



Diversity of small Amazonian *Dendropsophus* (Anura: Hylidae): another new species from northern Bolivia

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Abstract

A new small species of *Dendropsophus* is described from lowland Amazonia of the Departamento Pando, northern Bolivia. The new species is mainly characterized by smooth dorsal skin with scattered minute tubercles, relatively large distal subarticular tubercle on first toe, lack of tarsal folds, light brown to dark reddish or purple brown dorsum with numerous small dark markings and spots, dark colouration of loreal-tympanic region sharply outlined and contrasting against dorsal head colouration, one or two small white spots below the eye, yellow vocal sac in life, and advertisement call consisting of two notes with strong amplitude modulation. The new species is tentatively grouped with species placed in the *Dendropsophus microcephalus* group. It has rather arboreal habits and occurs in the tree canopy along swampy or flooded shores of smaller streams running through terra firme rainforest.

Key words: Amphibia, Anura, Hylidae, *Dendropsophus reichlei*, new species, Bolivia

Introduction

Small species of the hylid genus *Dendropsophus* may represent one of the most species-rich groups of frogs in Neotropical rainforests, including the vast lowlands of the Amazon. However, research in the last few decades have revealed that the present state of knowledge (nearly 100 known species) underestimates the actual diversity in this group, as demonstrated by the description of several new species, new country records, as well as reports of many populations with uncertain taxonomic status (e.g. De la Riva *et al.* 2000, Duellman 2005). The reasons for this situation are manifold, and could be summarized as follows: (a) the small size and superficial morphological similarity among species makes it difficult to reach reliable identification, particularly in preserved specimens; (b) many lowland species were described from one or very few localities only, although they are probably more widespread, and (c) the type specimens are scattered over many museum collections in America and Europe. This partly hampers necessary comparisons and consequently, several nominal taxa of small hylids were confused in the literature (e.g. De la Riva & Duellman 1997) and probably many are still. In addition, various small species of *Dendropsophus* seem to be highly seasonal in their activity and/or are undergoing dramatic changes in population size, being observed in hundreds of individuals at one place and then not recollected for years (own unpubl. data). This means, researchers have to be at the right place at the right time, suggesting that more species are awaiting their discovery even at “well studied” tropical sites.