

★ ★ ★

Lampropeltis alterna from Pecos County, Texas

By John S. Mecham and William W. Milstead

Published records for *Lampropeltis alterna* (Brown) list the following Texas localities: Davis Mountains, Jeff Davis County—type locality (Brown, 1901); Chisos Mountains, Brewster County (Murray, 1939); and Sierra Vieja Mountains, Presidio County (Jameson and Flury, 1949). A recent collecting trip to West Texas by J. A. Herrmann and the writers yielded one specimen of *Lampropeltis alterna* from the Stockton Plateau in Pecos County, Texas, approximately 15 miles west of Bakersfield. The specimen was found DOR on U. S. Highway 290 about midnight on September 17, 1949.

Due to the few specimens of the species known, we deem it advisable to give the following description of the Pecos County specimen: the snake is a female, 773 mm in length; tail length 119.5 mm; head length 26.5 mm; ventrals 218; subcaudals 58; preoculars 1-1; postoculars 2-2; supralabials 7-7; infralabials 11-11; temporals 3-3-4 on both the left and right sides; DSC 25-25-21.

The dorsal coloration agrees in general with previous descriptions in that there are twenty black bands split by red alternating with fifteen narrower black bands on a ground color of slate gray, five scale rows in width, between the bands. The narrow black bands are absent between the fourth and fifth and the fourteenth and fifteenth wide bands, and are reduced to spots posterior to the fifteenth. The first black and red band on the neck is eleven scales wide at the mid-dorsal line, and the remaining nineteen are from 4 to 7 scales wide, broken intermittently by the ground color. The red coloration is limited to the dorsal scales and is not present on the lateral scales. There is no red in the last two bands on the tail. All of the bands are bordered with a narrow margin of white, one-half scale in width, as described by Jameson and Flury (1949) and as shown by Murray (1939) in his illustration. The black bands of the dorsum extend onto the edges of the ventral plates. The ventral plates are white, mottled with black.

This record extends the known range of *Lampropeltis alterna* eastward in Trans-Pecos Texas to the Stockton Plateau and indicates a wider distribution for the species than has been previously indicated. The remains of a *Sceloporus undulatus consobrinus* were contained in the stomach of the specimen. The snake is No. 7420 in the Texas Natural History Collection of the University of Texas.

Literature Cited

- Brown, A. E. 1901. A new species of *Ophibolus* from western Texas. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia, 53:612-13.
- Jameson, David L., and Flury, Alvin G. 1949. The reptiles and amphibians of the Sierra Vieja range of southwestern Texas. Tex. Journ. Sci., 1:54-77.
- Murray, Leo T. 1939. Annotated list of amphibians and reptiles from the Chisos mountains. Contrib. Baylor Univ. Mus., No. 24:9-12.
- Department of Zoology, University of Texas, Austin, Texas