

First record of *Lithobates palmipes* (Spix, 1824) (Anura, Ranidae) for the state of Piauí, Northeastern Brazil

Werther Pereira Ramalho^{1*}, Felipe Viana², Rogério Benevides³, Edicarlos Pralon Silva² and Ricardo Alves-Silva³

Ranidae is one of the most diversified amphibian families worldwide, with 347 described species so far (Frost, 2011). The family is cosmopolitan; however, most species in the Americas are concentrated in the south of the United States and Mexico (Dubois, 1992; Frost, 2011). Ranids inhabit diverse environments, including deciduous forests, rainforests, temperate coniferous forests, savannah, deserts, wetlands, brackish water wetlands, streams, and freshwater lakes (Hillis and Wilcox, 2005).

Species in the genus *Lithobates* differ from other ranids by possessing an eardrum diameter equal to or bigger than eye diameter, which may represent a synapomorphy of the group (Dubois, 1992; Frost et al., 2006). In Brazil, the genus is represented by *Lithobates catesbeianus* (Shaw, 1802), an introduced species, and *Lithobates palmipes* (Spix, 1824) (SBH, 2010).

Lithobates palmipes is widely distributed in the Amazon basin of South America, including Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, and Venezuela (Acosta-Gavis, 1999; Gorzula and Señaris, 1999; La Marca et al., 2004; Lescure and Marty, 2000; Guayasamin and North, 2009; Souza, 2009). Moreover, there are established populations in the fragments of the Atlantic forest in Northeastern Brazil, from Southern Bahia to Rio Grande do Norte (Canedo and Bilate, 2005; Santana et al., 2007; Santos, 2009; Ferreira and Faria, 2011) as well as in the Brazilian Cerrado (Colli et al., 2002; Oliveira et al., 2010) (Fig. 1). It is a nocturnal and terrestrial rainforest species, usually found in habitats

permanently surrounded by water masses, such as slow water flows, rivers, lakes, pond banks, or flooded forests (La Marca et al., 2004).

During fieldwork on 23 March 2010, one adult *L. palmipes* (Fig. 2) was observed engaging in foraging activities at a creek pond located at Ribeiro Gonçalves municipality, state of Piauí (07°36'42.3" S, 45°04'05.5" W, 284 m above sea level) (Fig. 1). The specimen was identified using morphological diagnoses provided by Hillis and de Sá (1988) and housed at the Herpetological Collection of the Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro (CH-UFRRJ/ RU7278).

This work represents the first record of *L. palmipes* for the state of Piauí, extending the species distribution from the previous known localities as follows: ca. 1000 km westwards from the municipality of Jaqueira, state of Pernambuco (Santos, 2009), ca. 1200 km southwest from the municipality of Piranhas, state of Goiás (Oliveira et al., 2010) and ca. 1100 km to the north of the state of Mato Grosso and southern Pará (Canedo and Bilate, 2005) (fig 2). As for most of the Brazilian species (see Silvano and Segalla, 2005), almost no information

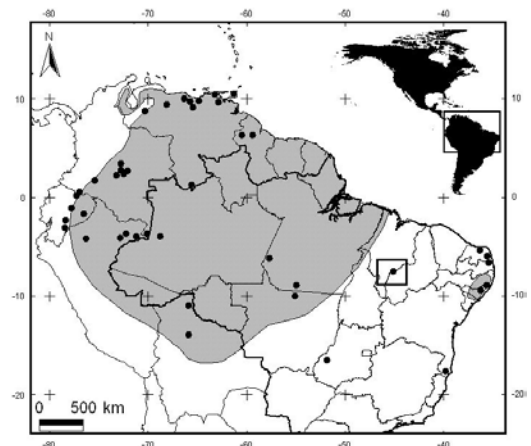


Figure 1. Geographic range distribution of *Lithobates palmipes* (delimited area, IUCN, 2010) and the localities where the species has already been registered (data modified from Oliveira et al., 2010). The square indicates the new record in the state of Piauí, Northeastern Brazil.

1 Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás. Avenida Universitária, n° 1069. Setor Universitário. CEP: 74605-010, Goiânia, GO, Brazil; e-mail: wertherpereira@hotmail.com

2 Faculdades Integradas São Pedro – FAESA. Rodovia Serafim Derenze, n° 3115, São Pedro. CEP: 29032-060, Vitória, ES, Brazil;

3 Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Instituto de Biologia, Programa de Pós-graduação. Caixa postal 74524. CEP: 23890-000, Seropédica, RJ, Brazil.

* Corresponding author.



Figure 2. Specimen of *Lithobates palmipes* (RU7278) from the municipality of Ribeiro Gonçalves, state of Piauí, Brazil. Photo by W. P. Ramalho.

is available for *L. palmipes* regarding its ecology and natural history. Detailed studies are needed to detect which environmental factors affect its abundance and distribution in South America.

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