
On 2 May 2007 a large (~1 m total length) rattlesnake was found coiled on a trail 4.8 km N of the town of Blue, 64 km NE of Austin, Lee Co., Texas, USA. The area is categorized as Post Oak Savannah but the immediate landscape that surrounds this property is disturbed and largely agricultural. Using the methods described in Douglas et al. (2006. Mol. Ecol. 15:3353–3374), we obtained DNA from a sample of shed skin. A comparative analysis of the sequence information (ATPase 8 and 6) obtained from the hybrid to a pre-existing phylogeny of rattlesnakes and other North American pitvipers (M. E. Douglas et al., unpubl. data) revealed that the haplotype was that of C. horridus. Thus, owing to matrilineal inheritance of mtDNA, we assigned the hybrid’s mother to be C. horridus. The overall appearance of the subject appears intermediate to that of the putative parents (Fig. 1A). The paired parietal marking, post-ocular stripe, and mottled venter pattern (not visible) are C. horridus-like, whereas the broad dorsal blotches and black and white rings on the tail are C. atrox-like.

To our knowledge, this is the second record of natural hybridization between C. atrox and C. horridus. Meik et al. (2008. Southwest. Nat. 53:196–200), using morphological characters (e.g., scales, color pattern), provided robust evidence for hybridization between C. atrox and C. horridus in a subadult (SVL = 667) female subject collected 50 km W of Denton, in Wise Co., Texas (University of Texas at Arlington [UTA] R-52942; Fig. 1B). This specimen bears a striking resemblance to the hybrid reported here (Fig. 1A). Our analysis of scalation and color pattern of the present hybrid essentially mirrors the results of Meik et al. (op. cit.). However, in our analysis of interocularials we followed the definition provided by Klauber (op. cit.), which includes counting a subocular and a supralabial. Our count for interocularials was 5–5 (both sides of the head). Using this definition, the hybrid described in Meik et al. (2008, op. cit.) is 3–3 as reported (J. Meik, pers. comm.).

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Dromicodryas bernieri (Bernier’s Striped Snake). DIET. Few studies have investigated the ecology of Madagascar’s more common diurnal colubrid snake species (Glaw and Vences 2007. A Field Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of Madagascar. 3rd ed. Vences & Glaw, Köln. 496 pp.; Kaloloha et al. 2011. Herpetol. Notes 4:397–402). Dromicodryas bernieri has only been documented preying upon saurian prey and is assumed to be strictly saurophagous (Cadle 2003. In Goodman and Benstead [eds.],