

A NEW LIZARD FROM THE SIERRA DEL NEVADO MOUNTAINS, CENTRAL ARGENTINA

Five subspecific taxa belonging to the iguanid *Phymaturus patagonicus* have been reported in a previous paper (Cei and Castro, 1973). They correspond to different and isolated geographical districts of the extended patagonian range of the species, between 36° and 46° South Latitude. The northernmost form recognized was *Phymaturus patagonicus payunia*, living in the basaltic rocks of the volcanic plateau of Payún, 2000 m, in southern Mendoza Province, near the Rio Grande and Colorado rivers. In late December 1973, a new form of the complex was discovered, 100 km northeast of the Payún plateau, on the southwestern slopes of the Sierra del Nevado range, the terminal volcanic relief, with many patagonian ecological features, facing the central Argentine lowlands. The form differs from all the recognized subspecies of *Phymaturus patagonicus*, especially from the neighboring *Phymaturus patagonicus payunia*, by a number of significant morphological characters. It is described here as:

Phymaturus patagonicus nevadoi subsp.n.

Holotype.—IBA-UNC-999-1. An adult male from Agua de la India Muerta, 1750 m, Nevado Mountains, Mendoza, Argentina, taken December 1973 by C. Willoud, C. Stassi and L. P. Castro. **Paratypes:** IBA-UNC-999-2-3. A male and female. Same locality as holotype.

Definition.—An homeomorphic subspecies of *Phymaturus patagonicus* characterized by dorsal brownish color with scattered regular small white spots; short hindlegs and forelegs; ventral scales larger than in all other described forms.

Distribution.—The same as holotype.

Description of holotype.—Snout-vent 86 mm, tail 123 mm, head length 18 mm, head width 16 mm, hind leg 50 mm. General aspect stout; adpressed limb scarcely reaching axilla. Head lepidosis and ear opening as in nominate form but with stronger and sharp pointed temporal scales. Gular and humeral folds moderate. Dorsal scales larger but more equal-sized and regularly disposed than in *Phymaturus patagonicus payunia*; slightly larger than in nominate form. Ventral scales larger than in other subspecies (1.4 mm; 1.0 mm in *patagonicus-zapalensis*, 1.2 mm in *somuncurensis-indistinctus*; 0.8 mm in *payunia*). Caudal scales slightly mucronate, without alternate rows; 7 brownish anal pores; 28-29 subdigital lamellae, with 3-5 keels.

Color in living animal dark brownish with regularly scattered, small round white spots (4-9 scales), larger on flanks. Ventral surface whitish or yellowish with fine dark spots on throat. Tail pale brown, unbanded.

Variation.—No sex dimorphism in color. Hind leg and foreleg shorter in the females; 8 anal pores in a male. Size of paratypes (snout/vent): 86 mm ♂, 98 mm ♀.

Remarks.—*Phymaturus patagonicus nevadoi* is probably the northernmost population of the species. Its noticeable differentiation from the neighboring *payunia* suggests a probable ancient dispersal and ecological specialization of the species as a whole, in association with rocky environments shared with *Liolaemus austromendocinus* in Mendoza Province.

LITERATURE CITED

Cei, J. M. and L. P. Castro. 1973. Taxonomic and serological researches on the *Phymaturus patagonicus* complex. J. Herp. 7(3):237-247.

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