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A New Locality Record for the Coral Snake, *Micrurus circinalis* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Elapidae) on Monos Island, Trinidad and Tobago

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The most extensive treatment to date of the distribution of the terrestrial herpetofauna of the satellite islands off Trinidad's north-western peninsular has been that of Boos (1984). Following this, additions to the herpetofauna were noted by Boos (1990) and Boos and Quesnel (1994). Temple (1996) conducted a fairly intensive study of the distribution of plants and animals on the Five Islands (a subset of the aforementioned north-western satellite islands comprised of six of the smallest of these islands) and based on his findings predicted that the much larger Bocas Islands (also a part of this north-western satellite island group) would be expected to host a greater number of reptile species than had previously been recorded there. Indeed, Temple's speculations have proven to be of some merit as several new locality records for reptiles in the Bocas Islands have been made since then (Lall and Hayes 2000; Hayes and Eitniear 2002; Charles 2007; Charles and Smith 2008). We visited the Bocas Islands during July and August 2008 and conducted brief herpetological surveys. Here we report one new locality record for a snake on Monos Island.

On 16 August, 2008, at 1015 h, a live specimen of the snake *Micrurus circinalis* (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril 1854) was observed at Grand Fond Bay, Monos Island. The snake was found in the leaf litter at the base of a small tree approximately 1 m above sea level and 50 m inland north of the beach in an area of secondary forest adjacent to the coconut palms near the beach. The animal was photographed *in situ* and then collected. Its snout to vent length measured 337 mm; tail 62 mm; jaw width 7.1 mm and jaw length 12.9 mm. Each side of the head exhibited 7 supralabial scales and 7 infralabial scales. The ventral scale count was 183, the subcaudal scale count was 48 and the anal plate was divided. There were 15 scale rows at mid body. Its mass was 9.0 g and it possessed 33 black bands (not including the nape band). With reference to Murphy (1997) the ratio of its tail length to its snout to vent length (18.4%) and the number of black bands on its tail (10) suggest that the specimen collected was male. The snake was preserved in a 10% formalin solution and kept as a voucher specimen. This species is locally referred to as the Common Coral Snake or the Small Coral Snake (Boos and Quesnel 1968; Boos 2001).

This paper represents the first record of the species *Micrurus circinalis* (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril 1854) for Monos Island. It is not entirely surprising that naturalists previously failed to observe this species on Monos. These snakes are fossorial and spend much of their time hidden

under leaf litter, under rocks and logs or burrowing in the soil (Murphy 1997; Boos 2001). Mention must be made that Boos and Quesnel (1994) noted that a watchman of the Siegert House on Monos Island named Tommy Griffith reported a 'coral snake' killed in a house on Monos. They are careful not to speculate as to what particular species of 'coral snake' it might have been (with the understanding that two species of coral snakes are known to occur on Trinidad, as well as a number of colubrid snakes commonly mistaken for coral snakes). *M. circinalis* is also known from the nearby island of Gaspar Grande (Boos 1984).

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