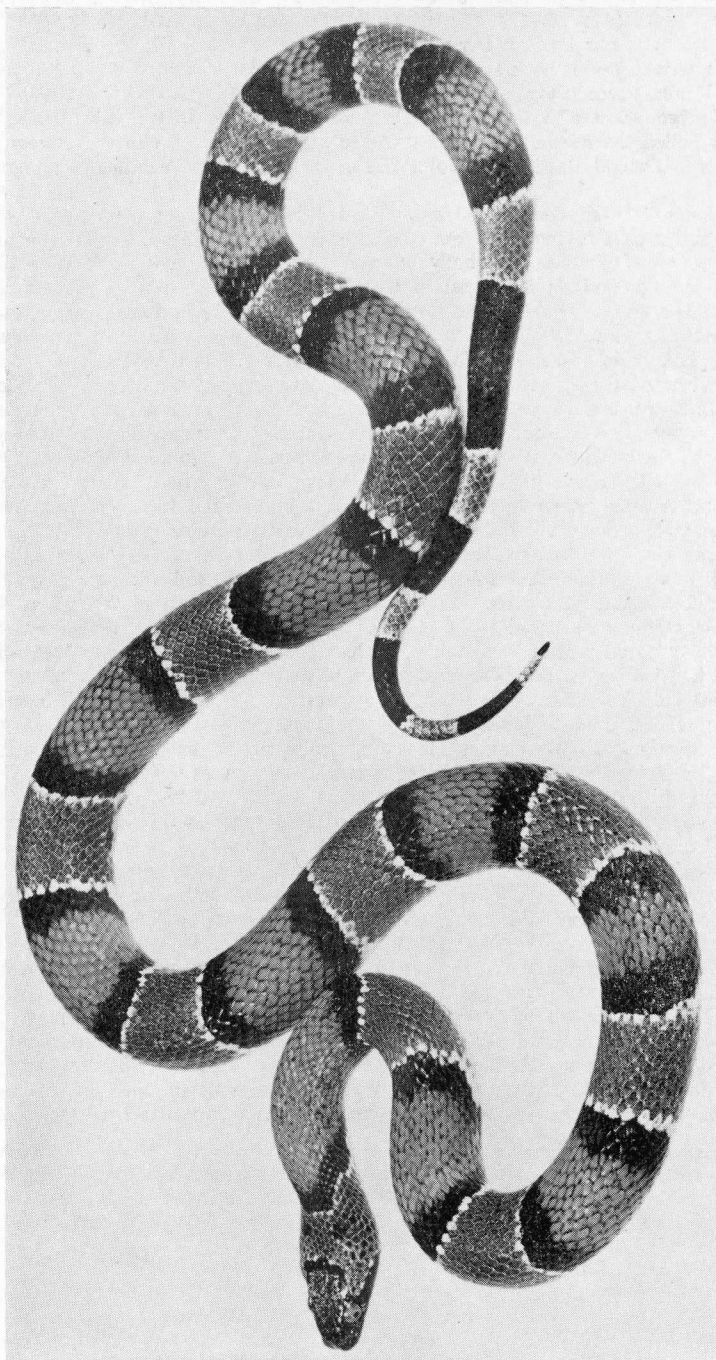


AN ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN OF *LAMPROPELTIS BLAIRI*
FROM TEXAS

RALPH W. AXTELL



Lampropeltis blairi Flury. Adult male, 11 miles N.W. Del Rio, Val Verde Co., Texas. Total length 669 mm.

AN ADDITIONAL SPECIMEN OF *LAMPROPELTIS BLAIRI* FROM TEXAS.—A second specimen of *Lampropeltis blairi* was collected while the original description (Flury, 1950, COPEIA (3): 215-17) was in press. This snake was taken about 79 miles southeast of the type locality. During a short collecting trip with W. W. Milstead and Glen Fry, the writer found the snake active about 10 P. M. on June 9, 1950, 200 yards east of the Devils River bridge, Val Verde County, on U. S. Highway No. 90. The individual has been kept alive at the San Antonio Zoo, where John Werler has taken and kindly supplied the life history notes included in this paper. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Donald Darling and John Werler for use of their excellent photograph of *L. blairi*.

Description of the specimen three months after capture: male; head much wider than neck; total length (living) 669 mm.; tail length 105 mm.; head length 20.6 mm.; head width 13 mm.; girth at mid-body 46 mm.; rostral $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as long as high, and notched by old wound; internasals and prefrontals paired; frontal quintangular; parietals paired; supralabials 7-7, preoculars 1-1; postoculars 3-3; loreals single, twice as wide as high; temporals (R) $2 + 3 + 4$, (L) $3 + 4 + 4$, with little variation in size; mental small; chin shields 4; infralabials 10-10; dorsal scale rows 25-25-27-26-21-20-19; with two apical pits per scale; ventrals 227; anal entire; caudals 63. The color pattern (Plate I) consists of alternating saddles and rings occurring in this order: red, black, white, gray, white, black, red; head with mottled pattern; snout, internasals, prefrontals and labials black with a few white specks; remaining dorsal head scales black heavily speckled with white; first gray band covering jowls and neck; black transverse U-shaped band crossing posterior edge of parietals; a black band from eye to angle of mouth; infralabials gray to black, becoming speckled toward center of chin.

The overall body pattern agrees well with the type, but differs in length and number of bands. There are 13 dull-red saddles on the body, one on the tail. The type, however, has 14 red body saddles with three on the tail. The average length of the red saddles, exclusive of the most anterior which is 17 scales long, is 6.2 scale lengths. The average length of the type's red saddles is 6.7 scale lengths. There are 26 black rings ($2\frac{1}{2}$ scales long) on the body, 6 on the tail. The type has 28 black rings (1 to 2 scales long) on the body, 7 on the tail. The 13 gray body bands ($5\frac{1}{2}$ scales long), and 5 gray tail bands of the snake are all bordered by white rings ($\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 scale long). The type has 14 gray body bands averaging 7 scale lengths (including white rings), and 4 gray tail bands, one of which is above the anus. The venter is much like that of the type.

After being in captivity for one week the snake was offered two dead mice, which it took without hesitation. Two dead specimens of *Sceloporus merriami* were eaten on the same night. The snake then ate mice regularly for a month. During August (1950) it refused further offerings of mice, but took lizards (*Sceloporus olivaceus*) instead. It has continued to take lizards to this date (March 1951). Lizards, both dead and alive, have been taken from the hand. They are seized after a sudden forward thrust of the anterior half of the body. If the lizard attempts any movement, it is held to the ground by a part of the snake's body. Further struggling of the lizard causes the serpent to bring its constricting powers into play. This snake however, uses no close coils, as do most of the larger individuals of *Lampropeltis*. The snake is active mostly at night and early morning. It often is found with its body wedged between the inside frame of the lid and the side of the cage. During diurnal hours it either remains coiled on the moss of the cage floor, or hidden beneath it. The specimen shows no predilection for water. Measurements have been taken twice since the specimen has been in captivity (see table).

Character	Measurements (in mm.) 9/23/50	Measurements (in mm.) 3/4/51	Growth (in mm.)
Total length	669	720	51
Tail length	105	113	8
Snout-vent length	564	607	43
Head length	20.6	21.2	0.6
Head width	13	14	1
Girth at mid-body	46	53.5	7.5

—RALPH W. AXTELL, Department of Zoology, University of Texas, Austin 12, Texas.