



New Elevational Record for Walker’s Slender Snake, *Tachymenis attenuata* Walker 1945 (Squamata: Dipsadidae), with Notes on Taxonomy and Natural History

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Six species of Slender Snakes in the genus *Tachymenis* (Wiegmann 1835) are distributed in Peru, Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina (Walker 1945; Chavez 2012; Giraudo et al. 2012; Wallach et al. 2014; Uetz et al. 2021). Two species, the Peruvian Slender Snake (*Tachymenis peruviana*) and Walker’s Slender Snake (*Tachymenis attenuata*) occur in Bolivia (Gonzales and Reichle 2003; Aguayo 2009; Reichle 2019). Numbers of ventral and subcaudal scales and solid maxillary teeth distinguish the latter from congeners and differentiate the two subspecies (*T. a. attenuata* and *T. a. boliviana*) (Walker 1945). In Bolivia the known distribution of the spe-

cies includes the departments of Cochabamba, La Paz, and Santa Cruz at elevations of 2,213–4,115 m asl. (Walker 1945; Peters and Orejas-Miranda 1970; Fugler and Cabot 1995; Köhler et al. 1995; Gonzales and Reichle 2003; Harvey and Muñoz 2004; Embert 2008; Aguayo 2009; Reichle 2019).

At 2300 h on 11 October 2018, we found and collected an adult *Tachymenis attenuata* (505 mm total length; Museo de Historia Natural Alcide d’Orbigny MNNC-R 3096) during standard visual encounter surveys (Crump and Scott 1994). The snake was active on a Bamboo (*Chusquea* sp.) at a height of 3 m (Fig. 1) in mature secondary forest near



Fig. 1. The Bamboo (*Chusquea* sp.) in mature secondary forest near a stream at Chaquisacha, Carrasco National Park, Carrasco Province, Cochabamba Department, Bolivia (left), where an adult Walker’s Slender Snake (*Tachymenis attenuata attenuata*) (MNNC-R 3096) was collected at a height of 3 m (right). Photographs by Oliver Quinteros-Muñoz.



Fig. 2. Dorsal and ventral views of an adult Walker's Slender Snake (*Tachymenis attenuata attenuata*) (MNNC-R 3096) collected at Chaquisacha, Carrasco National Park, Carrasco Province, Cochabamba Department, Bolivia. Photographs by Oliver Quinteros-Muñoz.

a stream at Chaquisacha, Carrasco National Park, Carrasco Province, Cochabamba Department, Bolivia (17°25'07.92"S; 65°14'40"W; elev. 1,628 m asl) in the Yungas Boliviano-Peruanos ecoregion (Ibisch and Merida 2003). We collected the snake under permit MMAYANMABCCGDF/DGBAP/MEG N° 0053/2019 and deposited the specimen (and others collected during the survey) in the Museo de Historia Natural Alcide d'Orbigny, Cochabamba, Bolivia. To the best of our knowledge, this record is the lowest elevation at which this species has been recorded in Bolivia.

Characteristics of the specimen (Fig. 2), particularly the numbers of ventrals (155), subcaudals (71), and maxillary teeth (12), correspond to descriptions of *Tachymenis a. attenuata* (Walker 1945). Köhler et al. (1995) noted two specimens of *T. attenuata* (Zoologisches Forschungsmuseum Alexander Koenig ZFMK 57659–60) from Sehuencas (2,213 m asl), Carrasco National Park, Cochabamba, Bolivia, assigned to the subspecies *T. a. boliviana* based on ventral (162–164) and subcaudal (77–84) scale counts, but did not provide information on the numbers of maxillary teeth, which was one of the characters used by Walker (1945) to distinguish *T. a. attenuata* (12–14 maxillary teeth) and *T. a. boliviana* (14–16). Having examined dentition in snakes from Sehuencas, which we found to be in the range recorded for *T. a. attenuata*, we suggest that snakes from both localities (Sehuencas and Chaquisacha) are *T. a. attenuata*, leaving the only known locality for *T. a. boliviana* in Bolivia at Incachaca, Cochabamba Department (Fugler and Cabot 1995).

Diets of Slender Snakes, medium-sized opisthoglyphs with attenuate bodies that can be active either by day or night in both terrestrial and arboreal situations, consists mainly of amphibians and lizards (Walker 1945; Giraudo et al. 2012). Information about the diets of Bolivian snakes is scarce and

only a few reports address prey taken by colubrids and dip-sadids (Quinteros-Muñoz et al. 2010; Miranda et al. 2015; Quinteros-Muñoz 2015, 2021a, 2021b).

Shortly after capture, the adult *Tachymenis attenuata* from Chaquisacha regurgitated a recently ingested adult male Charuplaya Treefrog (*Boana callipleura*) (Fig. 3). This hylid is endemic to Bolivia, where its distribution comprises the departments of Cochabamba and La Paz (Reichle and Aguayo 2006; Reichle 2007). The specimen was deposited in the vertebrate collection of the Museo de Historia Natural Alcide d'Orbigny (MHNC-A 2770). Although Walker (1945) indicated that frogs were taken by these snakes, he did not iden-



Fig. 3. An adult male Charuplaya Treefrog (*Boana callipleura*) (MHNC-A 2770) regurgitated by an adult Walker's Slender Snake (*Tachymenis attenuata attenuata*) (MNNC-R 3096) collected at Chaquisacha, Carrasco National Park, Carrasco Province, Cochabamba Department, Bolivia. Scale bar (red line) = 10 mm. Photograph by Oliver Quinteros-Muñoz.

tify any species. Therefore, this observation is the first record of *B. callipleura* or any species in the genus *Boana* as prey of *T. attenuata*.

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