

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of
Sciences and Affiliated Societies

Nebraska Academy of Sciences

1988

New Distributional Records of Lizards in Wyoming

Randall Morrison

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lawrence Powell

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tnas>



Part of the [Life Sciences Commons](#)

Morrison, Randall and Powell, Lawrence, "New Distributional Records of Lizards in Wyoming" (1988).
Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences and Affiliated Societies. 187.
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tnas/187>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Nebraska Academy of Sciences at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences and Affiliated Societies by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

NEW DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORDS OF LIZARDS IN WYOMING

Randall Morrison and Lawrence Powell

School of Biological Sciences
University of Nebraska–Lincoln
Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0118

Based upon published evidence (Baxter and Stone, 1985), either lizard distributions in Wyoming are extremely patchy or they are not well known. It is apparent that many of the localities for different species are coincidental and clustered in particular areas of the state, suggesting that parts of the state are better collected than others, and that much is still to be learned about the distributions of Wyoming lizards. We report some observations of lizards in Wyoming, some with vouchers and some without, that are of some distributional significance. Five species or subspecies of lizards were observed at four localities.

† † †

Cnemidophorus sexlineatus (Linnaeus)

We observed, but did not capture, a juvenile of this species on the Triangle X Ranch in Platte County, Wyoming, on August 15, 1987 (T24N R70W Sec. 34 NW¼, 1555 m) about 40 km W of the nearest published record (Baxter and Stone, 1985). The ranch is approximately 26.3 km W and 9.4 km S of Wheatland, near the Platte County border on the Laramie River (Fig. 1). The lizard appeared to be about 3 cm SVL (snout–vent length), and still had a juvenile color pattern. We saw it in short grass near a dry creek bed, at the bottom of a 30 m-deep draw with steep till sides.

Holbrookia maculata maculata Girard

Baxter and Stone (1985) indicated that the northwesternmost locality of this species in Wyoming is about 15 km SW of La Grange in Laramie County (Fig. 1). On August 15, 1987, also on the Triangle X Ranch in Platte County, we captured a specimen of it (UNSM [University of Nebraska State Museum] 9525) slightly farther up the same dry creek bed in which the *Cnemidophorus sexlineatus* was observed. It was first observed running over an open area on the edge of a large patch of sagebrush growing in a crook of the stream bed. The specimen is female, 4.3 cm SVL. This locality establishes a range extension of approximately 96 km to the northwest of the nearest locality

indicated in Baxter and Stone (1985), but is still in the foothills of the easternmost range of mountains in Wyoming, the Laramie Mountains.

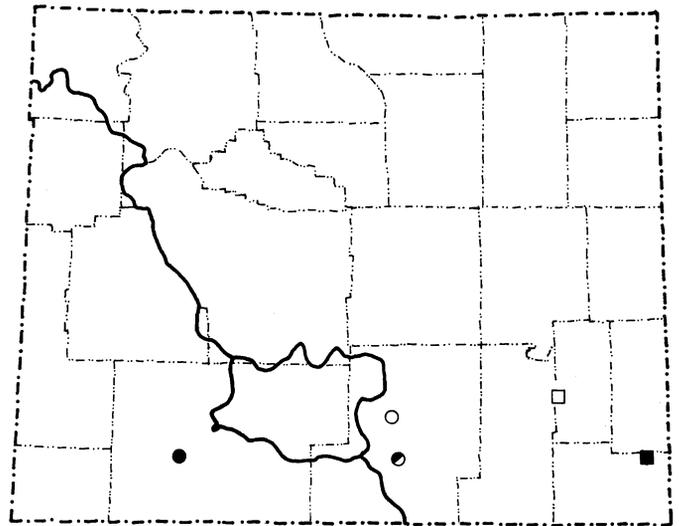


FIGURE 1. Map of Wyoming showing counties and the major range extensions of lizards documented in this paper. Closed circle: nearest locality of *Sceloporus undulatus elongatus* in the Colorado River basin (Sweetwater County). Half-closed circle: locality reported by Hammerson and Lapin (1980) (Carbon County). Open circle: locality reported for *Sceloporus undulatus elongatus* in this paper in addition to the two reports here of *Sceloporus graciosus graciosus* (Carbon County). Closed square: nearest locality of *Holbrookia maculata maculata* reported in Baxter and Stone (1985) (Laramie County). Open square: locality reported for *Holbrookia maculata maculata* in this paper (Platte County). The solid line indicates the continental divide.

Sceloporus graciosus graciosus Baird and Girard

We collected specimens at two localities in Carbon County on August 4, 1987. The first is approximately 12.7 km NNE of Sinclair (T22N R86W Sec. 14 NE¼, 1966 m) (Fig. 1); five

specimens were collected (UNSM 9641–9645, three adults and two juveniles). Several other individuals were observed but not captured. The second locality is approximately 4 km S of the Seminole Dam (T24N R70W Sec. 8, 2042 m) (Fig. 1), where we captured three specimens (UNSM 9646–9648). All were on rocky outcrops with scattered sagebrush. All preferred relatively low perches or stayed partially concealed under sagebrush or rocks. Both localities are well within the range indicated for this species by Baxter and Stone (1985). The notable feature of these two collections is the general coloration of the animals. The specimens collected near the Seminole Dam in Wyoming are in life pale and similar to the specimens from Morrill County in western Nebraska reported by Lynch (1985). The specimens from NNE of Sinclair are much darker animals with much dark brown in their color pattern. Groups of animals from all three localities were maintained in the laboratory for a few months, and all maintained the same colors as when collected.

Sceloporus undulatus elongatus Stejneger

Hammerson and Lapin (1980) documented the presence of this lizard in Carbon County near the Overland Trail Crossing of the North Platte River (University of Colorado Museum of Natural History 52679–52829). That was the first report of *S. u. elongatus* outside the Colorado River basin in Wyoming, and was a range extension of approximately 182 km E of the nearest locality indicated in Baxter and Stone (1980) in Sweetwater County (Fig. 1). On August 4, 1987, we collected a specimen (UNSM 9636) 12.7 km NNE of Sinclair on the North Platte River (T22N R86W Sec. 14 NE¼, 1966 m). This is approximately 33 km NNW of the locality reported by Hammerson and Lapin (1980) (Fig. 1). This specimen was on a steep rocky slope with boulders and smaller rocks interspersed with sagebrush on the west bank of the river. When observed, it was sunning on a boulder, as were two other individuals that were observed but not captured. These lizards were living sympatrically with *S. g. graciosus* which were generally located on much lower perches. This specimen is male, 7.15 cm SVL. The discovery of this population of *S. u. elongatus* farther north along the North Platte River minimally suggests that there is a disjunct population of this subspecies on the eastern side of the continental divide, if there is not a continuous distribution with the *S. u. elongatus* in the Colorado River basin across the continental divide. Our discovery of this subspecies in this part of Wyoming suggests that the status of *S. u. elongatus*, *S. u. erythrocheilus* and *S. u. garmani* needs clarification.

Sceloporus undulatus erythrocheilus Maslin

We collected a specimen of this lizard (UNSM 9635) August 15, 1987, on the Triangle X Ranch in Platte County, approximately 14 km W of the nearest locality reported in Baxter and Stone (1985), and thus a minor range extension. It was sunning on a pile of lumber in a farmyard. This specimen is female, 7.24 cm SVL.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank Dr. Willard Woods of Wheatland, WY, for permission to work on his land, and Mr. Dale Strickland, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, who helped us get collecting permits. This research was conducted while the authors were staying at the University of Nebraska's Cedar Point Biological Station, Keith County, Nebraska, and we wish to thank the directors, Linda Vescio and Anthony Joern, for the use of the facilities. We also wish to thank John Lynch for many helpful suggestions and improvements to this paper.

REFERENCES

- Baxter, G.T., and M.D. Stone. 1980. *Amphibians and Reptiles of Wyoming*. Bulletin of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, 16:1–137.
- _____. and _____. 1985. *Amphibians and Reptiles of Wyoming*. Second edition. Bulletin of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, 1–137.
- Hammerson, G.A., and B.P. Lapin. 1980. Geographic distribution, Lacertilia. *Herpetological Review*, 11(4): 115.
- Lynch, J.D. 1985. Annotated Checklist of the Amphibians and Reptiles of Nebraska. *Transactions of the Nebraska Academy of Sciences*, 13: 33–57.