

THE HERPETOLOGY OF CAJA DE MUERTOS ISLAND AND CARDONA KEY, PORTO RICO

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The interesting little Island of Caja de Muertos, Coffin Island, 8 miles off Ponce, Porto Rico, has been nearly ignored by herpetologists. It is not mentioned by Stejneger, 1904, in his "Herpetology of Porto Rico", or by Barbour, 1930, in his "A List of Antillean Reptiles and Amphibians". Schmidt, 1928, Vol. X, Part 1, "Scientific Survey of Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands" mentions *Anolis cristatellus*, *Ameiva wetmorei* and *Alsophis portoricensis* as the only forms known from the Island.

On July 26th, 1931, the joint writers visited the Island and secured the following 53 specimens, adding 3 species to the fauna, bringing the total to 6 species:

Anolis cristatellus, 21; very numerous and apparently not differing in habits or form from the mainland specimens.

Anolis pulchellus, 3; not abundant, but apparently not differing in form or coloring from the mainland specimens.

Ameiva exsul, 6; not abundant, seemingly the dorso-lateral stripes persist longer than in the mainland specimens.

Ameiva wetmorei eleanorae, 6; not abundant; described in this paper.

Sphaerodactylus townsendi, 17; not rare, differ slightly from the Vieques and Porto Rican specimens.

On August 20, 1931, we received a small collection comprising *Anolis pulchellus*, 3; *Sphaerodactylus townsendi*, 4; *Typhlops jamaicensis* sp. ?, 2; *Alsophis portoricensis*, 3; and *Phyllodactylus tuberculosus*, 1, adding 3 species to the fauna, bringing the total to 9 species.

On November 26, 1931, the senior writer again visited Caja de Muertos and captured 38 specimens:

<i>Sphaerodactylus townsendi</i> ,	5;	<i>Ameiva wetmorei eleanorae</i> ,	14;
<i>Phyllodactylus tuberculosus</i> ,	1;	<i>Ameiva exsul</i> ,	3;
<i>Anolis pulchellus</i> ,	1;	<i>Typhlops jamaicensis</i> , sp.?,	2;
<i>Anolis cristatellus</i> ,	11;	<i>Alsophis portoricensis</i>	1.

The *Alsophis* do not resemble the series of eight *A. portoricensis* in the Grant collection, but resemble the series of thirty *A. antillensis* in the same collection, in color and pattern but not in squamation.

The *Typhlops* appears to be distinct.

Barbour mentions *Phyllodactylus spatulatus* Cope; "Barbados collected years ago, about 1861, in fact, by Dr. Theodore Gill. I have no recent information as to its status". This is the nearest record of this genus to the present locality. The present find adds a genus to the Porto Rico fauna and a species to the Antilles.

On November 26, 1931, the senior writer visited Cardona Key, a tiny sand-coral islet bearing a light-house, off the harbor of Ponce. *Ameiva exsul* fairly swarms and *Anolis cristatellus* is numerous. Nine *Ameiva exsul* and three *Anolis cristatellus* were taken. *Exsul* exhibited a wide range of color and pattern, but no turquoise blue tails or red or salmon undersides were seen. Some specimens had light brown unmarked backs, others had two complete white lines below the dorso-lateral line along the sides, formed by the coalescence of white dots. *Cristatellus* showed no markings and a plain olive fan.

Ameiva wetmorei eleanorae subsp. nov.

There are 135 specimens of *A. wetmorei* in the Grant collection from the neighborhood of Cabo Rojo, P. R. There is little variation in this series. The white stripes are narrow and there is a faint brown stripe between the mid-dorsal stripe and the continuation of the subocular white stripe. This brown stripe is the continuation of the subocular white stripe.

Type No. 2734, Grant Collection, July 26, 1931, Caja de Muertos Island, Porto Rico. Collectors, Roosevelt and Grant.

Diagnosis: Differs from *A. wetmorei* in having wider dorso-lateral white stripes. The supraocular white stripes usually stop at the base of neck instead of continuing on to tail as a brown stripe.

Habitat: Caja de Muertos Island, Porto Rico.

Proportions and squamation: As in *A. wetmorei*.

Color and pattern: The mid dorsal white line turns blue as it passes the sacrum. In the Muertos form this wide blue stripe includes an uneven, broken central black line from near the sacrum. In the Porto Rican form if the central black line occurs at all, it is much further down the tail. The supraocular white line usually stops at the neck in the Muertos form, leaving a jet black space between the middorsal white line and the continuation of the subocular white line. In the rare cases where this line continues in the Muertos form, it is merely as a faint white line. In the Porto Rican form, the supraocular white line turns brown at the shoulders and continues onto the tail. In the Muertos form the lowest white

line which runs from armpit to groin is as clear cut and distinct as those above it. In the Porto Rico form, the lowest white line is blurred or wider than the ones above it. The Muertos form has a much tidier clear cut pattern with more contrast.

WIDTH IN SCALES OF MIDDORSAL WHITE LINE AT:

	scapular		midbody		sacral	
	min	max	min	max	min	max
<i>A. wetmorei eleanorae</i>	2	3	3	3½	3½	5
<i>A. wetmorei</i>	1	2¼	1½	3	2½	4

AVERAGES OF THE ABOVE:

	scapular	midbody	sacral
<i>A. wetmorei eleanorae</i>	2.5	3.2	4.1
<i>A. wetmorei</i>	1.9	2.2	3.3
<i>difference</i>6	1.0	.8

Remarks: Specimens taken 20. Named in honor of the junior writer's Mother, Eleanor Roosevelt.

The habits of this species are mentioned by the senior writer in "Copeia", July, 1931.