



A new species of *Plestiodon* (Squamata: Scincidae) from Sierra Madre del Sur of Guerrero, México

MANUEL FERIA-ORTIZ¹ & URI OMAR GARCÍA-VÁZQUEZ^{2,3}

¹Museo de Zoología, Facultad de Estudios Superiores Zaragoza, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Batalla de 5 de mayo s/n, Col. Ejército de Oriente, México 09230, D. F., México

²Laboratorio de Herpetología, Museo de Zoología, Departamento de Biología Evolutiva, Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Apdo. Postal 70-153, México 04510, D. F., México

³Corresponding author. E-mail: urigarcia@gmail.com

Abstract

We describe a new species of lizard of the genus *Plestiodon* from the Sierra Madre del Sur of Guerrero, Mexico. *Plestiodon nietoi* **sp. nov.** shares a characteristic with all members of the *P. brevirostris* group in that the scale that medially borders the postgenial is wider than long. This species is most similar to *P. brevirostris* and *P. indubitus* from which it differs by having the following combination of characters: large adult size, interparietal enclosed posteriorly by parietals, and a pale lateral line on the neck.

Key words: *Plestiodon brevirostris* group, taxonomy, description

Resumen

Describimos una nueva especie del género *Plestiodon* de la Sierra Madre del Sur, en el estado de Guerrero, México. *Plestiodon nietoi* **sp. nov.**, comparte una característica con todos los miembros del grupo *brevirostris*: la escama que bordea medialmente a la postgenial es más ancha que larga. Esta especie es más similar a *P. brevirostris* y *P. indubitus* pero difiere de ellas por tener la siguiente combinación de caracteres: mayor tamaño en adultos, interparietal envuelta por las parietales, y una línea lateral clara en el cuello.

Introduction

The scincid lizard genus *Plestiodon* comprises approximately 44 species arranged in 11 species groups (Feria-Ortiz *et al.* 2011; Brandley *et al.* 2012). The collective distribution of *Plestiodon* includes eastern Asia and North and Middle America (Brandley *et al.* 2005, 2012; Smith 2005). In a taxonomic key of the Mexican species of *Plestiodon* and *Mesoscincus* (at that time regarded as *Eumeces sensu lato*), Lieb (1995) recognized 16 species of *Plestiodon*, although the richness of Mexican *Plestiodon* is likely much greater. In a recent phylogenetic study, Feria-Ortiz *et al.* (2011) found that the polytypic wide-ranging species *P. brevirostris* actually represents a species complex consisting of at least five different species.

While conducting biodiversity surveys of the reptiles of Guerrero, a field party from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Universidad Autónoma de Guerrero (UAG) and the University Texas at Arlington collected a series of large specimens of the genus *Plestiodon* in the Sierra Madre del Sur, in the municipality of Ajuchitlán del Progreso, in the western part of Guerrero. The size and certain morphological characters suggested that these new specimens belonged to an undescribed species. This new species is morphologically similar to *P. brevirostris*, and *P. indubitus* (formerly *P. b. brevirostris* and *P. b. indubitus* [in part], Feria-Ortiz *et al.* 2011; Brandley *et al.* 2012). These species also are the closest geographical neighbors to the new species. *Plestiodon brevirostris* is widely distributed in the mountains of the Mexican Transversal Volcanic Belt and of the Sierra Madre del