Easternmost record of the Cuban Broad-banded Trope, *Tropidophis feicki* (Squamata: Tropidophiidae)

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*Tropidophis feicki* Schwartz, 1957 is restricted to densely forested limestone mesic areas in western Cuba (Schwartz & Henderson 1991; Henderson & Powell 2009). This species has been reported from about 20 localities distributed from near Guane, in Pinar del Río Province, to Ciénaga de Zapata, in Matanzas Province Rivalta et al., 2013; GBIF 2020; Fig. 1).

On 30 June 2009 and on 22 December 2011 we found an adult male and an adult female *Tropidophis feicki* (ca. 400 mm SVL; Fig. 2), respectively, at the entrance of the “Cueva de la Virgen” hot cave (22.8201, -80.1384; 30 m a.s.l.; WGS 84; point 14 in Fig. 1). The cave is located within “Mogotes de Jumagua” Ecological Reserve, Sagua La Grande Municipality, Villa Clara Province. This locality represents the first record of this species for central Cuba, particularly for Villa Clara Province. This new record is about 123 km northeast (airline distance) of the nearest previous record at Playa Máquina, Ciénaga de Zapata, Matanzas Province (Rodríguez & Rivalta 2007).

**Figure 1.** Map of western and central Cuba depicting the distribution of *Tropidophis feicki*, including records from the literature (yellow dots) and this paper (red dots). Numbered localities are in the text. The question mark (?) represents a published record that needs confirmation (i.e., “San Ubaldo-Sabanalamar” Flora Reserve; Rodríguez et al. 2013).
Other new locality records for *T. feicki* are indicated by numbers in Figure 1. PINAR DEL RÍO Province. Guane Municipality: (1) Sierra de Guane (22.2025, -84.0561); Minas de Matahambre Municipality: (2) Sierra La Mar (22.5070, -83.9446); and (3) Sierra Gramales (22.4991, -83.9030). Viñales Municipality: (4) Maravillas de Viñales trail (22.5631, -83.8336); (5) SE of Pan de Azúcar (22.6177, -83.8231); (6) Sierra del Infierno (22.6152, -83.7770); (7) Mogote del Valle (22.6148, -83.7341); and (8) Mogote La Mina (22.6969, -83.6628). La Palma Municipality: (9) Sierra Guacamaya (22.6964, -83.5739); and (10) Cueva Los Portales (22.6689, -83.4790). ARTEMISA Province. San Cristóbal Municipality: (11) Río Santa Cruz (22.7495, -83.1498). Caimito Municipality: (12) Sierra Esperón (22.9566, -82.6243). MAYABEQUE Province: border between Jaruco and San José de las Lajas municipalities: (13) entrance of Cueva del Indio (23.0183, -82.0896).

Records of *Tropidophis feicki* outside the Guaniguanico mountain range are scarce and isolated (Fig. 1). Intermediate records between this mountain range and Matanzas Province have been mapped in previous works without details (Schwartz & Henderson 1991; Tolson & Henderson 1993). These records were overlooked in later contributions (Rodríguez et al. 2013). Nonetheless, our records from Sierra Esperón and Cueva del Indio corroborate the occurrence of the species in this intermediate area.

![Figure 2. Adult female Tropidophis feicki from “Mogotes de Jumagua” Ecological Reserve, Villa Clara Province, the easternmost record of the species. Scale bar in millimeters. Photo by E. Morell Savall.](image)

We also report natural history observations from individuals outside of the Guaniguanico mountain range. We found *Tropidophis feicki* from “Mogotes de Jumagua” Ecological Reserve about two hours after sunset foraging on limestone cliffs between 1.5 and 2 m above the ground, which is consistent with previous observations (Schwartz 1957; Schwartz & Henderson 1991). We kept them in captivity for several months and noted that they were permanently as pale as other individuals from western populations during the pale phase at night (Rehák 1987; Hedges et al. 1989). We observed the same pattern in two individuals from Sierra Esperón, in which the ground color was also permanently pale yellowish instead of whitish (pale phase) or grayish brown (dark phase). The snakes from Ciénaga de Zapata exhibited an unusual pinkish ground coloration (O.H. Garrido pers. comm.).

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References


