

OPHRYACUS UNDULATUS IN THE MEXICAN STATE OF HIDALGO

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Ophryacus undulatus is a crotaline snake endemic from moderate to high elevations in the Sierra Madre del Sur in the Mexican states of Guerrero, Oaxaca, and west-central Veracruz. The elevation range for *O. undulatus* is between 1800 and 2800 meters above sea level in pine-oak and cloud forest; for more details and a map, see Campbell and Lamar (1989).

This snake previously has been reported from Hidalgo (Martín del Campo, 1935; Smith, 1941), but the only record from that state (Actopan) was considered suspect by Campbell and Lamar (1989), who mentioned that another possible locality of the same name in the state of Veracruz is probably too low to be considered valid.

Based on the literature, the only seemingly valid records are from the states of Veracruz, Guerrero, and Oaxaca. The first mention in the literature of the Actopan, Hidalgo, locality was in Ferrari-Pérez (1886:190), who listed one specimen from the "State of Vera Cruz, Actopan." Subsequently, Cope (1887:88) described the genus *Ophryacus*, probably based on the same specimen reported by Ferrari-Pérez. The same locality (Actopan, Vera Cruz) was referred by Günther (1895-1902:187), giving credit for the locality data to the Comisión Geográfico-Exploradora.

Martín del Campo (1935), in a paper on the geographic distribution of the poisonous reptiles of Mexico, made an extensive review of the available literature. The only reference cited by Martín del Campo that reported Actopan as a locality for *Ophryacus*, is found in Günther's (1885-1902) *Biología Centrali Americana*, although Martín del Campo cited this locality as in the state of Hidalgo and not in Veracruz. Listing the record from Hidalgo probably was a mistake by Martín del Campo (1935), perpetuated in Smith (1941). The locality data were corrected in Smith and Taylor (1945).

Martín del Campo (1936) published a paper on the fauna of Actopan, Hidalgo. He described the region as having a dry and hot climate, with cacti, mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora*), and Peru trees (*Schinus molle*). Agricultural products consisted of magueyes, corn, and wheat. According to this description, the region of Actopan, Hidalgo, is a highly unlikely locality for *Ophryacus undulatus*.

Whether the species occurs at Actopan, Veracruz, or not, the fact is that *Ophryacus undulatus* has only questionably been reported from the state of Hidalgo.

During a survey of the herpetofauna of Hidalgo, we collected five specimens (one lost) of this rare viper in the highlands of the extreme eastern part of the state, in el Potrero, Municipality of Tenango de Doria, at 2200 meters in a cloud forest. Two specimens were encountered on or near fallen logs and one was captured on a bush about one meter above the ground.

Taxonomic data for the specimens follows, including four values for each character, corresponding, respectively, to two males, M1 and M2, and two females, F1 and F2: all specimens have 12 intersupraoculars; supralabials 7-8, 9-8, 8-8, 9-8; infralabials 10-10, 9-9, 9-9, 11-11; 21 scales rows at midbody; ventrals 164, 162, 167, 169. One specimen (M1) has a broken tail. The number of subcaudals in the others are: 44, 40, 42 divided subcaudals. Measurements in millimeters of the four specimens are: snout-vent length 230, 550, 520, 600; tail 35 (broken), 77, 40, 75; head length 10.5, 16.3, 15.0, 14.9.

The coloration of the top of the head of these specimens is olive green, the interorbital region darker; a band of brownish green above the supralabials from tip of the snout to the neck; some yellow marks bordered by black on the supralabials; infralabials about same color as supralabials but paler. The dorsum is olive green with irregular markings of variable shape; these markings are ochre and most of them have black edges. It seems that females tend to be darker than males. Number of dorsal spots on body (except M1) are: 48, 44, 49. The gular and chin regions are pale yellow and the venter of greenish yellow, being darker posteriorly. The venter has small black spots and ventrals with pale yellow borders. The mental has a yellow mark, the shape of an inverted triangle. The iris is black bordered by yellow.

All specimens, except M1, are alive at Vivario ENEP-Iztacala, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and will be deposited in the Museo de Zoología, Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (MZFC numbers 04825-04828).

In general, the specimens from eastern Hidalgo have characteristics that fall within the range reported by Campbell and Lamar (1989), except for the number of supralabials and infralabials reported by these authors as 10-13 and 11-14, respectively. Further study on the geographic variation in this species is needed.

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PREDATION ON IMPORTED FIRE ANTS BY BLIND SNAKES

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In the summer of 1989, a blind snake (*Leptotyphlops dulcis*) was uncovered by Wivagg in an active fire ant nest (*Solenopsis* sp.) in a suburban yard in Waco, Texas. The seemingly