

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONA NEW SOUTH AMERICAN *LEPTOTYPHLOPS*.

BY HOBART M. SMITH AND LEONARD E. LAUFE.

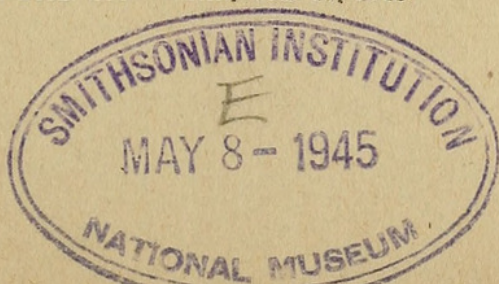
Through the courtesy of Dr. Doris Cochran in providing material for anatomical study, a specimen has come to hand of a species of *Leptotyphlops* hitherto unannounced. Dr. Dunn has examined our description and verifies the distinctness of the species from the forms he recently described, and from others of the Panamá-Colombia area. We name the new form

*Leptotyphlops striatula* sp. nov.

*Type*.—U. S. Nat. Mus. No. 98889, collected at Yamachi, in the Southern Yungas, Bolivia, by M. Cárdenas.

*Diagnosis*.—A member of the *albifrons* section of the genus, having large supraoculars, a normal snout, two supralabials, a lined pattern, a yellowish snout and tail-tip, a total length/tail ratio of 12.7, and a total length/diameter ratio of 41.6. Related to *rufidorsum* and *tenella*, having the supraoculars enlarged more than is usual in the *albifrons* section, and narrowly separated from the 1st supralabials. Differs from these by having 12 scale rows around the tail, 249 dorsal scales, 23 subcaudals, and every scale row with a very distinct, broad median dark stripe.

*Description*.—Head somewhat flattened. Snout projecting far beyond lower jaw; snout rounded in lateral and dorsal profile. Portion of rostra, visible from above about  $1/5$  longer than broad (by measurement; to the eye it appears proportionally longer), strongly tapered a short distance back of snout, sides elsewhere only slightly convergent. Posterior tip of rostral extending very slightly posterior to anterior borders of eyes and narrowly in contact with prefrontal. Latter longer than any other dorsal scale of head or neck, very slightly broader than long. Frontal as broad but only about half as long as prefrontal. Interparietal and interoccipital successively longer and broader than the preceding scale. First nuchal equally as broad as interparietal, but a little shorter. Nasal completely divided, the suture passing diagonally upward through the naris from the posterior to the anterior margin of the scale. Lower borders of naris and eye about on a level with each other. Supraoculars





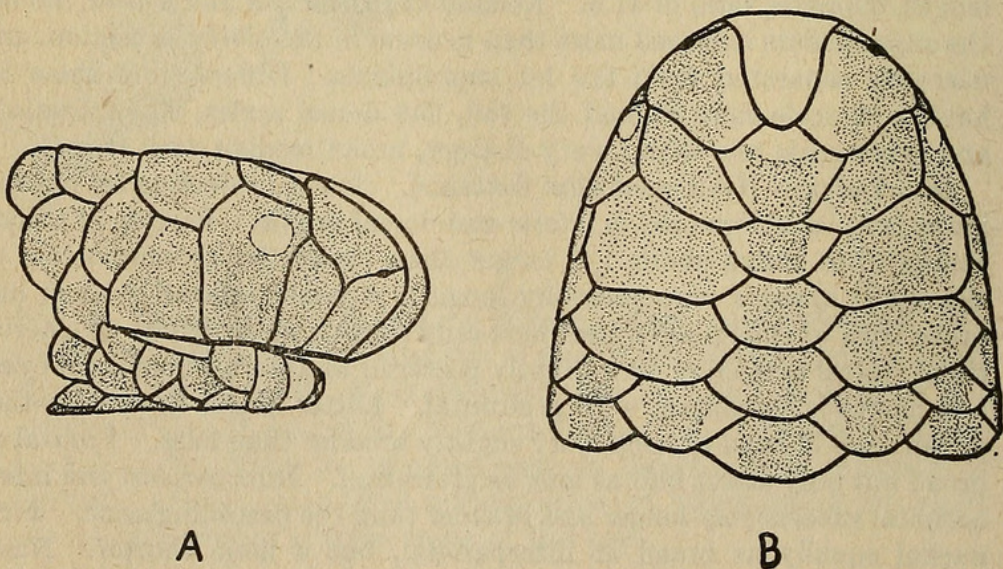
twice as broad (maximum, diagonal) as long (diagonal), narrowly separated from 1st supralabial. Parietal slightly smaller than upper portion of nasal, longer than succeeding occipital, extending laterally nearly to lower margin of orbit. Occipital extending as far laterally as parietal, but not so long as that scale. Sides of rostral divergent toward lip. First supralabial narrow, anterior and posterior borders nearly parallel; upper edge even with middle of eye and with upper edge of nostril. Ocular large, bordering lip, second in size only to rostral of the head scales; eye near anterior border of ocular; suture of ocular and nasal  $3/5$  that between 1st supralabial and upper section of nasal. Second supralabial subtriangular, almost as long as parietal, length nearly equal to width (height). Temporal about the size of interparietal. Lip bordered successively from anterior to posterior by nasal, 1st supralabial, ocular and 2nd supralabial, the labial borders increasing in size in the same order.

Mental very short but broad; 4 infralabials, the anterior 3 subequal in size, the posterior extremely large and concealed when mouth is closed, the first separated from its mate by a single scale.

Head scales, above and below, with many sensory pits, which are more numerous on the anterior scales, and larger on the ventral surfaces; on the ventral surface of the rostral they are almost in contact with each other.

Scale rows 14, reducing to 12 at the extreme base of tail; tail with 12 scale rows to very near tip. Dorsal scales 249 from rostral to caudal spine; caudal spine short, pointed, conical. Subcaudals 23. Total length 241 mm.; tail 19 mm.; diameter of body 5.8 mm.

A broad, very dark brown band following the middle of each scale row, occupying most of the width of each; a narrow light brown line following the edges of adjacent scale rows. The dorsal and ventral



A. *Leptotyphlops striatula*, type; lateral view of head. B. Same, dorsal view of head.



surfaces are almost exactly alike, except that the dark stripes are slightly lighter on the belly than on the dorsal surface. The chin is light. A large yellowish or light tan spot on tip of snout, occupying all the dorsal surface of the rostral and part of the adjacent nasals, and united with the paravertebral light stripes. The entire tip of the tail, including some two scale rows back of the terminal spine, is light also, like the snout.

*Comparisons.*—This species is most clearly distinguishable from others of the *albifrons* group by the possession of 12 instead of 10 scale rows about the tail. No other species of the group has been recorded with a like number. Unusual also is the high number of subcaudals, exceeded only by *columbi*, a species otherwise markedly different. In dorsal count, body proportions and relation of the first supralabial and supraocular *striatula* resembles to some extent *rufidorsum* and *tenella*, although the supraocular does not extend quite so near the 1st supralabial as in either of these latter species. The last 3 species mentioned may well form a natural subgroup; each occupies an area distinct, so far as now known, from that inhabited by any of the others, viz.: *tenella* in British Guiana, *rufidorsum* in Peru, and *striatula* in Bolivia. There is a uniform north-south trend in supraocular-supralabial relation (greater degree of separation toward the south), but in dorsal scale count, pattern and other characters there is little or no evidence of any geographic gradients.



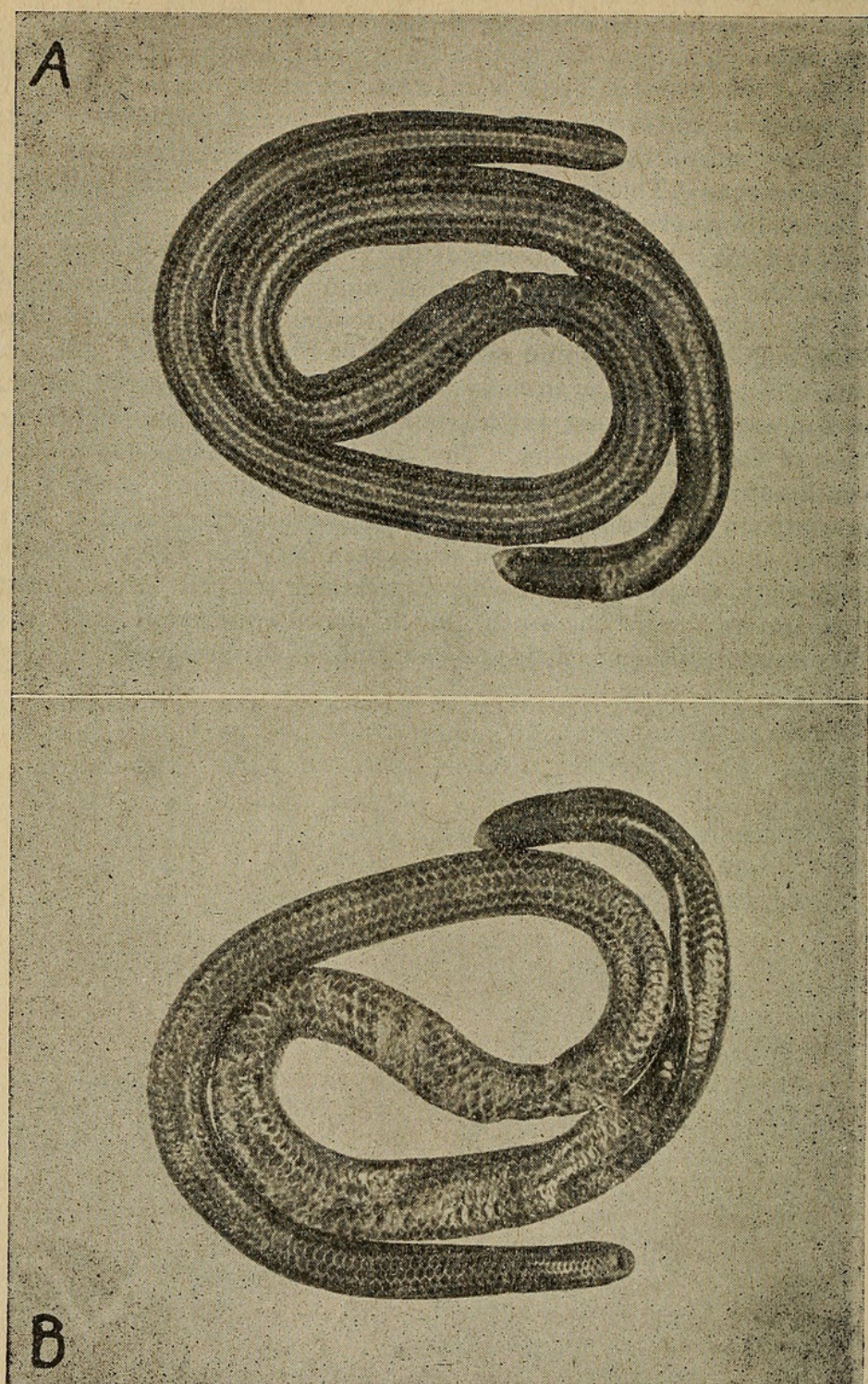


Fig. A. *Leptotyphlops striatula*, type; dorsal view. Fig. B. Same, ventral view.





Smith, Hobart M. and Laufe, L E. 1945. "A new South American Leptotyphlops." *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington* 58, 29–32.

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