Epictia tenella (Klauber’s Worm Snake)

Family: Leptotyphlopidae (Worm Snakes)
Order: Squamata (Lizards and Snakes)
Class: Reptilia (Reptiles)

Fig. 1. Klauber’s worm snake, Epictia tenella.
[http://www.trinidad-tobagoherps.org/Epictiatenella.htm, downloaded 16 October 2016]

TRAITS. Epictia tenella is commonly known as Klauber’s worm snake and is often confused with other species in the Epictia genus (Wallach, 2016). Its distinguishing features are details of scale patterns (TTHerps, 2016). Klauber’s worm snake is generally identified by the dark stripe that passes through each scale row, and the yellow-tipped head and tail (Fig. 1). The snake is relatively small with lengths of 275mm (TTHerps, 2016). There are 14 rows of smooth dorsal scales, with a tail ending in a sharp spike.

DISTRIBUTION. Found in South America and Trinidad and Tobago (Fig. 2) (Wallach, 2016). Klauber’s worm snake was observed in southeast Trinidad (Mohammed et al., 2014).

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY. Klauber’s worm snake is found in lowland forest clearings such as savannas, urban gardens and evergreen or partially evergreen forests. They tend to live under rocks and leaf litter near to ant and termite nests. This is because they feed on ants and termites, however they can be found in trees and or in crevices in rock walls as they tend to crawl up these walls and trees to reach food. They are active during daylight (TTHerps, 2016) and use chemical trails left behind by ants and termites to find them. Female worm snakes lay eggs, which hatch into young worm snakes (Reptile Database, 2016).
**BEHAVIOUR.** These snakes are mesophilic meaning that they tend to live in moderate temperature environments, thus it is easy to understand why these snakes are found under rocks and leaf litter where they burrow themselves to remain cool.

**REFERENCES**


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**Fig. 2.** Klauber’s worm snake distribution. [http://media.eol.org/content/2012/01/17/09/34027_260_190.jpg downloaded 25 October 2016]

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