

## Herptiles Collected at Cano Palma

in March 1999

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On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999, a group of 17 people descended on Cano Palma. The visitors included three Board members, the Administrative Assistant, family members and friends. The purpose of the trip was to assess the capabilities of the station for that large of a group, to do a little work and to enjoy the atmosphere of Cano Palma.

One of my ongoing jobs is to collect a list of the 'Herpetofauna' (reptiles and amphibians) in the region. The weather was particularly dry for the task. Many species that had been regularly caught on previous trips were not observed. This led to a record low of only 40 species being observed. Despite this low count, 7 new species were found. Added to this list is an eighth important species that was observed by the station manager in 1998. This brings the total of the list to 78 species. The area that the observation covers includes the property of the Biological Station, pathways across the canal, the canal, the beach of Tortuguero (sea turtles) and in one species the town of Tortuguero. Another species that has been occasionally seen at the station is the eyelash viper. Our sightings however have always been at Tortuguero Park where it is regularly observed.

The new species caught were: *Hyla ebraccata*, *H. elaeochroa*, *Agalychnis calcarifer*, *Smilisca phaeota*, *Hyla* sp., *Hydromorphus concolor* & *Sphaerodactylus millepunctatus*. The eighth species observed by the station manager, Ross Knop, on the property was *Lachesis muta*. The first five species are all various forms of treefrogs, the six a tiny gecko and the seventh a small aquatic snake. The last specimen observed by Ross was the "Bushmaster", the largest venomous snake in the New World.

The total list this trip was:

### Frogs & Toads (Anurans)

5 species of *Eleutherodactylus* including *E. fitzingeri* & *E. bransfordi*. These are small brown ground dwelling frogs.  
*Leptodactylus pentadactylus*, the Smoky Jungle frog, and *L. melanonotus*; a smaller relative.  
*Rana palmipes*, a pond dwelling frog that can reach the size of a bull frog;  
*Dendrobates pumilio*, the strawberry poison dart frog;  
*Bufo marinus*, the giant toad and *B. conifera*, a green toad;  
*Agalychnis callidryas*, the red eyed treefrog, *A. calcarifer*, the barred treefrog,  
*Hyla ebraccata*, a beautiful yellow and brown treefrog, *H. elaeochroa*, a green boned treefrog and finally one other *Hyla* that did not fit the species key that I had with me.  
*Smilisca baudini*, the brown treefrog, *S. sordida*, the pale treefrog and *S. phaeota*, the green mustached treefrog.

### Turtles

Only two species were caught this time, *Kinosternon angustipons*, the white lipped mud turtle and *Rhinoclemmys funerea*, the river turtle.

### Lizards

*Hemidactylus garnoti?*, the Indo-Pacific house gecko; *Sphaerodactylus homolepis* & *S. millepunctatus*, (mini-geckos),  
*Basiliscus plumifrons*, the plumed basilisk, *Corytophanes cristatus*, the helmeted iguana; *Iguana iguana*, the green iguana, and anoles, *Norops humilis*, *N. limifrons*, and *N. oxylophus*.  
The jungle runner, *Ameiva festiva* and a microteid *Gymnophthalmus speciosus* were observed as were the skinks *Mabuya unimarginata* and *Sphenomorphus cherrei*.

## Snakes

*Leptophis depressirostris*, the Laura or parrot snake; *Mastigodryas melanomus*, the red bellied racer, *Hydromorphus concolor*, a watersnake; *Sibon annulata*, the annulated thirst snake and two venomous species, *Bothiechis schlegelii*, the eyelash viper observed in Tortuguero Park and *Bothrops asper*, the Terciopela or Fer de lance.

## Crocodilians

### Caiman crocodylus

As always something new was found. Coloured photos were taken to add to the list of species for the photo identity album now at the station. For anyone going to the area, please remember to take photos of everything you see. We wish to have the best identification album in the country. Your photos could help.