

## *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* (Double-lined Water Snake)

Family: Dipsadidae (Rear-fanged Snakes)

Order: Squamata (Lizards and Snakes)

Class: Reptilia (Reptiles)



**Fig. 1.** Double-lined water snake, *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi*.

[[http://www2.scielo.org/ve/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0037-85182006000200002&lng=pt](http://www2.scielo.org/ve/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0037-85182006000200002&lng=pt), downloaded 31 October 2016]

**TRAITS.** A medium sized snake, about 60cm long, *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* is the only snake in Trinidad having 19 rows of smooth scales on its back. It has light and dark stripes on the back and a plain brown coloured belly (Fig. 1). There is one scale in front of the eyes, and two scales behind the eyes; eight scales on the upper lip, with the fourth and fifth entering the orbit (eye); 137–153 scales on the belly, a divided anal plate, and 59–75 scales below the tail (Fig. 2) (Bailey and Thomas, 2006). It is also known as the mapanare del aqua (Manzanilla and Sanchez, 2005).

**DISTRIBUTION.** Occupies a considerable altitudinal range, from sea level to 1750m. They are found in southwest Trinidad, northern and eastern Venezuela and coastal Suriname, and elsewhere in South America (Bailey and Thomas, 2006).

**HABITAT AND ECOLOGY.** *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* is a semi-aquatic species, and swims very proficiently. Its diet consists of small fish and tadpoles. It is found in secondary forests and agricultural areas.

**BEHAVIOUR.** *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* are solitary, they have never been encountered in groups or clusters. When provoked, *T. ramonriveroi* opens its mouth quite widely in a vicious manner, either to bite or as a warning signal (Bailey and Thomas, 2006) This snake species will play dead if threatened, with a flattened body (Manzanilla and Sanchez, 2005).

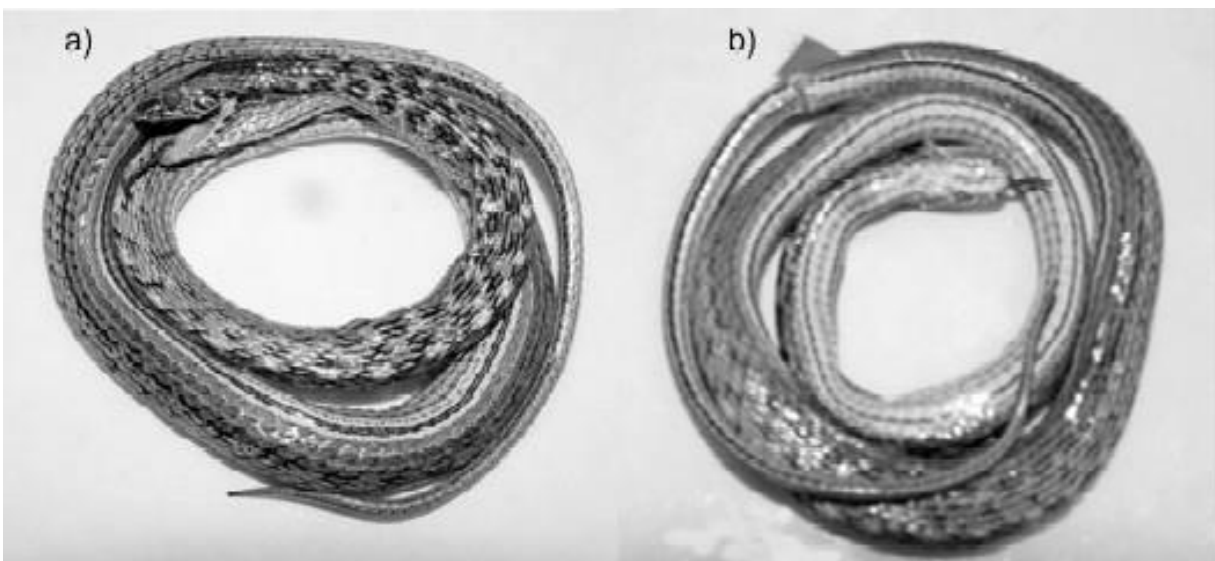
**APPLIED BIOLOGY.** *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* is not listed by the IUCN. The related species *T. strigatus* is used in venomics, which is the study of venom peptides and proteins and transcripts.

#### REFERENCES

- Bailey, J.R. and Thomas, R.A., 2006. A revision of the South American snake genus *Thamnodynastes* Wagler, 1830 (Serpentes: Colubridae, Tachymenini). II. Three new species from northern South America, with further descriptions of *Thamnodynastes gambotensis* Pérez-Santos and Moreno and *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* Manzanilla and Sánchez. *Memoria de la Fundación La Salle de Ciencias Naturales*, **166**: 7-27.
- Manzanilla, J. and Sanchez. 2005. *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi*. Herpetology.blogspot.com
- Myers, P., et al. 2016. The Animal Diversity Web (online). Accessed at <http://animaldiversity.org>.

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**Fig. 2.** *Thamnodynastes ramonriveroi* preserved specimen; a) dorsal view, b) ventral view.

[[http://www2.scielo.org/ve/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S0037-85182006000200002&lng=pt](http://www2.scielo.org/ve/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0037-85182006000200002&lng=pt), downloaded 31 October 2016]