

NATURE NOTES

Amphibia: Gymnophiona

***Gymnopsis multiplicata*. Size.** The distribution of *G. multiplicata* extends from southeastern Guatemala to western Panama, on the Atlantic versant, and on the Pacific versant from northwestern Costa Rica to western Panama, at elevations from sea level to 1,400 m (McCranie and Wilson, 2002). Wake (1988) provided a definition and diagnosis for the genus *Gymnopsis*, which then was considered monotypic, and indicated the maximum total length (TOL) as “to 500 mm” (= 50 cm). Savage (2002) reported the maximum TOL of *G. multiplicata* as “to 480 mm” (= 48 cm). The longest specimen presently in the museum collection at the University of Costa Rica (UCR 17096) measures 47.4 cm.

Róger Blanco, the research coordinator of Área de Conservación Guanacaste, informed me that at Sector Santa Rosa, Provincia de Guanacaste, Costa Rica, the rainfall recorded during the rainy season of 2010 (2,819.3 mm) was more than twice the amount that fell the previous year. A portion of the park’s administrative area remained flooded throughout much of the rainy season, which made the soil softer than usual, and under these conditions on 21 November 2010, Johan Vargas and Roberto Espinoza collected a very large *G. multiplicata* (Figs. 1A, B). The individual measured 56 cm in TOL and 6 cm in circumference at midbody. Because of its possible record length, the caecilian was maintained for study and placed in a terrarium, but several days later it escaped and was not seen again.



Fig. 1. (A) The large *Gymnopsis mexicana* found in Sector Santa Rosa on 25 November 2010; and (B) a close-up of the anterior portion of its body.

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On 29 October 2014, an even longer individual of *G. multiplicata* was found at Río Oro de Santa Ana, Provincia de San José, Costa Rica (Figs. 2A, B.). Although the exact total length was difficult to determine because the caecilian constantly kept expanding and contracting different parts of its body, a conservative estimate is that the animal measures at least 70 cm in TOL, by far the longest known individual of this species. Other measurements and the weight of the animal are as follows: diameter at midbody = 2.8 cm; circumference at midbody = 10.5 cm; and weight = 334.1 g. The individual is being maintained alive, but will be deposited at the UCR collection upon its death.



Fig. 2. (A) The record-length *Gymnopsis mexicanus* recently found at Río Oro de Santa Ana, Provincia de San José, Costa Rica, held so as to provide a perspective on its length; and (B) a dorsal body view of the animal. © Alejandro Solórzano

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