

ish Honduras), as did Smith (1965), in distinguishing *mertensi* from *lateralis*. Smith believed it was confined to British Honduras, but Villa (1969) pointed out that 42.9% of the Corn Island *T. nigroluteus* have 3 preoculars.

In México, Guatemala, and British Honduras material, the dark groundcolor continues to the edge of the ventrals, the only break in the continuity being at rows 3 and 4 where a light stripe is present. Specimens from Honduras southward, including the Bay and Corn islands, have the first, second, and lower half of the third row light in color. The change from one condition to the other apparently occurs in northwestern Honduras and perhaps adjacent Guatemala. Two specimens from the northern portion of the department of Cortés (LSUMZ 23868-69) have a great deal more dark pigment on the first two scale rows than do the rest of the Honduran specimens, even two specimens (TCWC 19226-27) from a few miles south of the localities of the first two.

Ventral coloration has been stated to exhibit two types of variation. Neill and Allen (1959) pointed out that a young specimen from British Honduras was scarlet ventrally and black dorsally but an adult had a tan venter, and they suggested that the variation was ontogenetic. Conant (1965) described a young female (total length 245 mm) from Oaxaca as follows: "The belly was tan, but it changed to light orange-red posteriorly and was even brighter orange under the tail." Duellman (1963) described the venter of a specimen from El Petén, Guatemala, 407 mm in total length, as "dark grayish brown with cream-colored flecks anteriorly and creamy gray posteriorly." Bay Islands specimens as Villa (1969) demonstrated, have either a cream or red-orange venter. The two colorations cannot be associated with sexual or ontogenetic differences but are rather individual in nature. All Corn Islands specimens (Villa, 1969) have a light red venter.

The dorsal groundcolor may be relatively light as in the mainland specimens, except for British Honduras, so that the pattern can be clearly distinguished, or very dark (black) as in specimens from British Honduras and the Corn Islands.

The dorsal pattern consists of a double row of small spots which may or may not be fused anteriorly. Smith (1965) used the fused condition of the anterior paravertebral spots as a characteristic of *T. n. mertensi*, but Neill and Allen (1959) noted the same condition in a specimen from British Honduras, to which area Smith (1965) allocated *T. n. lateralis*.

The patterns of variation are so discordant that any attempt to recognize geographic subunits must be entirely arbitrary. We therefore