

The colubrid snake *Geophis rhodogaster* (Cope) in Honduras

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GEOPHIS rhodogaster (Cope) is a small semifossorial snake that occurs in disjunct montane populations on the Pacific versant and along the Atlantic versant headwaters from eastern Chiapas, Mexico, to northwestern El Salvador (Downs, 1967; Smith, 1995). We spent 21st–24th June 2006 in the village of El Mojanal, Ocotepeque (1350m elevation), in extreme southwestern Honduras. All streams in the area feed into the Río Lempa, which empties into the Pacific Ocean along the coast of central El Salvador. On two occasions, we climbed a nearby mountain known as Cerro El Chuctal where we were fortunate enough to collect two specimens of *G. rhodogaster*, the first known records of the species from Honduras. One was taken under a log at 1830 m elevation on top of a ridge and the other was inside a rotten tree stump at 1800 m near a small stream. Cerro El Chuctal is in the Lower Montane Moist Forest formation of Holdridge (1967). The forests where the specimens were collected are largely broadleaf, but scattered pines are also present. *Geophis fulvoguttatus* was also collected on Cerro El Chuctal.

Pertinent data for the two Honduran *G. rhodogaster* (USNM 563347–48; both females), respectively, are: SVL 255, 304 mm; total length 296, 359 mm; ventrals 146, 144; subcaudals 30, 35. Both specimens have six supralabials and infralabials, 17–17–17 smooth dorsal body scale rows, 0+1 temporals, a single loreal that borders the eye, and a single postocular. Supraoculars are absent in both. These data are in agreement with that provided for the species by Downs (1967).



Colour in life of USNM 563348 (Fig. 1; colours and colour codes from Smithe, 1975–1981): all dorsal surfaces uniform Greenish Olive (49), except lower two and one-half scale rows on each side Spectrum Yellow (55) with Greenish Olive stripe on upper edge of scale row 2 and lower edge of scale row 3; incomplete Greenish Olive stripe also present along upper edge of scale row 1; supralabials and lower edge of loreal Spectrum Yellow; all ventral surfaces Spectrum Yellow; tail spine Greenish Olive on all surfaces; iris Greenish Olive.

The Honduran locality for this species lies only 6 km NNE of the highest peak of Cerro Montecristo. *Geophis rhodogaster* was previously known from the El Salvadoran side of Cerro Montecristo (Downs, 1967).

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Figure 1. Adult female (USNM 563348) of *Geophis rhodogaster*. © J. R. McCranie.