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Article

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A new species of *Liolaemus* (Squamata, Iguania, Liolaemini) endemic to the Auca Mahuida volcano, northwestern Patagonia, Argentina

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Abstract

We describe a new species of the *Liolaemus bibronii* complex. The new species differs from other members of the *bibronii-alticolor* group in color pattern, coloration and squamation. *Liolaemus cyaneinotatus* is endemic to the Auca Mahuida volcano in northwestern Patagonia.

Key words: Iguania, *Liolaemus*, Auca Mahuida, Argentina, *Liolaemus cyaneinotatus* **sp. nov.**, Patagonian lizards

Resumen

Se describe una nueva especie del complejo *Liolaemus bibronii.* La nueva especie difiere de otros miembros del grupo *bibronii-alticolor* por el patrón de coloración y por la escamación. *Liolaemus cyaneinotatus* es una población endémica del volcán Auca Mahuida en el noroeste de Patagonia.

Palabras claves: Iguania, *Liolaemus*, Auca Mahuida, Argentina, *Liolaemus cyaneinotatus* **sp. nov.**, lagartijas patagónicas

Introduction

Liolaemus, the largest lizard genus in South America, ranges from central Peru to the northern tip of Tierra del Fuego, and is divided in two main clades (Laurent 1983; Etheridge 1995; Schulte *et al*. 2000; Espinoza *et al*. 2004): *Liolaemus sensu stricto* and *Eulaemus*. Within *Liolaemus sensu stricto*, which includes almost half of the described species, several species groups can be recognized (Lobo *et al*. 2010). One group of small-sized species with slender bodies, small limbs, and long tails is recognized as the *alticolor-bibronii* clade (Lobo *et al*. 2010). These authors recognized in this group the following species: *Liolaemus alticolor, L. araucaniensis, L. bibronii, L. bitaeniatus, L. chaltin, L. curicensis, L. exploratorum, L. fuscus, L. gracilis, L. incaicus, L. lativittatus, L. lemniscatus, L. pagaburoi, L. paulinae, L. puna, L. ramirezae, L. saxatilis, L. tacnae, L. tandiliensis, L. variegatus, L. walkeri*, and *L. yanalcu*, but excluding *L. robertmertensi* and *L. sanjuanensis* previously related to *L. bibronii* (Schulte *et al*. 2000; Lobo 2001; 2005; Cei 1986; 1993). In southern Argentina, a representative of this clade is the widely distributed *Liolaemus bibronii* Bell 1843, a nominal species that includes several candidate species and is considered a species complex (Morando *et al*. 2007). In northwestern Patagonia, the northern Neuquén and southern Mendoza provinces are geographically very complex, with high mountains, deep valleys, and isolated plateaus and volcanic peaks, coupled with a complex history of glaciations and pronounced climatic changes (e.g. Rabassa & Clapperton 1990; Ramos & Kay 2006; Ramos & Folguera 2011). These characteristics most probably fostered multiple population divergence processes across different geographic and temporal scales, and suggest that the region may be a

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