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Description of a new divergent lineage and three new species of Honduran salamanders of the genus *Oedipina* (Caudata, Plethodontidae)

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Abstract

We describe three new species of the plethodontid salamander genus *Oedipina* from Honduras. All three are relatively small to moderate sized, elongated and attenuate forms, which are differentiated from each other and from other members of the genus in limb and digital features, size, and body shape. Their distinctiveness is validated by phylogenetic analysis of mtDNA (cytochrome b and 16S) data, which shows each to be strongly differentiated. Furthermore, two of the three species are sister taxa and they comprise a third major clade in the genus, which we recognize as a new subgenus.

Key words: *Oedipina quadra* **sp. nov.**, *O. kasios* **sp. nov.**, *O. leptopoda* **sp. nov.**, *Oeditriton* subgenus nov., tropical salamanders, Honduras, mtDNA, cytb, 16S

Resumen

Aquí describimos tres nuevas especies de salamandras del género *Oedipina*, familia Plethodontidae. Las tres especies son de pequeño a moderado tamaño, con forma alargada y atenuada, y se diferencian entre ellas y de otros representantes del género principalmente en características de pies y manos. Análisis filogenéticos basados en ADN mitocondrial (citocromo b y 16S) validan su estatus y confirman su alto grado de diferenciación genética. Asimismo, dos de las tres nuevas especies son especies hermanas y constituyen una tercer clado en el género, que proponemos como nuevo subgénero.

Introduction

Tropical plethodontid salamanders comprise the most speciose radiation of caudate amphibians, including 234 of a total of 570 species currently recognized (AmphibiaWeb 2008). The 13 genera of tropical bolitoglossine salamanders display an enormous diversity in terms of morphology, ecology and species diversity. Among them, the 25 species of the genus *Oedipina* stand out because of their slender, elongated appearance. These species are distributed from southern Mexico to northwestern South America, occupying a wide altitudinal range (sea level to 2500 m). Most of these species are known from few specimens because they are difficult to find in the field, probably as a result of their fossorial behavior.

Representatives of this genus are characterized by having long to very long tails and small limbs, and differ from the remaining tropical salamanders in having trunks that have become elongated by an increase of trunk vertebral numbers from 14, typical of all other tropical genera, to 18 or more (García-París & Wake

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