



A new *Nototriton* (Caudata: Plethodontidae) from Parque Nacional Montaña de Botaderos in northeastern Honduras

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Abstract

The highlands of northeastern Honduras remain under-characterized in terms of biological diversity, as exemplified by the regularity of new amphibian and reptile taxa discoveries. Following the recent description of a new species of *Nototriton* from the Sierra de Agalta in northeastern Honduras, we report the discovery of a second new species of *Nototriton* from the nearby Parque Nacional Montaña de Botaderos. This new taxon, *Nototriton mime* **sp. nov.**, is distinguished from other *Nototriton* by its distinctive pale brown dorsal coloration in adult males, relatively large nares, a relatively broad head, mitochondrial sequence divergence, and phylogenetic relationships, and is geographically isolated from other populations of *Nototriton*.

Key words: *Nototriton mime* **sp. nov.**, mtDNA, 16S, cytochrome *b*, *Nototriton picucha*, sexual dichromatism

Resumen

Las tierras altas del noreste de Honduras continúan insuficientemente caracterizadas en términos de diversidad biológica, ejemplificado por la regularidad con la que nuevas especies de anfibios y reptiles son descubiertos. Siguiendo la reciente descripción de una nueva especie de *Nototriton* de la Sierra de Agalta en el noreste de Honduras, reportamos el descubrimiento de una segunda nueva especie de *Nototriton*, procedente del vecino Parque Nacional Montaña de Botaderos. Este nuevo taxón, *Nototriton mime* **sp. nov.**, se distingue de otras *Nototriton* por su distintiva coloración dorsal marrón pálido en machos adultos, orificios nasales relativamente grandes, cabeza relativamente ancha, divergencia en la secuencia mitocondrial y relación filogenética, y se encuentra aislada geográficamente de otras poblaciones de *Nototriton*.

Introduction

Despite the presence of over a dozen isolated tropical montane cloud forests, the highlands of northeastern Honduras remain largely uncharacterized in terms of regional endemic biodiversity (Townsend *et al.* 2011). Only two cloud forest areas above 1,000 m elevation in northeastern Honduras have been studied in any detail: Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta (Castañeda 2006) and Parque Nacional La Muralla (Espinal *et al.* 2001), both in Departamento de Olancho. Despite being one of the herpetologically best-known of cloud forests in northeastern Honduras, a new species of moss salamander (*Nototriton picucha*, Townsend *et al.* 2011) was recently described from Parque Nacional Sierra de Agalta. The Sierra de Agalta forms the westernmost portion of a narrow *cordillera* extending into the lowland plain of La Mosquitia and containing the easternmost 2,000+ m elevation cloud forests in Nuclear Central America (Fig. 1).

To the north of the Sierra de Agalta, separated by an arid intermontane basin known as the Valle de Agalta and