fossorial snakes, most individuals being found beneath rocks or other objects, primarily in riparian, grassland, chaparral, and woodland communities (literature reviewed by Cole and Hardy, 1981:223).

• FOSSIL RECORD. No fossils have been unequivocally re-



MAP. Solid circle marks the type-locality. Open circles indicate localities from which we examined specimens (Cole and Hardy, 1981:275-278).

ferred to *T. hobartsmithi*. Gehlbach and Holman (1974) reported six precaudal vertebrae from the Holocene of western Texas as "*Tantilla* sp.," stating, "*T. atriceps* [= *T. hobartsmithi* here] is abundant around Pratt Cave today, while *T. nigriceps* is apparently scarce in the Guadalupe Mountains region." Van Devender and Worthington (1977) reported eight vertebrae from the Pleistocene and/or Holocene of southwestern New Mexico, stating, "the smaller vertebrae may be of subadult *T. nigriceps*, or of the smaller-sized species, *T. planiceps* [= *T. hobartsmithi* here]."

• PERTINENT LITERATURE. The most recent taxonomic revision, including a review of the biological literature known for this species, was presented by Cole and Hardy (1981); see COMMENT.

• ETYMOLOGY. The specific epithet honors Dr. Hobart M. Smith.

COMMENT

Prior to the most recent taxonomic revision by Cole and Hardy (1981), *T. hobartsmithi* had been considered as conspecific with several other species (*T. planiceps*, *T. atriceps*, and *T. yaquia*; e.g., see Tanner, 1966). Indeed, the name *T. hobartsmithi* has long been considered a junior synonym of *T. atriceps* (or *T. planiceps atriceps*). Consequently, most of the literature on *T. atriceps* or *T. p. atriceps* actually pertains to *T. hobartsmithi*; for more details, see Cole and Hardy (1981).

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