

NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Iguania, Liolaemidae, *Liolaemus somuncurae*: Distribution extension.

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The genus *Liolaemus* contains more than 180 species, 58 of which occur in a variety of habitats in Patagonia (Argentina) (Morando et al. 2007; Scolaro 2005). In spite of this, our knowledge on the systematic, ecology, and geographic distribution of *Liolaemus* lizards is still very scarce. It is necessary to increase the information available on these lizards to improve our knowledge of one of the most speciose genus of vertebrates of America. Here we present new geographic distribution data on a poorly known Patagonian species of *Liolaemus*.

Liolaemus somuncurae (Figure 1) was described from “Meseta de Somuncura, near Lago Raimundo” (Cei and Scolaro 1980) (Figure 2) and belongs to the *kingii* group. During a recent field trip to western Province of Río Negro, we collected five individuals which were morphologically similar to the species described as *L. somuncurae*. Lizards were collected by hand, euthanased with pericardic injection of Tiopental Sódico (Abbot®), fixed with formalin 20 %, and transferred to 70 % ethanol after 3 to 4 days. Latitude, longitude, and elevation were determined with a Garmin™ GPS 12.

Voucher specimens were deposited in the field collection Luciano Javier Avila Mariana Morando (LJAMM 3661-3, 3708-9), housed in the Centro Nacional Patagónico-CONICET, Puerto Madryn (Chubut), Argentina.



Figure 1. Adult male of *Liolaemus somuncurae* from the new locality: Department of 25 de Mayo, Province of Río Negro, Argentina.

Collection site (Figure 2) was on the margins of Provincial Road 76, 35 km S junction National Road 23, south of the municipality of Ingeniero Jacobacci (41°34' S, 69°23' W, 1000 m a.s.l.), Department of 25 de Mayo, Province of Río Negro. Landscape was dominated by Patagonian Steppe vegetation which is constituted predominantly by shrubs (*Mulinum spinosum*, *Adesmia campestris*, and *Senecio bracteolatus*), and several grass species of *Poa* and *Stipa* (Burkart et al. 1999). All lizards were found basking on small stones accumulated by human disturbance with motor graders.

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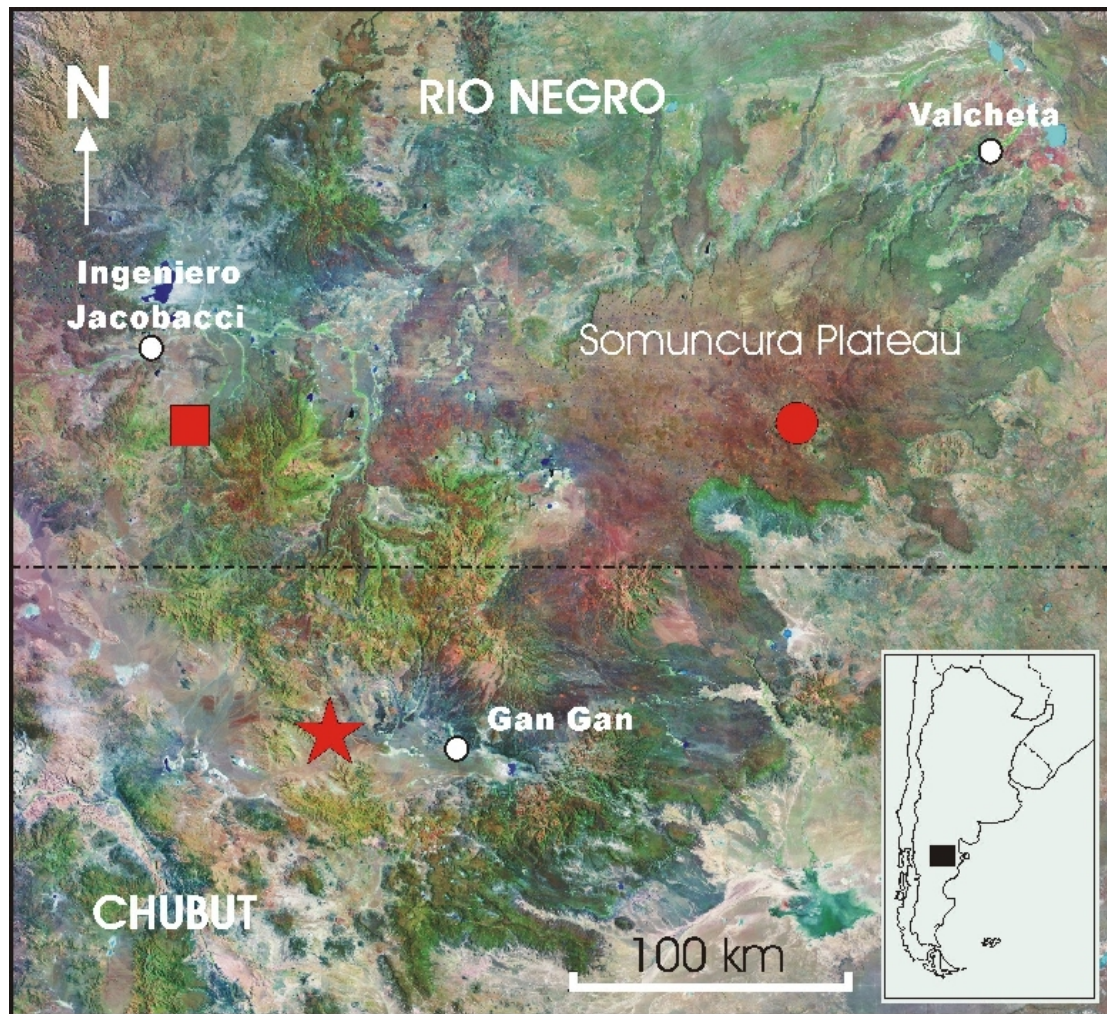


Figure 2. Geographic distribution of *Liolaemus somuncurae* and *L. uptoni* in Patagonia, Argentina. Closed circle = type-locality of *L. somuncurae*. Square = new locality reported for *L. somuncurae*. Star = type-locality of *L. uptoni*. White dots: main cities marked as reference.

Comparisons of collected specimens with those of *L. somuncurae* deposited at the collection of the Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales Bernardino Rivadavia (MACN) combined with literature data (Ceï and Scolaro 1980; 1997) confirmed the species identity. Therefore, this new distributional record constitutes the first for *Liolaemus somuncurae* in 25 de Mayo and represents the westernmost known distribution, extending species range ca. 215 km western airline from the type locality (Figure 2).

Recently, another species of the *kingii* group was described from an area closer than the type locality of *Liolaemus somuncurae* (Scolaro and Ceï

2006). This new species, *L. uptoni*, was found ca. 120 km southeastern from our collection site, but it is separated by the Añueque and Calcatapul mountain ranges, and is located in a lower plain region (600 to 700 m a.s.l.) known as Pampa de Sacanana, in the Province of Chubut (Figure 2). Comparisons between samples of *L. somuncurae* and type series of *L. uptoni* deposited at MACN showed few differences between both species, but a more detailed study is necessary to establish the limits between species of *Liolaemus kingii* group.

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