



Trachylepis septemtaeniata. King Khalid Wildlife Research Centre, Thumamah.
(Photo: Peter Cunningham)

REPTILIA: SQUAMATA; SERPENTES

COLUBRIDAE

***Dipsadoboa underwoodi* Rasmussen, 1993**
Underwood's Rear-fanged Tree-Snake

Cameroon, South-West Province, Mt. Cameroon area, Bakingili, 4° 4' 54.2"N, 9° 1' 39.5"E; 140 m a.s.l.; 13 December 2005; V. Gvoždík.

Dipsadoboa underwoodi was described from Cameroon (type locality: Mukonjefarm, Mundame), where it predominantly occurs in lowland rain forests (Rasmussen 1993). The known distribution comprises the area from Guinea to Congo (Chippaux 2006). Recently, a comprehensive study of the reptile fauna of the Mt. Cameroon area was published (Gonwouo *et al.* 2007), and *Dipsadoboa v. viridis* was the only species of *Dipsadoboa* mentioned. However, Rasmussen

(1989) listed also *D. duchesnii* from a locality from the Mt. Cameroon area (Mukundange), and further Rasmussen (1993) even examined several museum specimens of *D. weileri* and *D. underwoodi* from the area within his taxonomic review of the genus (*D. weileri*: Bibundi, Buea, Idenau; *D. underwoodi*: Bibundi, Idenau, Victoria = Limbe). Herein, a further report confirming a recent occurrence of *D. underwoodi* on the foothill of Mt. Cameroon near Bakingili village is presented.

The snake, probably an adult male, was found after dusk on the ground in the leaf litter at the margin of disturbed lowland rain forest. It was photographed, morphologically investigated, and later determined according to the keys of Rasmussen (1993) and Chippaux (2006). Basic morphological characters were as follows: total length ca 520 mm (snout-vent length 400 mm, tail length 120 mm), 17 dorsal scale rows at mid-body, 195 ventrals, 87 subcaudals (single), anal shield single, frontal shield 1.3 times as long as broad (4 x 3 mm), large eyes – diameter of the eye 1.1 x the length of the snout (the latter was measured dorsally). The dorsal colour was brownish with fine yellow marbling or small dots, skin slightly opalescent. The belly was of bright yellow colour, the underside of the tail was grey.

Thus, *D. underwoodi*, *D. weileri* and *D. duchesnii* (cf. Rasmussen 1989, 1993; see also Chirio & LeBreton 2007) increase the number of known reptile species for the Mt. Cameroon area to at least 89 species (cf. Gonwouo *et al.* 2007, 86 species). However, the real number could be probably even higher, as a presence of *D. unicolor* is also of a high probability since the species has been reported from Bioko Island and several places in the Cameroon mountain range (Rasmussen 1993). The presence of all the five above mentioned species sympatrically was reported by Herrmann *et al.* (2005) from Mt. Nlonako, Cameroon, which may suggest a possible multi-species sympatry of *Dipsadoboa* also in the Mt. Cameroon area.

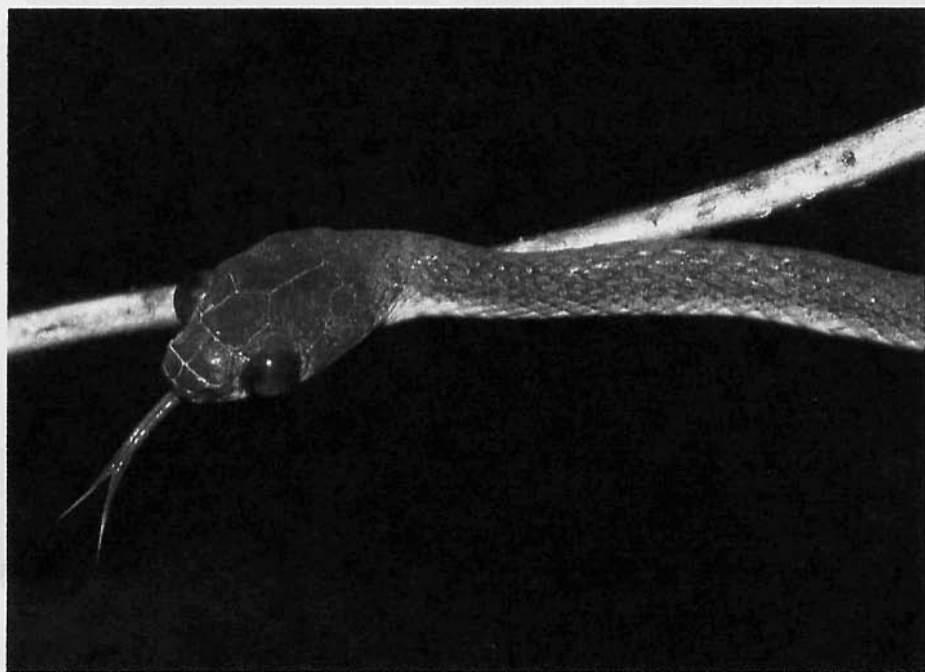
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Submitted by

Václav GVOŽDÍK, National Museum, Department of Zoology, Václavské náměstí 68, 115 79 Prague, Czech Republic; Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, 277 21 Liběchov, Czech Republic. E-mail: vgvozdik@email.cz.



Dipsadoboa underwoodi. Bakingili village, Mt. Cameroon area, Cameroon.
(Photo: Václav Gvoždík)