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Notes on the poorly known colubrid snake *Rhadinaea anachoreta* Smith & Campbell

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SMITH & Campbell (1994) described *Rhadinaea anachoreta* from two localities in the Sierra de Caral and Sierra de Santa Cruz of northeastern Guatemala. That description was based on two adult males and one adult female, one of which was “badly mutilated.” Campbell (1998) reported the species from Tikal, in the northern Petén of Guatemala, but did not mention the number or sex of the specimens from that locality. Campbell (1998) increased the known range of ventrals from 139 to 151 from over that of 139 to 147 given by Smith & Campbell (1994), but all of his other data were the same as that given by Smith & Campbell. Campbell’s (1998) colour description appears to

be taken from a preserved specimen, as was the colour description provided by Smith & Campbell (1994). Townsend *et al.* (2005) recorded the species from the department of Cortés in northwestern Honduras, based on one “desiccated” unsexed adult. All data provided by Townsend *et al.* (2005) are in agreement with the previously published data for the species. The only colour description of the Honduran specimen provided by Townsend *et al.* (2005) was also taken in preservative.

On 10th October 2006, I collected a specimen of *Rhadinaea anachoreta* in the top portion of a rotten tree stump about 0.5 m above the ground in a shade-tolerant coffee farm at Cerro Negro,



Figure 1. Adult female (USNM 563606) of *Rhadinaea anachoreta*. The only previously published illustrations of this species are drawings of the head and midbody showing colour and scale pattern. © J. R. McCranie.

Santa Bárbara, Honduras. That locality lies at 900 m elevation along the border with Guatemala less than 0.5 km from the type locality of the species. The original vegetation at the site was Premontane Wet Forest in the Holdridge (1967) system, but the forests in the area were cleared more than 30 years ago. The small coffee farm where the specimen was collected is bordered above and on both sides by completely denuded and eroded pastures. There is no forest remaining in that area of Honduras, but there are numerous other shade-tolerant coffee farms in the area.

The new specimen of *Rhadinaea anachoreta* (USNM 563606) is an adult female with a total length of 216 mm and a tail length of 55 mm. Pertinent scale data are: ventrals 151; anal plate divided; subcaudals 68; supralabials 8–8, with fourth and fifth bordering eye; loreals 1–1; preoculars 1–1; postoculars 1–1; temporals 1+1–1+1; infralabials 8–8, with first pair in contact behind mental and first four on one side and first five on other side in contact with anterior pair of chinshields; dorsal scale rows 17–17–17, smooth, without apical pits. Thus, the specimen agrees in most aspects with the previously published data for the species, except that it has six fewer subcaudal scales than previously reported.

Colour in life for the new specimen (Figure 1; colour and codes from Smithe, 1975–1981): dorsal ground color Cinnamon (39) with Dark

Grayish Brown (20) stripes on upper and lower edges of scale rows 3 and 4, respectively, and on vertebral row and adjacent edges of paravertebral rows; Olive-Brown (28) supplemental stripes present on lower and upper edges of scale row 1 and lower edge of scale row 2; incomplete Buff (24) nuchal collar; dorsal surface of head Dusky Brown (19) with Buff mottling; supralabials anterior to eye Dusky Brown, supralabials 3–4 also with pale cream anterior edges; pale cream, incomplete postocular stripe present; ventral surface of body pale grayish brown, except for Olive-Brown lateral edges; subcaudal surface pale gray, except for Olive-Brown lateral edges; iris Dusky Brown.

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