



Additional notes on Orthalicidae from the Chimantá massif, Venezuelan Guayana, with descriptions of new species of *Plekocheilus* Guilding, 1828 (Mollusca: Gastropoda)

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Abstract

Two new species are described from Venezuelan Guayana, Chimantá massif: *Plekocheilus* (*P.*) *vlceki* and *P.* (*Eurytus*) *breweri*. Some remarks are made on the ecology of the latter species in relation to birds. Finally some notes on conservation issues are made, highlighting possible threats by climate change.

Key words: Venezuela, taxonomy, ecology, endemism, new species, distribution

Introduction

For more than 100 years the malacofauna of the highlands in southern Venezuela, known as Guayana Highlands (Huber 1995a; Fig. 1A), has been hardly explored. Most of the year, their table-top mountains ('tepui') are hidden in clouds and blankets of fog. Due to the inaccessibility of the area, very scant material is available in museum collections. So far 18 land snail species are known from Venezuelan Guayana (Thompson 2008, Breure 2009, Simone in press), of which 16 belong to the family Orthalicidae.

The Chimantá massif (approx. 05°15' N 062°10' W) is a series of tepuis in the eastern part of the Guayana Highlands (Fig. 1B). It has been mainly visited by botanists and herpetologists. Recently a Slovakian geological expedition explored the cave systems of these mountains. This paper reports on the malacological results of the recent expedition to Churí-tepui (Figs 1C, 5A), supplementing the recent revision by Breure (2009), describing new taxa and adding details on the ecology of the species.

Measurements are according to the method described by Breure (1974: figs. 2–3). Abbreviations used for the depositories of material treated in this paper: CB, private collection of C. Brewer-Carias, Caracas, Venezuela; FMNH, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, U.S.A.; JG, private collection of J. Grego, Banská Bystrica, Slovakia; MLSC, Museo de Historia Natural 'La Salle,' Caracas, Venezuela; MZSP, Museu de Zoologia, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brasil; RMNH, National Museum of Natural History 'Naturalis,' Leiden, The Netherlands; SNMSZ, Slovak National Museum, Bratislava, Slovakia; UF, Florida Museum of Natural History, Gainesville, U.S.A.

Systematics

Family Orthalicidae Albers, 1860

Subfamily Bulimulinae Tryon, 1867