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Checklist of lizards and amphisbaenians of Argentina: an update

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Abstract

We update the list of lizards of Argentina, reporting a total of 261 species from the country, arranged in 27 genera and 10 families. Introduced species and dubious or erroneous records are discussed. Taxonomic, nomenclatural and distributional comments are provided when required. Considering species of probable occurrence in the country (known to occur in Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Paraguay at localities very close to the Argentinean border) and still undescribed taxa, we estimate that the total number of species in Argentina could exceed 300 in the next few years.

Key words: Reptiles, *Liolaemus*, *Phymaturus*, South America, list

Resumen

Actualizamos la lista de lagartijas de la Argentina, presentamos un total de 261 especies para el país, organizados en 27 géneros y 10 familias. Especies introducidas, registros dudosos o erróneos son discutidos. Comentarios taxonómicos, nomenclaturales o de distribución son incorporados si son requeridos. Considerando especies de probable existencia en nuestro país (que se encuentran en Bolivia, Brasil, Chile y Paraguay en localidades muy cercanas al límite con Argentina) y taxas aún no descriptos, estimamos que el número total de especies en Argentina puede exceder las 300 en los próximos años.

Palabras clave: Reptiles, *Liolaemus*, *Phymaturus*, America del Sur, Lista

Introduction

The Republic of Argentina, situated in the southernmost portion of the South American Continent, occupies over 2.791.810 km² not including the Antarctic territory (www.ign.gov.ar). The country ranges from subtropical areas (21°46' S) to subantarctic regions (55°03'S), extending latitudinally over about 3,400 km, and about 1,400 km wide at its widest point. It possesses significant latitudinal and altitudinal variation (33° of latitudinal range), and heights from Bajo de San Julian in Santa Cruz province at 105m below sea level, up to Aconcagua Mountain at 6.959 m above sea level; as well as two gradients of physical variation, extending in north-south and east-west directions. Argentina presents a wide range of climates and soil types, being one the countries with greatest diversity of biogeographical units and ecosystems, including three main bioregions, Southern South America, Eastern South America, and the Central Andes, and 18 different ecoregions (Dinerstein *et al.* 1995). This diversity of environments harbors a high variety of lizard species, a few with large geographic distributions but the majority are endemic to Argentina; and a high number of species with restricted geographic distributions.

Since Cei's (1986; 1993) monographs on the reptiles of Argentina, there has been a remarkable growth in the number of researchers working on lizards of the country, and a corresponding increase in knowledge of the lizard herpetofauna. Avila *et al.* (2000) presented an updated checklist as part of a categorization of lizards and amphisbaenians, but the species number has continued to grow markedly, particularly in the genera *Liolaemus* and