

## *Stenocercus trachycephalus* Duméril, 1851 (Squamata: Sauria: Tropiduridae) in a disturbed area in Villa de Leyva, Boyacá

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The species *Stenocercus trachycephalus*, family Tropiduridae (Duméril, 1851), is endemic to Colombia and is distributed throughout the Oriental Chain of the Andes (4°N–6°N), between 1749 – 3800 m altitude (Torres-Carvajal, 2007). Tropidurids have been recorded in many ecological life zones, such as rain forests, dry forests, savannas and deserts (Castro, 2008; Uetz and Hallerman, 2010). *Stenocercus trachycephalus*, has been reported in areas within the cloud forest-paramo transition zone, in rocks and fallen trees. The distribution of *Stenocercus trachycephalus* is varied and includes different types of high mountain ecosystems

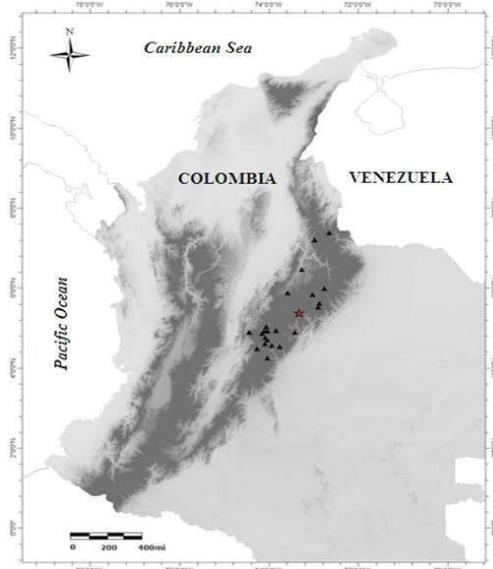
at the Oriental Chain of the Andes at Boyacá, Caldas, Cundinamarca, Norte de Santander and Santander departments ranging from 1749 to 3800 m altitude (Torres-Carvajal, 2007).

Here, I provide the first record for the species in a disturbed area in Villa de Leyva municipality, Boyacá. On March 21, 2010 at 12:30 pm, an adult male of the species *S. trachycephalus* (identified by the black scales at the lateroventral region of the neck) was observed and photographed (Fig. 1). The species was recorded in the municipality buffer zone relatively near the Quebrada San Francisco, vereda Centro (5°37'29.05" N – 73°31'09.21" W, at 2208 m altitude) at the Oriental slope of the Andes, Villa de Leyva municipality, Boyacá department, Colombia (Fig. 2).

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**Figure 1.** Adult male of *Stenocercus trachycephalus* found in a burned forest area which is in ecological succession process. Insert and upper right corner: same lizard signaling the black scales at the ventrolateral region of the neck, characteristic in males. Photographed by Cortés, J. E.



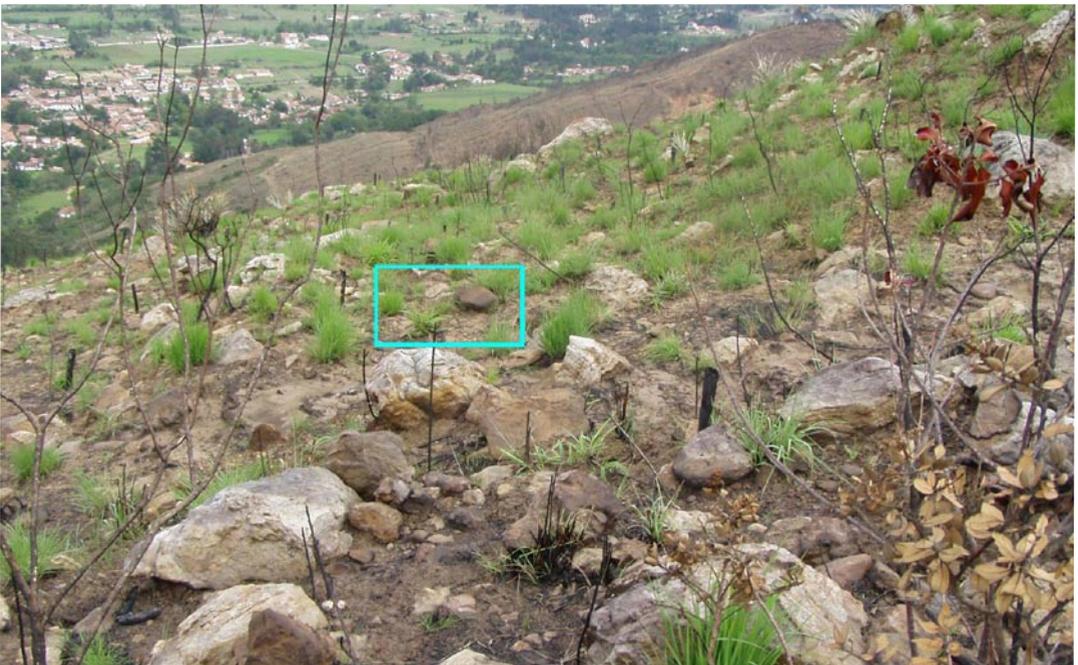
**Figure 2.** Known geographic distribution of *Stenocercus trachycephalus* in Colombia based on personal data and Torres-Carvajal (2007). Red star represents the new locality reported in this paper; black triangles represent previously known localities.

Renjifo and Lynch (2001) have reported the species in semi-desert areas of southwestern Bogotá savannah and hills surrounding the city between 1900 - 3200 m

altitude. While Hoyos (1990) and Castaño et al. (2000) have reported the species in other parts of the country: Paramo of Chingaza and the Massif of Sumapaz, especially in grasslands (Duméril and Duméril, 1851) and suparamo vegetation between frailejones dead and dry leaves where it generally feeds on insects (Torres-Carvajal, 2007).

In Boyacá department, *S. trachycephalus* has been reported between 1789 - 3000 m altitude in different places: Aquitania, Tota Lake, Las Cintas, Moniquirá, Paz del Rio and San José de la Montaña (Torres-Carvajal, 2007). Particularly in Villa de Leyva the species is reported to occur at 2208 m altitude, in an area with little vegetation, ash and rock formations (Fig. 3), which serve as shelter from predators (Duméril and Duméril, 1851). These characteristics of the area are a consequence of forest fires that took place during the first quarter of 2010 (January-February) generating a process of ecological succession in the area.

Finally, the presence of *S. trachycephalus* in a disturbed forest area with an ecological succession process contributes to the natural history and ecology of the species. It is recommended to carry out fieldwork to identify the conservation status of populations of the species to improve the respective management actions.



**Figure 3.** Habitat where the individual of *Stenocercus trachycephalus* was found. In a square the area where the picture was taken.

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