

## NEW RECORDS OF SNAKES IN SOUTHWESTERN KANSAS

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ABSTRACT. Four species are reported from 3 counties. COLUBRIDAE: *Natrix r. rhombifera* Hallowell, *Heterodon n. nasicus* Baird & Girard (both Seward Co.). CROTALIDAE: *Sistrurus catenatus* Raf. (Meade Co.). *Crotalus v. viridis* Raf. (Finney Co.).

During the summer of 1955 a small collection of amphibians and reptiles was made in Meade and surrounding counties in southwestern Kansas. Included were four new county records, two of which represent small but important range extensions. Specimens have been deposited in the collection of the University of Arkansas Department of Zoology (UADZ); they were collected by the writer unless otherwise stated.

### COLUBRIDAE

**NATRIX RHOMBIFERA RHOMBIFERA** Hallowell. Diamond-back Watersnake. (UADZ 1684.)

Captured August 4, about 1:30 P.M., in a reed habitat along the Cimarron River, about 5.8 miles southwest of Kismet, Seward County. The water was backed up into a small ravine by a beaver dam. This locality extends the known range of this snake in Kansas westward by about 18 miles (cf. Smith, 1950; 266).

Female. Body length 855 mm., tail length 209 mm. Supralabials 8-8, infralabials 11-11; dorsal scale rows 25+27+21, ventrals 137, sub-caudals 58. Ground color light brownish gray with 33 gray-black mid-dorsal blotches on the body connected by narrow, indistinct, dark, alternating lines in a row on either side. Belly yellowish white with numerous semilunar blackish spots on the anterior borders of most of the ventral plates.

**HETERODON NASICUS NASICUS** Baird & Girard. Western Hognose Snake. (UADZ 1685.)

Taken July 19, about 9:15 A.M., on a dirt road 6.2 miles southwest of Kismet, Seward County. This locality helps to fill an apparent gap in the distribution of this species in Kansas (cf. Smith, 1950: 220).

Female. Body length 556 mm., tail (broken off) 84+mm. Rostral projecting forward, sharply turned up, with a single median keel. Supralabials 8-8, infralabials 10-10; dorsal scale rows 23+23+19. Ventrals 149, subcaudals 36+. Ground color pale yellowish brown with a mid-dorsal row of 49 dark blotches on the body and 11 on the tail, tending to form crossbands. Two rows of alternating blotches present on either side, the area between the blotches pale brownish white. Belly yellowish with a wide, irregular band mid-ventrically, interrupted by spots of yellow and white. The above description agrees with Edgren's (1952: 2) definition of this subspecies.

## CROTALIDAE

*SISTRURUS CATENATUS* Rafinesque. Massasauga. (UADZ 1686.)

Killed June 30, approximately 3.5 miles south of Meade County State Park, Meade County, by Dr. Claude W. Hibbard. It was found about dusk on a dirt road. Both Tihen and Sprague (1939: 505) and Smith (1950: 298) thought that this snake would eventually be found there. Gloyd (1955: 95) records an individual from Harper County, Oklahoma, some 29 miles to the southwest. This is the nearest recorded locality.

Male. Body length 398 mm., tail length 55 mm.; four rattles present. Supralabials 11-12, infralabials 13-13; dorsal scale rows 23+23+17, ventrals 144, subcaudals 29. Ground color gray-brown with 37 recognizable, squarish, black body blotches with fine white borders; blotches are about twice as large as the spaces between. Tail blotches 5. Belly moderately blotched with brownish gray, especially laterally.

The color pattern, both dorsal and ventral, is characteristic of *S. c. tergeminus* Say, as defined by Gloyd (1955: 94). The scutellation of the labials, ventrals, and subcaudals might refer either to this subspecies or to *S. c. edwardsi* Baird & Girard, which the small dorsal scale counts strongly suggest. Since this individual was collected between the known ranges of the two subspecies, and since it combines the distinguishing characters of each, it may be considered a member of an intergrading population *S. catenatus tergeminus* × *edwardsi*.

*CROTALUS VIRIDIS VIRIDIS* Rafinesque. Prairie Rattlesnake. (UADZ 1687.)

Mr. Marvin Schwilling presented me with a Prairie Rattlesnake which he killed June 9, in the Buffalo Pasture of the Finney County State Farm Preserve, about 2 miles southwest of Garden City, Finney County. This record helps to fill an apparent distribution gap (cf. Smith, 1950: 304).

**Male.** Body length 495 mm., tail length 41 mm.; 5 rattles and a button present. Subcaudals 14-15, infralabials 17-16; dorsal scale rows 25 + 25 + 19, ventrals 173, subcaudals 25. Sides of head dark brown with characteristic diagonal white lines; a fine transverse line present over each eye on the top of the head. Ground color of body gray with 40 oval, white-edged dark blotches; tail with 7 cross bands. Belly immaculate, brownish gray.

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