

Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

TELFORD, SAM R., JR. 1982. *Tantilla coronata*.***Tantilla coronata* Baird and Girard
Southeastern crowned snake**

Tantilla coronata Baird and Girard, 1853:131. Type-locality, "Kemper Co[unty]., Miss[ississippi]." Holotype, U.S. Nat. Mus. 1875, adult female, collected by D. C. Lloyd, date of collection unknown (not examined by author).

Homalocranium wagneri Jan, 1862:51. Type-locality, "Florida." Holotype, collected by Professor Wagner, originally located at Munich, according to Jan and Sordelli (1866), presumed destroyed during World War II (not examined by author).

Tantilla coronata var. *wagneri*: Garman, 1884:163. First use of combination.

Homalocranium coronatum: Boulenger, 1896:218. Synonymy of *H. wagneri* with *H. coronatum*.

Tantilla coronata coronata: Blanchard, 1938:369. First use of trinomial.

Tantilla coronata mitrifer Schwartz, 1953:153. Type-locality, "Caesar's Head, 5 miles south of Caesar's Head community, Greenville County, South Carolina." Holotype, Charleston Mus. 53.92.2, adult female, collected by Albert Schwartz, 26 April 1953 (examined by author).

- CONTENT. The species is monotypic.

• DEFINITION. A medium-sized species of *Tantilla* (maximum SV length 190 mm in males, 217 mm in females), with a tan to dark brown dorsum (dorsal color shading into pale ventral coloration). Head pattern consists predominately of a pale parietal band which separates the black head cap from the black nuchal collar (in over 96 percent of specimens), with the collar usually 3 or fewer scales in length at midline ($2-6$, $\bar{x} = 3.0$). The black head cap usually does not extend to the last two supralabials or

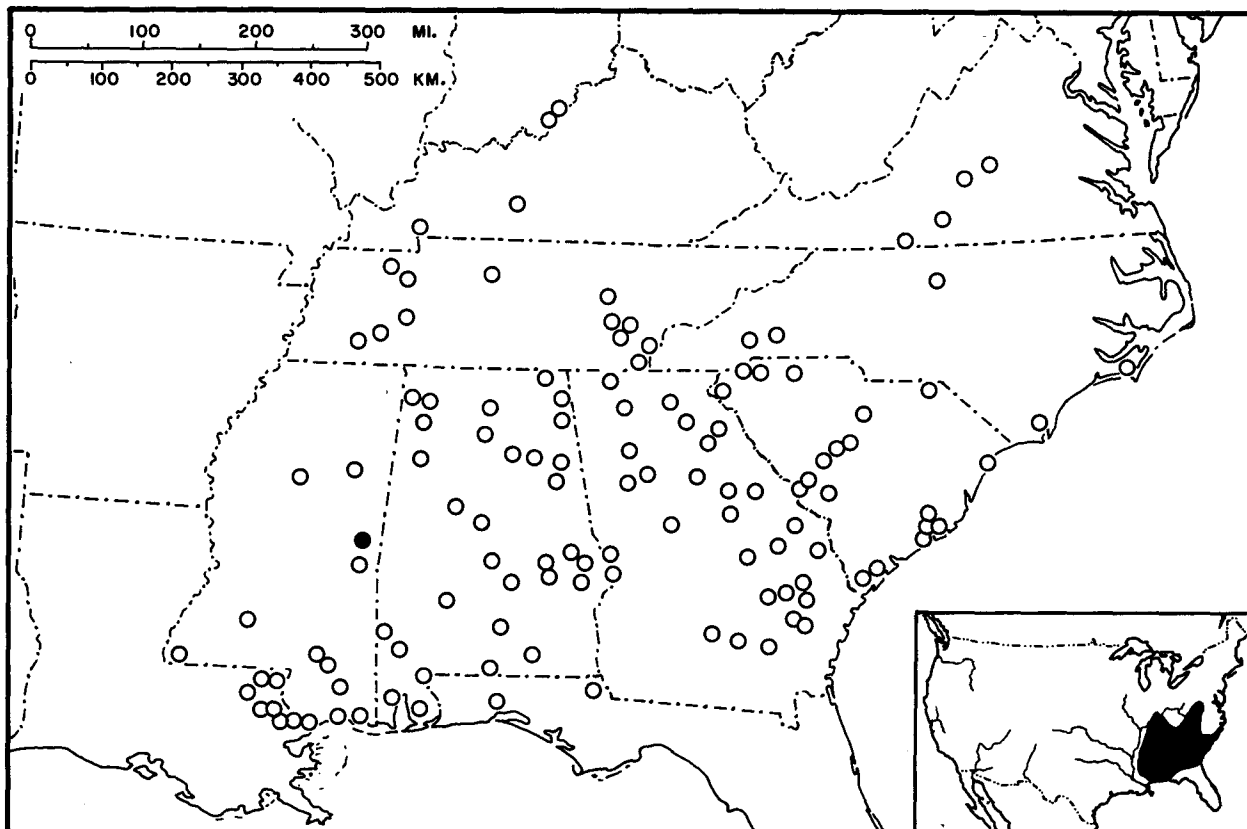
the ventral halves of the lower postocular and anterior temporal. The head is broadly pointed and widens distinctly at the temporals, with a lower jaw that is not countersunk. The hemipenis possesses two basal hooks, one posterolateral and adjacent to the sulcus spermaticus, located in the basal third of the hemipenis, and the other anteromedial, slightly smaller, in the mesal third of the organ. The ventrals number 123-147, subcaudals 34-53. The tail comprises 15-23 percent of total length. Dorsal scale rows number 15 throughout. The head scales consist of one preocular, two postoculars, one anterior and posterior temporal, seven supralabials (3rd and 4th entering the orbit), and five or six infralabials (four in contact with anterior chinshields). The posterior chinshields are one-third shorter than the anterior pair, which are in contact or not with the mental. The anal plate is divided. Maxillary teeth number 14-18, usually 16.

• DESCRIPTIONS. Baird and Girard (1853) adequately described the holotype. Unless origin of their material is stated, as in Wright and Wright (1957), general descriptions in the literature may be based in part upon *T. relicta* from peninsular Florida, which are not *T. coronata*. Schwartz (1953) furnished a good description of montane *T. coronata*. Telford (1966) provided descriptions of variation in coloration and scalation, maxillary dentition and hemipenial structure. Conant (1975) presented a brief description of the species.

• ILLUSTRATIONS. Drawings depicting head pattern are in Schmidt and Davis (1941) and Telford (1966), and the hemipenis was figured by the latter author. Photographs (black and white) appear in Cochran and Goin (1970), Conant (1975), Ditmars (1936), Minton (1972), Mount (1975), and Wright and Wright (1957).

• DISTRIBUTION. Florida west of the Appalachian River westward to the Mississippi River and north to southern Indiana and Virginia.

• FOSSIL RECORD. Specimens reported as *T. coronata* by Auffenberg (1963) from north-central Florida sites may be *T. relicta* instead.



MAP. Solid circle marks the type-locality; open circles indicate other records.

• **PERTINENT LITERATURE.** The most recent and comprehensive treatment of *Tantilla coronata* is by Telford (1966), who described variation in scutellation, morphology, coloration, pattern, maxillary dentition; figured the hemipenis; and summarized several published reports and collecting notes dealing with habitat and reproduction. Neill (1951) and Neill and Boyles (1957) reported natural nests and eggs. Clarke (1970) discussed the presence of a single oviduct in this and some other species of *Tantilla*. Hamilton and Pollack (1961) reported *T. coronata* as prey of *Ophisaurus*. Anderson et al. (1952), Brode and Allison (1958), Carr (1940), Ferguson and Bancroft (1957), Hibbard (1936), Mount (1963), Neill (1951), Schwartz (1953), and Wright and Wright (1957) reported a variety of habitat notes and other field observations. Several authors contributed distributional information: Cliburn (1958), Dunn (1919), Endsley (1954), Freeman (1955), Hardy (1952), Minton (1949), Mount (1975), Smith and List (1955), Taylor (1936), Williamson and Moulis (1979), and Witt (1963). Conant (1975) provided a brief account and a range map for the species.

• **REMARKS.** Telford (1966) clarified the status of *Homalocranium wagneri* Jan (*T. coronata wagneri* of Blanchard) by pointing out that "Florida" as a type-locality published in 1862 might well have included the lower Gulf Coast from present-day Florida through the "Florida parishes" of Louisiana, and by demonstrating that the plotting of ventrals against subcaudals clearly identifies the holotype of *wagneri* as representative of *T. coronata* rather than a peninsular population.

Montane and Upper Piedmont populations of *T. coronata* are distinctly darker dorsally than those from the Coastal Plain, but variation in meristic characters is insufficient to support recognition of *T. coronata mitrifer* Schwartz (Telford, 1966).

• **ETYMOLOGY.** The name *coronata* (Latin) refers to the prominent black cap which "crowns" the dorsal surface of the head.

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SAM R. TELFORD, JR., FLORIDA STATE MUSEUM, GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32601.

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