

Phimophis guerini (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854) (Squamata, Colubridae): Distribution extension in the northeast coast of the state of Bahia, Brazil

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ABSTRACT: *Phimophis guerini* inhabits open areas, forest and habitats within urban regions. In this paper we report two new localities for *P. guerini* in the state of Bahia within restinga environment. The two sites are along the northeast coast of Bahia, at Praia do Forte and Imbassá. The sites support many species of reptiles and amphibians and are threatened by tourism development, which may compromise many snakes in the region.

The Argentine Pampas Snake, *Phimophis guerini* (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril, 1854) is a nocturnal terrestrial snake of medium size. The habitats where this species occurs are open areas (Marques *et al.* 2008; Sawaya *et al.* 2008; Valdujo *et al.* 2009), ombrophilous vegetation habitat (Silva *et al.* 2006) and habitats surrounding urban regions (Brites and Bauab, 1988; Carvalho and Nogueira 1998).

This species differs from other congeners by the presence of a loreal scale, more than 196 ventral scales, and the absence of longitudinal bands (Peters and Orejas-Miranda 1970). In this paper we report two new localities where *P. guerini* (Figure 1) was recorded on the northern coast of the state of Bahia, in restinga ecosystem habitat.

Records are from two sites in restinga habitat on the northeast coast of Bahia, at Praia do Forte and Imbassá in the municipality of Mata de São João (Figure 2). One specimen was captured in shrub vegetation habitat at Imbassá (12°28'43.83" S, 37°57'37.33" W, 30 m) under permit number 0011/2006-NUFAU/IBAMA/BA and deposited in the herpetological collection at the Centro de Ecologia e Conservação Animal (CHECOA 1420). It is a male, 323 mm SVL and 60.6 mm tail length. The specimen captured in Praia do Forte (12°34'11.85" S, 38°00'08.01" W, 5 m) under permit number 0012/2006-NUFAU/IBAMA/BA was deposited in the same herpetological collection (CHECOA 1411). It is a female, 754 mm SVL and 121 mm tail length, and was captured in restinga dry forest.

Phimophis guerini is not listed on the IUCN Red List (IUCN, 2012) and its distribution is known from a few localities in Argentina, and from south, southeast and central Brazilian states of Paraná, São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul and Goiás, to northern Brazil in Amazonas and Tocantins, and northeastern Brazil (Rio Grande do Norte and Alagoas) (Melo 1926; Schmidt

and Inger 1952; Carvalho and Nogueira 1998; Vitt *et al.* 2002; Pavan and Dixó 2004; França *et al.* 2006; Recoder and Nogueira, 2007; Vaz-Silva *et al.* 2007; França *et al.* 2008; Marques *et al.* 2008; Sawaya *et al.* 2008; Moreira *et al.* 2009; Valdujo *et al.* 2009; Bérnils and Moura-Leite 2010; Bisby *et al.* 2011; Lisboa *et al.* 2011; Uetz 2012).

In Bahia, *Phimophis guerini* was recorded in a region of semideciduous forest and Caatinga environment with anthropic activity at Chapada Diamantina in Lençóis municipality by Juncá (2005). Although Freitas (2003) reports the occurrence of the species to Mata de São João and other municipalities, his records do not allow a precise habitat location, and no voucher specimens are given. In the restinga ecosystem, Dias and Rocha (2005) recorded this species at Costa Azul in Jandaíra municipality. The specimens reported here extend the distribution of *Phimophis guerini* 110 km southeast of the nearest location at Costa Azul.



FIGURE 1. *Phimophis guerini* CHECOA 001411 SVL 754 mm, from Imbassá, Bahia, Brazil (Photo by RM).

The sites where *Phimophis guerini* was found hold many species of reptiles and amphibians and are threatened by human tourism development (Tinôco et al. 2008; 2010), which may compromise not only this species, but also

other snakes from the region (Marques et al. 2011). We believe this snake occurs in open habitats that surround the Cerrado ecoregion and are somehow influenced by it, since most records are within this biome.

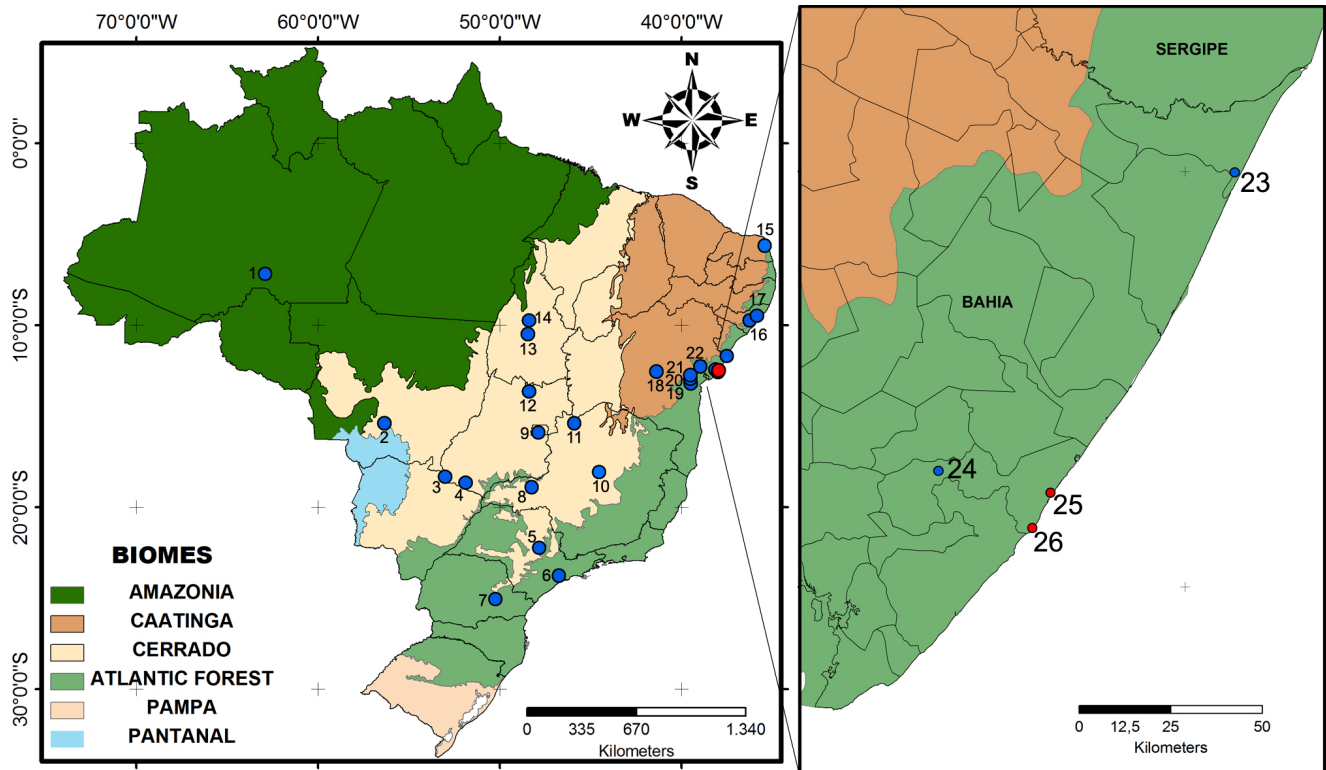


FIGURE 2. Left: Distribution of *Phimophis guerini* in Brazil according to literature: 1 – França et al. 2006; 2 – Carvalho and Nogueira 1998; 3 – Valdujo et al. 2009; 4 – Vaz-Silva et al. 2007; 5 – Sawaya et al. 2008; 6 – Marques et al. 2008; 7 – Bérnils and Moura-Leite 2010; 8 – Brites and Bauab 1998; 9 – França et al. 2008; 10 – Melo 1926; 11 – Recorder and Nogueira 2007; 12 – Moreira et al. 2009; 13 – Vitt et al. 2002; 14 – Pavan and Dixo 2004; 15 – Schmidt and Inger 1951; 16 – Lisboa et al. 2009; 17 – Silva et al. 2006; 18 – Juncá 2005; 19, 20, 21 and 22 – Freitas 2003. Right: The northern coast of Bahia containing remnants literature records of the species: 23 – Dias and Rocha 2004; 24 – Freitas 2003. The red dots 25 – Imbassaí and 26 – Praia do Forte show the new localities in Mata de São João municipality.

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