

Short Note

Distributional Records of Herptiles From the Chautauqua Hills of Southeastern Kansas

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Specimens of six species of herptiles that were collected in the Chautauqua Hills on 20-21 April 1973 serve to augment the known distributions of those species in Kansas. Individuals of four of the species were obtained at a place 8/10 mi. W Elgin, that of one from within Elgin, and those of another at a place 1 mi. E Elgin, all in Chautauqua County. Most specimens collected at the locality west of Elgin were found on a steep, south-facing slope dominated by *Quercus stellata* (post oak) and *Q. marilandica* (blackjack oak). The surface of the ground was covered with oak leaves scattered among slabs of sandstone, and few understory plants were present (see Lathrop, 1958). Because of recent precipitation, the sandy soil was wet and depressions in the forest and roadside ditches were filled with water. At the base of the hill, adjacent to a road, was a narrow strip of non-forested land (probably an old, revegetated roadbed) dominated by *Andropogon scoparius* (little bluestem), *A. gerardi* (big bluestem), *Panicum virgatum* (panic grass), and *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indian grass). All specimens from this and the other locales are preserved in the Museum of the High Plains (MHP), Fort Hays Kansas State College.

Bufo cognatus Say, Great Plains Toad.—An adult (MHP 5573) was caught on a paved street in Elgin shortly after an early evening shower. This locality is seven miles south and 14 miles east of the southeastern most locality of record (½ mi. S, 1½ mi. W Hoover, Cowley County—Legler, 1960) for the species in Kansas.

Pseudacris clarki (Baird), Spotted Chorus Frog.—Four specimens (5549-5552) were collected at a place 1 mi. E Elgin in an alfalfa field that was flooded by recent rains, where they were in a breeding chorus together with numerous individuals of *Bufo americanus* and *Rana pipiens*. This locality extends the known distribution of the species in Kansas approximately 90 miles south of Lyon County, from which Smith (1956) reported (but did not examine) one specimen, and 54 miles south and 55 miles east of the previous southeasternmost verified (Smith, 1956) locality of record (10 mi. N Wichita) in the state.

Hyla versicolor Le Conte, Gray Tree Frog.—Four specimens (5590-5593) were collected from a breeding chorus in a flooded roadside ditch at a place

8/10 mi. W Elgin. Although Smith (1956) indicated that the species should occur in Chautauqua County, no previous records exist. The site of capture is 18 miles south and 20 miles west of the nearest locality of record (Elk City, Montgomery County—Smith, 1956) in Kansas.

Sceloporus undulatus (Latreille), Northern Fence Lizard.—One specimen (5568) was caught beneath a sandstone fragment on the wooded hillside described above, 8/10 mi. W Elgin. This locality is 12 miles south and 19 miles west of the nearest locality of record (6 mi. N Havana, Montgomery County—Legler, 1960) in Kansas, and falls within the geographic gap between the ranges of the subspecies *S. u. garmani* (to the west) and *S. u. hyacinthinus* (to the east—see Smith, 1956). Legler (1960) referred the above-mentioned specimen from near Havana (in southwestern Montgomery County) to *S. u. garmani*, whereas Fleharty and Ittner (1967) referred another specimen that was obtained at a place 4½ mi. N Coffeyville (in southeastern Montgomery County) to *S. u. hyacinthinus*. The specimen caught west of Elgin, in our estimation, resembles most closely those of *S. u. hyacinthinus* and, therefore, is referred to that subspecies although it seems likely that the population from which it was obtained is in the midst of a zone of intergradation between the two subspecies (see Webb, 1970). On the basis of specimens collected since 1956, we feel safe in suggesting that there probably is no hiatus between the ranges of the two subspecies in southeastern Kansas.

Eumeces anthracinus (Baird), Coal Skink.—One individual (5554) was found beneath a sandstone fragment on the south-facing hillside 8/10 mi. W Elgin. Smith alluded to the presence of the species in Chautauqua County but cited no records. The nearest locality of record is approximately 80 miles to the east at a place 4 mi. NE Baxter Springs, Cherokee County (Smith, 1956).

Virginia striatula (Linnaeus), Rough Earth Snake.—Ten adults and two juveniles (5558-5563, 5584-5589) were collected at the locality described above 8/10 mi. W Elgin, where they were taken from beneath slabs of sandstone. The species is known in Kansas from only three localities in Ozarkian habitats in the extreme southeastern corner of the state (Smith, 1956). Therefore, the site of capture of the specimens is the westernmost in Kansas, and represents a range extension of 80 miles from a place 2 miles north of Baxter Springs, Cherokee County (Smith, 1956). The nearest locality of record for the species is 16 miles farther to the south and eight miles to the east in the Chautauqua Hills at a place 7 mi. W Bartlesville, in Osage County, Oklahoma (Burt and Hoyle, 1934).

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