

J.R. Dixon

2004

Journal

Tamaulipas, Mexico Trip

2004-1

2 July 2004 - Mary and I drove to Hemisfair to meet William Farr (Trip Leader), and Maya + Gary Barnett. We left at 7:30am; met Maya + Gary at 9:00, + Farr at 9:15. We loaded my gear in Farr's 1995 Ford Taurus, said goodbye + drove down H-159 to H-59 + on to Refugio by 12:15 Lunch. Drove on to Kingsville after gas-up; + met Dr Randy Powell (Lis6 venom student) at Texas A+M University, Kingsville, at the Natural Toxins Research Center, MSC 158, Kingsville, TX; 78363-8202; O-361-593-2643; + delivered two *Naja melanoleuca* from Houston Zoo to him. Left in about 15min; (2:25pm) + drove on to H-511, 3068, arriving Southmost Ranch at 5:05pm. I took Farr on walk; got lost + returned to hog. by 6:50pm. (about 4mi walk). Saw only *C. guttatus*. Went to Mariscos for supper; ate pescado plancha Veracruziana. We picked up *Thamnophis proximus* DOR at $25^{\circ}51'92.4''N$ - $97^{\circ}24.844'W$, 14ft, on FM 1419, \pm 2 mi from Brownsville limits sign. Called Mary at 7:30pm, showered; Mike + Josie came in about 10pm. On walk we also saw *Eumeces tetragrammus* + juv. *Bufo valliceps*, + adult *Rana berlandieri*.

3 July 2004 - Southmost Ranch to "Cabañas" above La Peña, Tamaulipas, up at 7:30am; packed Mike's gear in trunk; Josie left to visit her mom in Falcon Heights. ate McDonald's burritos for breakfast, at border at 9:00am, twenty minute crossing after obtaining visas for 225 pesos@; at outskirts of Matamoros by 9:45am. We stopped at each water crossing on H-101, en route to C. Victoria. Rio Salado^{canal}; $25^{\circ}40.806'N$ - $97^{\circ}35.359'W$; 10', Rio Salado $25^{\circ}35.646'$, $97^{\circ}38.680'$, 11ft; saw *Apalone spinifera*, *C. guttatus* + *Trachomys scriptus*. Roadside ditch, saw ♀ *Trachomys scriptus* + *A. spinifera*, $25^{\circ}28.334'N$ - $97^{\circ}48.065'W$ 0' elev., Santa Teresa-Canal, *Trachomys catalapae* seen, $25^{\circ}16.715'N$ - $97^{\circ}51.553'W$ 0' elev.,

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3 July cont.

Hwy 101 ~ *Elaphe emoryi* (dark dry + flat) 190 ft., $24^{\circ}53'65''N - 98^{\circ}06'.52''W$
tissue taken; Stopped at Jimenez 12:30 pm for Lunch, 80 pesos,
Arrived Rio Corona $23^{\circ}56'.265''N - 98^{\circ}56'.173''W$, 467 ft., scw
C. guttatus, S. cyanogenys + R. berlandieri; Left at 2:35 pm, left
C. victoriae 3:50 pm, after checking two homes for either

Gilberto or Oscar. Drove on to Joaquinas,
+ Palmillas - Car stopped running 2 mi E. of Palmillas. We
waited 30 min, it started, we drove into outskirts of Palmillas
+ found roadside mechanic "Taller Mecanico." 6:00 pm. We waited
until he finished two other vehicles, said he thought it was the
filter. Fair bought new filter, finished by 7:50 pm; drove to turnoff
to Miquihuana, av. La Peña for keys to Cabana in mountains.
Finally found Francisco Gonzales (key keeper) after a few tries
at various groups of men on roadside to where Francisco could be
found. Fair paid him for 6 nites 1500 pesos; + we started for
road to mountain. An AOR. Crotalus scutulatus was at turnoff at
5937 ft., $23^{\circ}33'.212''N - 99^{\circ}41'.380''W$; 71°F, 31.37 mercury; we captured
it. We ran down into Miquihuana, + returned to La Peña + Rd to
cabins at 9:57 pm; arrived at Cabins midnite because car stalled
at 9000 ft. Let it cool, and drove on to gate at 12:15 am; ate
supper + in sack (freezing) at 12:30 am.

4 July

Cabana 1, $23^{\circ}39'.191''N - 99^{\circ}42'.573''W$, 9619 ft.; In morning
we stayed around cabin, on slopes. We counted 178 Chiroptera trin
under bark, on ground, under stones. We also caught + released
Eumeces bivittatus, Sceloporus jarrovii (minor)[#], Sceloporus
grammicus, Pseudoeurycea galvanae. Ate pm - banana
sandwich for lunch; Mike + I fried or tissue (cut tails)
on all critters. Drove down mountain at 1537 pm; pond at
8552 ft., $23^{\circ}36'.102''N - 99^{\circ}42'.458''W$ found tadpole sp (probably)
Spea multiplicata; took tissue. At $23^{\circ}36'.062''N - 99^{\circ}42'.652''W$

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July 5 (cont.) rock faces, & short grass (heavy grazing). We found 3 Sceloporus minor, 1 Syrrophorus "guttatus", 1 Pseudoeurycea galeanae. Took tissue & released. This locality is at 8142 ft, 76°F, 32.81 mercury; 23°40.171N - 99°47.35W. Coming around to back road into Miquihuana - at 1700 hrs; Mike killed a horse with a broken foreleg. He did it with a 50# rock to the head!! Reached Miquihuana at 1930 hrs; had hamburger at a house offering food; 22 pesos for 3 hamburgers & coke. Bought gas from house for 375 pesos. We then drove to La Peña to get key for another cabin for students when they arrive. Found Francisco & got key to cabin 5. We moved to one with electricity. On the way to cabin, we heard chorus of Hyla eximia. Collected five for blood & released them. 2139pm; 68°F; 8652 ft, 23°36.122N - 99°42.458W. Arrived cabin at 2210 pm. In our move to Cabin 5, we checked keys to all 6 cabins. We then moved to Cabin 5, big job!! now 2315 hrs; Made big fire, its cold! Made the big loop today - Cabin - Aserradero - Miquihuana - La Peña Cabin! - Pablo leaves in morning for C. Victoria.

July 6. Pablo leaves, yesterday, we stopped at a valley where Pablo & Xochil found Sceloporus chrysostictus two years ago - 9880 ft., 33.75 mercury, 72°F; 1259pm; 23°40.305N - 99°43.218W we did not find S. chrysostictus, but I found Micruroides sp, 5 Pseudoeurycea galeanae under dead rosette agave leaves, 3. Chiropterotriton sp. Today, we drove down slope past Aserradero. Found 3 S. grammicus (not tissue) in valley without trees (Farmed?) on roadside rocks at 8083 ft; 74°F 32.89 mercury; 1448pm; 23°40.439N - 99°46.154W Collected at Km 29 Marker again, Mike caught 2 Sceloporus grammicus ♂♂, 1 S. grammicus ♀ on ridge above slope. Farr photographed them. Quilt at 1700 hrs; back to Cabin 5, 9015 ft, 2339.227N - 99°42.261W

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July 7, 2004

We left Cabin 0800 hrs, down slope to La Peña, Pamillos, + Tula. Stopped en way down for S. minor in Pinon-pine, tressed tail ♀, 0837 hr; 23°35' 103°N - 99°42.607W, 60°F; 32.80 mercury; 7484 ft, reached La Peña 0901 am; at Tula (Hwy 101) at 1030 hr; drove SW to hillside, 1000 m; nr San Pedro; 84°F; 31.13 mercury; 3684 ft, 22°54'33.2N - 99°50.586W We observed or collected 1 Crotaphytus collaris ♀ (6000), Sceloporus spinosus (tail), Cophosaurus texanus, Cnemidophorus gularis, C. ornatus. Typical Chihuahuan desert, with Larrea, Tecoma Persimmon, cholla, Pitaya, leathersteam, Tascillo, Cordia, Fallifera. Returned to Hwy 101 through San Pablo - Drove back through Tula to turnoff to Bustamante (Paved to Bustamante); Left Bustamante 1642 hrs; on dirt road to Miquihuana Hwy. Found S. minor 6470 ft; 23°28' 283N, 99°43.870W; 87°F; 23.11 mercury. We arrived near La Peña 1730 hrs; checked roads just above La Peña on road to cabin; 23°33'.887N - 99°41.673W, 6046 ft; Found S. minor + S. spinosus. Drove to Miquihuana for hamburger, at 1830 hr, 1930 hr, drove road to Bustamante turnoff, back to La Peña 2115 hrs; up mountain Rd (8 km) to cabin, arriving 2215 hrs; we are all tired - in bed by 2300 hrs.

July 8 - Up at 0900 hr, now -10 hr sleep, tried to start fire, but rained during night, wood is wet! We Lft Cabin for south slope of mountain, Mike went up slope to 10,178 ft, found S. torquatus + snails, I found 1 Eumeces Gravirostris, 3 S. torquatus, 2 Thamnophis sirtalis under rosette agave leaves; at 9720 ft, in pm; also 1 ad T. sirtalis under agave leaf, + 1 S. cheneyi on Log, + 1 P. galeatus under Log. Pablo showed up at 1700 hrs with 4 students. We drove down mountain to La Peña with Pablo to get a key for Cabin 6 for students (free) I took Pablo, Farr, Mike + 4 students f. hamburgers, 200 pesos for hamburgers, colas, tacos; for 8 people.

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4 July 2004 75°F, 33.09 mercury, 8567 ft; found ♂ Sceloporus torquatus,
6cm L green; at 7771 ft, 79°F, 32.95 mercury, 23°35.309 N
99°42.399 W, a juv. Sceloporus grammicus; reached pavement
at 1710pm, drove into Miquihuana & bought a tefbra for
154 pesos; at 1733 pm, downpour of rain. Drove to rain-filled
pond near La Peña, Spec frogs at 5496 ft, 23°26.04 N
99°37.593 W, 82°F, 31.66 mercury; drove route to Palmillas
4237 ft; 23°18.63 - 99°33.123 W, bought gas at a tienda
18L for 175 pesos; supper in Loncheria of papas con carne Asada
3 cokes for 175 pesos. 1820 hrs; we returned to 3 mi N. of
Miquihuana (dirt rd), found Spec frogs in large earthen
pond. returned to Miquihuana at 2100 hrs, dark; then to
entrance to La Peña; found 3 choruses of Scopula multiplicata,
+ 1 Bufo punctatus calling. Drove south en pavement towards
Palmillas, at km 32 marker, checked rock faces for
anurans, none seen. Returned to gate at 10000 ft, by 12:30 am
± 1:15 hrs from pavement. Gray-Green chav. pickup parked
at gate - it was Pablo Lain-Muñoz; he had been waiting
for us since 6 pm. We drove to Cabin + talked until 0230 am.

5 July - Left cabin in Pablo's truck at 1000 hr; stopped at top of pass
10009 ft; 23°39.557 N, 99°42.518 W; walked down trail Bill
said to follow (Pablo + I); 20 min. later, we wound up behind
cabin 2. Wrong trail!; walked back to truck 30 min uphill;
saw S. torquatus, C. sp., + S. grammicus on walk, including
1 P. galecae. We drove on to Asadero 23°41.14 N;
99°45.052 W 2556m (8358 ft), continuing we found S. torquatus
ad ♂ + juv; 77°F, 32.87 mercury, 8476 ft, 23°41.067 N 99°45.086 W,
1447 pm; At or near this site Mike found 4 hatching Syrrophus,
(black) / Sceloporus chrysostictus; 1 P. galecae in rocks + grass.
Drove to km marker 29, a long slope with many boulders,

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July 8 cont. - Pablo, Mike, 2 students + I drove back to Cabin while FGW + 2 students road-hunted the Bustamante road. We stopped at the Hyla eximia pond in oak Forest with some pines at 2038 hrs. Mike picked up 3 Fairy shrimp in pond for friend. 8593 ft; 2038 hrs, 23°36'.067 N 99°42.277 W.

Students are Oscar M. Hinojosa, Gilberto A. Patino, Armando Martinez, + Ricardo E. Nuñez. Cabin 6 reading 9774 ft; 23°39.276 N-99°42.246,

July 9. cont. Left at 1005 hrs; stopped at rock pile just above La Peña, + found S. parvus, S. spinosus, S. minor, C. pulchellus. (See previous data for this site). We drove on to a site 11 km SW of Juamave; Cabanas de Florida, on Hwy 101, 3445 ft, 23°23.146 N 99°30.126. Rented two cabins for 350 pesos @. We left + drove through Juamave 7 km to San Vicente, then to Baleniro " 7 km past San Vicente. This is a union of 3 rivers before they pass into the Great Canyon of Rio Grijalvo. The rivers are Rio Chihue, Rio Guayalejo and Rio ³ . On way back we found Bufo valliceps at 2133 on outskirts of Juamave, + 2 Bufo marinus, 402 km E of Juamave. Last night Fair + students found an adult Echtherodactylus agusti (tissie) at 2318 hrs; 68°F, 31.98 mercury; 23°19.152 N-99°42.072, 5357 ft, Crotalus scutulatus neonate (tissie) at 0103 am; 75°F, 31.76 mercury, 23°24.235 N-99°44.784 W; 5075 ft, and DOR Bufo punctatus 0135 hrs; 68°F; 31.63 mercury; 23°21.254 N-99°48.915 W 4785 ft, (tissie), all on paved Bustamante Road.

July 10 Up at 0800, huevos rancheros + cafe for desayuno; All eight of us in Pablo's truck. Drove W + S of Juamave to new road going to La Joya de Salas, bulldozed in April; sign says Rd to EL Cielo. 31 km distant, very bad road, only 4-wheel drive, found S. parvus at 5868 ft, at 1234 hrs, 23°14'58.7" N, 99°21'54" W; S. torquatus 23°13.150 N-99°21.282 W; 6158 ft, 1319 hrs, S. grammicus 1247 hrs

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10 July cont. 23°14'.649 N - 99°21.774 W; 5815 ft.; S. tigrinus signatus + snails, 1333 hrs, 23°13'.116 N - 99°21.284, 6158 ft.; S. minor 23°11.463 N - 99°20'.002 W; 5542 ft; 1418 hrs; S. minor Ad ♂ (1/loc), 23°11.051 N - 99°18'.842 W, 5180 ft; 1445 hrs; Rana berlandieri 23°10'.389 N - 99°18'.043 W; 5055 ft., 1514 hrs; 2 Kinosternon integrum juv, Ad; away from La Joya on hillside, 1542 hrs; 23°09'.994 N - 99°17'.983 W; 4998 ft; one was under cactus. Ate lunch in pine grove; on way back to cabin by 1745 pm. We stopped on ridge 1/16 before we descended; at 5906 ft., found juv. Eleutherodactylus augusti under rock; some 15 km NW of La Joya de Salas. 23°14'.59 N - 99°21'.575 W. From the latter ridge to bottom is stem of many switch-backs; reached mouth of Caguayo; 17.5 more km; + reached jet with new road + road to Ocampo in 6 more km; + at 2030 hrs. We ate supper in Juamave at 2130 hrs; finished 2230 hrs, at cabin 2300 hrs, — Long tough day! We tissueed all specimens by taking tails or blood.

11 July 2004 Up by 0600 hr, Pablo + students will leave late today. Pablo gave me a "constancia" for the tissues + blood from the UNAM Technological University in C. Victoria. We will drive south of Palmillas on dirt road + come out at Tula. The kilometer readings will be from Palmillas to La Union, where we will turn west over the mountains. At 11 km S, 0950 hr; we saw Rana sp, S. spinosus, and C. guttatus; at 12 km S, 1015 hr; 5004 ft; we found Bufo punctatus, Synaphophis sp. ♀, S. spinosus ♂; Leptodeira septentrionalis 23°10'.083 N - 99°33'.201 W (tissues + blood) released, at Km 30 south; Aquiles Serdan, 4220 ft, stopped for cokes. at Km 32 south; small stream, spring flow; saw 3 Kinosternon integrum 2 ad, 1 hatching, collected 2 types of tadpoles; 1148 hr; 31.41 mercury, 4137 ft; 23°04'.618 N - 99°32'.396 W

11 July cont. at 1205 hrs; Mike saw Drymobius, Sceloporus variabilis, and Norops slevini; 3990 ft., $23^{\circ}04'10.2''N - 99^{\circ}32'6.07''W$ all at 33 km south. Village of Santa María La Tocha; very near ~~36~~ km south; 1247 hr, 3801 ft; DOR Senticolus trispis ♀, tissue; $23^{\circ}02'9.29''N - 99^{\circ}32'7.29''W$; at 40 km south; La Union, 3532 ft; turn west to Cieneguera (km 9 west of La Union) 4685 ft, at km 12 west, top of pass, 5550 ft, made pavement at km 25 west, nr. Laguna San Isidro; 35 km west; made north outskirts of Tula at 1500 hrs. Ate lunch at Hotel run by Ricardo's mother. We then drove to site of volcanic hills just NE of border with state of San Luis Potosí, at Hwy km 14 marker; we turned SE into lava field; 3462 ft, $23^{\circ}02'9.28''N - 99^{\circ}32.920''W$. This site yielded Anelytropsis papilliferus and Eumeces obsoletus in August of 2002, following a 4" rain. It was raining when we got there, but didn't see R in. I took a digital photo. The valley from Palmillas to La Union was humid + somewhat tropical, running along a stream that flows towards Ocampo. More tropical plants than in other sites visited. We left site at 1700 hr. Returned to La Florida cabanas + had café + pan dulce with Pablo. They left for Ciudad Victoria at 1930 hrs. Farm decided to road hunt, but Mike + I showered + went to bed.

12 July 2004 Rainy nite, we checked out of one room, kept another, and then drove up old road to C. Victoria. We stopped at or near the top in the oak forest + worked down slope at 3526 ft., $73^{\circ}F$; 30.73 mercury, 1346 hr; $23^{\circ}36'41.4''N - 99^{\circ}12'36.3''W$; in the rain we found 2 Eleutherodactylus "Gatrachyla", juv on ground under debris, Ad in vertical rock crack; + 3 Xenosaurus platyceps, 1 S. grammicus. The area is known as "Balcon Montezuma". We returned to Juárez for lunch. + then drove towards mouth of Guayalejo

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12 July 2004 ^{cont.}

Canyon. Just across Rio; we found 2 S. olivaceus,
C. gularis; B. marinus tadpoles (many) + 9 Physosoma cornutum.
tissue + blood. 82°F ; $23^{\circ}25.032\text{N}$ - $99^{\circ}19.667\text{W}$. Further towards
mouth of Canyon we found S. olivaceus ♂ at 1627 hrs; 91°F ;
 30.67 mercury, 2197 ft.; $23^{\circ}25.089\text{N}$ - $99^{\circ}19.420\text{W}$, drove to
joining of 3 rivers, returned to Juamave at 1755 hrs; supper, then
to La Florida Cabana.

13 July

Up at 0700, packed gear, checked out + drove old road into C.
Victoria; drove through C. Victoria, Jimenez, + into San
Fernando by 1230 hrs. Got motel room for 450 pesos; ate peanut
butter/banana sandwich for lunch. Drove E to coast 69 km to
Carajal, then returned to motel at 1600 hrs; alcoholized pablos'
material to date. X. platyceps, - 1900 hr, ate supper + drove to
solem marker on coast highway + returned at 2330 hrs; found
Rana berlandieri mR 127, 2105 h, 40 ft., 85°F ; 29.33 mercury,
1 DOR, 16 AOR; tissue (1); $24^{\circ}43.667\text{N}$ - $97^{\circ}56.550\text{W}$, many Scaphiopus
couchii (incl. MX 128-30), ~~$27^{\circ}52^{\circ}43.228\text{N}$ - $97^{\circ}55.885\text{W}$~~ , 35 ft.;
2109 h; 29.92 mercury, 16 + on Hwy; Bufo speciosus 82°F mR 131;
18 ft., 29.90 mercury, $24^{\circ}40.231\text{N}$ - $97^{\circ}51.447\text{W}$; Thamnophis
proximus ♀ mR 132; 29.92 mercury, 2204 hrs, 81°F ; bright yellow mid
stripe, $24^{\circ}39.744$, $99^{\circ}46.890\text{W}$; Thamnophis proximus mR 133 F;
2221 hr; 83°F $24^{\circ}39.203\text{N}$ - $97^{\circ}47.108\text{W}$ pale yellow mid-stripe
Thamnophis proximus 2237 h, 29.33 mercury, 81°F , pale orange
stripe Chaedodipus hispidus mR 135. Returned to Motel 2330 hrs.

14 July - up at 0630 h; on road to Cruillas by 0800. past L.; Found two
Sceloporus cyanogenys ^{♂♂} (tails) at 0857 hr; 32.22 mercury, 82°F ,
mR 136-37; $24^{\circ}47.496\text{N}$ - $98^{\circ}34.342$, 819 ft.; Thamnophis marcianus
DOR, mR 139 0914 hr; 717 ft., $24^{\circ}52.725\text{N}$ - $98^{\circ}38.866$, 84°F ,
 30.20 mercury; S. cyanogenys ♀ tail, mR 138; $24^{\circ}55.889\text{N}$ - $98^{\circ}42$.
046; 575 ft., 0944 hr; 85°F ; 30.14 mercury, Scincus.

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14 July Cont.

Gopherus berlandieri ♀; MX 126, 25°05.703 N - 98°29'429 W, 218 ft;
1141 hr; 96°F; 30.30 mercury; Km road marker 43, on Mendez to Hwy
101. Returned to San Fernando by 1230 hr, ate lunch after
our experience with "Death Bridge", Mike's term for the crossing
of the Rio San Fernando just west of Mendez; "a bridge of pipes
+ railroad rails. Fair's Ford truck clearance of $\frac{1}{2}$ " got us across.
We loaded all material or fissured from last night, will release it this
pm on our 2nd run. Now 1500 hrs. We drove the San Fernando-
Mendez road at 1830 hrs NW; a Gopherus berlandieri ♀ at 1841 h,
24°55'.889 N - 98°13'.996 W, 85°F; 30.24 Mercury, 251 ft, between
km marker 14+15, MX 141. I found a Large ♀ Bufo valliceps under
stone at 1755 h; Muscovy Duck + nest in cliff wall, + a shed of
a snake in a wall-wall, 200 ft, 24°59'.909 N - 98°18'.160 W
82°F. MX 142-43; Drove into Mendez on Hwy 18, 56 km from
Hwy 101, at 2015 h. Had cola + cookies. On return drive
Found Hypsirhina torquata "dunklei" jani pattern type at
2136 h; 352 ft, 86°F; 29.95 mercury, 24°58'.478 N - 98°12'.447 W.
returned to motel 2230 hrs. Showered + in bed by 2300 hrs.

15 July

Left 0715 for Matamoros; arriving 0915. Mexico side rushing
across for "sale" at Beall's - required 40 min. on bridge, with
two American lances closed. We drove through with no
hassle. We arrived southmost ranch 1015 hrs, Mike, in mean
time, had a change of plans via cell-phone + Taxis. We
(Bill + I) decided to head to Bryan. We made it by
1815 hrs. Mary + I took Farr to dinner at Lubys;
+ Bill was on way home by 2000 hrs. to Houston -
An end to a great trip.