

A live Double-Striped Water Snake *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* (Reptilia:Serpentes), from Trinidad

A live specimen of the Double-Striped Water Snake *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* was caught in Saint Marie Road towards Galfa Point, Grid Reference 625695E, 1115001 N., at 1845 h on 30 September 2015.

The snake was discovered while conducting a survey of Reptilian and Amphibian fauna on behalf of the Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited. The survey, of the southwestern peninsula of Trinidad from Icacos Point to Galfa Point, was conducted by the author and two field assistants Daryl Abraham and Robert Marks.

The snake was generally light brown. From the neck to upper midbody there was a matted myriad of colours ranging from shiny gold, dark brown black and hues of pale green. Similar to that of *Liophis reginae*. There were distinct longitudinal broken stripes along either sides of the body. From the dorsum and around the eyes were stripes of black radially arranged, thinner from the outline of the eyes and bolder to the upper sides. The belly was pale white with parallel broken lines located mid belly. The broken line appeared to be similar to that of the broken longitudinal stripes observed on the sides of the body. The specimen was female with the following scale counts, subcaudals 70, ventrals 152 and 19 rows of dorsal scales at midbody. The vent to tail length was 127mm, the snout to vent measured 425 mm with the overall length (snout to tail) 552 mm.

Prior to this find, there were four other accounts of the species for Trinidad. Three specimens were discovered

dead on the road within the years of 1981,1983 and 1984 (Boos 2001), and a live specimen was found in 2002, in Cedros by a resident of Arima and photographed by Hans Boos (Boos 2016). This is thus the second live specimen recorded and photographed in Trinidad (Fig. 1). The snake was subsequently released.

The genus *Thamnodynastes* geographical distribution occurs in throughout South America Brazil, Argentina, Colombia (Rafael Damasceno 2013) and in the Caribbean Trinidad (Boos 2001).

Snakes of the genus *Thamnodynastes*, are a small to medium sized, viviparous, with dentition in an opisthoglyph arrangement. The pupils are elliptical and aligned vertically which indicate that the species nocturnal and crepuscular. They feed on amphibians, fish, lizards and small mammals.

The authors would like to thank John Murphy for verifying the identity from the photograph.

REFERENCES

- Boos, H.E.A.** 2001. Snakes of Trinidad and Tobago. Texas A&M University Press. 328 p.
- Boos, H.E.A.** 2016 A note on the Trinidad striped swamp snake. *The Field Naturalist: Quarterly Bulletin of the Trinidad and Tobago Field Naturalists' Club*. Issue 2: 24.
- Saiyaad H. Ali and Nalini Rampersad-Ali**
The Serpenterium, Trinidad and Tobago
trinissnakehunter@gmail.com



Fig. 1. Double-Striped Water Snake *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi*. Saint Marie Road, 30 September 2015.