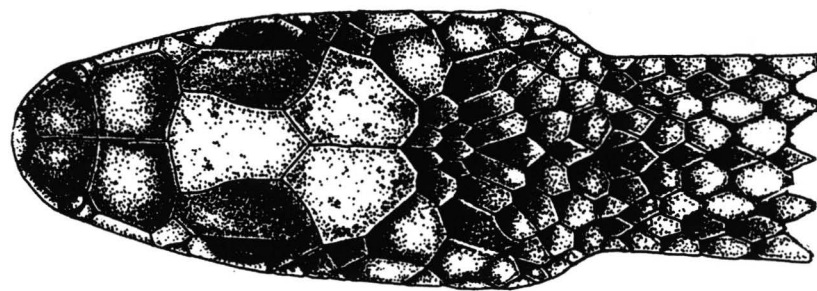
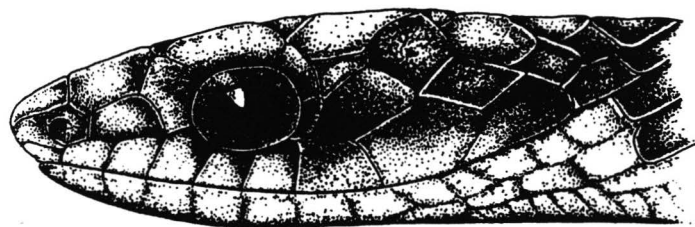


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**AN ABERRANT SPECIMEN OF  
*DRYMOBIUS RHOMBIFER*  
(COLUBRIDAE: COLUBRINAE): A  
NEW GENERIC RECORD FOR  
BRAZIL**

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The neotropical colubrid genus *Drymobius* contains four species of 'racer-type' snakes closely related to the neotropical genera *Dendrophidion*, *Mastigodryas* and *Drymoluber* (Stuart, 1932). Three species, *Drymobius margaritiferus*, *D. chloroticus* and *D. melanotropis* are Central American in their distribution (Wilson, 1970: 1975a-d; Villa, Wilson & Johnson, 1988), although *D. margaritiferus* has also been recorded from the Caribbean coast of Colombia (Pérez-Santos & Moreno, 1988). *D. rhombifer* is primarily a South American species, occurring to the north and west of Amazonia in a Caribbean and Pacific coastal belt extending from French Guiana (Chippaux, 1986) and Venezuela to Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia (Vaeth & Rossman, 1984), on either side of the Andes (Pérez-Santos & Moreno 1991), and into Central America as far as Nicaragua (Villa, 1983).

The first author was conducting a herpetofaunal survey as part of the intensive Anglo-Brazilian, multi-disciplinary, ecological Maracá Rainforest Project (Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia; Royal Geographical Society) on the Ilha de Maracá, a forested riverine island on the Rio Uraricoera, 130 km northwest of Boa Vista, Roraima, northern Brazil (O'Shea, 1989). A single specimen of *Drymobius* was collected on a trail through terra-firme forest near the Cachoeira Fumaça on the northern Furo de Santa Rosa channel of the Rio Uraricoera towards the western end of the 100,000 hectare riverine island. Maracá specimen (field no. MR309): female; 740 mm SVL + 290 mm TL; dorsals (keeled) 19-17-15 rows; ventrals 156; subcaudals 91 (paired); anal plate divided; supralabials 9 (with 4th, 5th and 6th in contact with the orbit, 4th divided by a horizontal suture on both sides); infralabials 10 (with five in contact with first pair of chin shields); preocular 1; postoculars 2; temporals 2+2 (left), 1+2 (right); maxillary teeth 34 (Table 1). Dorsal coloration olive green to brown with patterning confined to scattered black speckling; ventrally off-white with two longitudinal ventrolateral rows of black spots.

Although the ventral and subcaudal scale counts of MR309 (a female) complied with those of typical *D. rhombifer* (Table 1) the characteristic rhomboid patterning on the dorsum was absent. The head of MR309 also appeared much narrower than that of other specimens of *D. rhombifer* examined. The only other *Drymobius* sp. with similar scale counts is *D. melanotropis* from Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.

	<i>D. rhombifer</i>	<i>D. melanotropis</i>	MR309
Ventrals	145-169	149-163	156
Subcaudals	84-103	91-108	91
Maxillary teeth	30-32	33-34	34

TABLE 1. Ventral and subcaudal scale counts for MR309 compared with those obtained from two specimens of *D. melanotropis*, seven specimens of *D. rhombifer* and available literature.

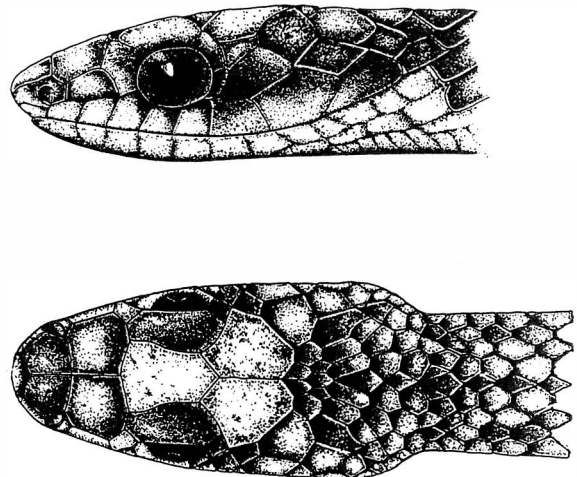


Fig. 1. Dorsal and lateral views of head of MR309 (S. Elmhurst).

The high maxillary tooth count and the uniform dorsal coloration of MR309 resemble the Central American *D. melanotropis* but MR309 lacks the black scale keels usually reported for that species and the presence of a specimen of *D. melanotropis* on Maracá would indicate a range extension of approximately 1800 km. It seems more likely that MR309 represents an aberrant specimen of *D. rhombifer*, the first record of the genus from Brazil, since uniform, unblotched specimens of *D. rhombifer*, although rare, are not unknown (Dixon & Soini, 1977).

**Material examined:** *D. melanotropis*: UMMZ 79762 (7mi. above Rama, Rio Signia, Nicaragua); UMMZ 131309 (Zapote, Guancaste, Costa Rica); *D. rhombifer*: MNHN 1897-4 (French Guiana); BMNH 74.8.4.24 & 30 (Moyobamba, Peru); BMNH 97.11.12.9 (Medellin, Colombia); BMNH 98.4.28.58 (Paramba, Ecuador); BMNH 1909.4.30.67-68 (Bitaco, S.W. Colombia). MR309 will be deposited in the Museum of Zoology, University of Sao Paulo (MZUSP).

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