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Boa Constrictor

Are R. Berentsen

USDA National Wildlife Research Center, Are.R.Berentsen@aphis.usda.gov

Juan G. Garcia-Cancel

Auburn University

Edna M. Diaz-Negron

USDA/APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center

Oscar A. Diaz-Marrero

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Cabo Rojo and Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuges

Alberto R. Puente-Rolón

Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Are R. Berentsen, Juan G. Garcia-Cancel, Edna M. Diaz-Negron, Oscar A. Diaz-Marrero, Alberto R. Puente-Rolón, Robert N. Reed, and Kurt C. VerCauteren

BOA CONSTRICTOR (Boa Constrictor). USA: PUERTO RICO: MUNICIPALITY OF CABO ROJO: Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge (17.978958°N, 67.170910°W; NAD 83). 10 November 2014. O. A. Diaz-Marrero. Verified by S. M. Boback. National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution (USNM Herp Image 2838a, b; photo vouchers). First municipality record for this exotic species; all previous reports were restricted to the Municipality of Mayaguez, located ca. 25 km north of Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge. Reynolds et al. (2013. *Biol. Invasions* 15:953–959) concluded that Boa Constrictor introductions into Puerto Rico were likely related to the pet trade and that they genetically matched snakes belonging to the South American clade (*B. constrictor*), instead of *B. imperator*, the Mesoamerican species (Hynková et al. 2009. *Zool. Sci.* 26:623–631). It also represents the first report of this species from a protected area in Puerto Rico.

An interesting feature relates to why the snake was detected in the first place. It was a direct result of USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services personnel tracking a radio-collared Mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*) as part of a rabies study. The collar was broadcasting a mortality signal that was tracked to the fairly large gravid female *B. constrictor*, which was captured, sacrificed, and later underwent a necropsy that revealed a fully digested mongoose and its functional intact radio collar.

ARE R. BERENTSEN, USDA/APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Ave., Fort Collins, Colorado 80521, USA (e-mail: Are.R.Berentsen@aphis.usda.gov); **JUAN G. GARCIA-CANCEL**, USDA/APHIS/Wildlife Services, 602 Duncan, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama 36849, USA; **EDNA M. DIAZ-NEGRON**, USDA/APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Ave., Fort Collins, Colorado 80521, USA; **OSCAR A. DIAZ-MARRERO**, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Cabo Rojo and Laguna Cartagena National Wildlife Refuges, Boqueron, Puerto Rico, 00622; **ALBERTO R. PUENTE-ROLÓN**, Departamento de Ciencias y Tecnología, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Arecibo, PO Box 4050, Arecibo, Puerto Rico, 00614; **ROBERT N. REED**, U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center, 2150 Centre Ave., Bldg. C, Fort Collins, Colorado 80525, USA; **KURT C. VERCAUTEREN**, USDA/APHIS/WS/National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Ave., Fort Collins, Colorado 80521, USA.