



FIG. 1. Polydactylous right forelimb of a juvenile *Osteopilus septentrionalis* from Sarasota, Florida, USA.



FIG. 2. Polydactylous right hindlimb of a juvenile *Osteopilus septentrionalis* from Sarasota, Florida, USA.

pesticides (Ouellet et al. 1997. *J Wildl. Dis.* 33:95–104). Polydactyly is one of the most common malformations exhibited in anuran skeletons (Svinin et al. 2020. *Parasite. Vector.* 13:1–11). Here, we report the observation of two *Osteopilus septentrionalis* that expressed various forms of polydactyly and were collected from a disturbed, urban location.

Osteopilus septentrionalis is an arboreal anuran native to Cuba, the Caiman Islands, and the Bahamas, and the species has since become established as an invasive species throughout peninsular Florida, USA (McGarrity and Johnson 2009. *Biol. Invasions* 11:1411–1420). On the night of 25 October 2024, we collected 64 invasive *O. septentrionalis* individuals from the New College of Florida campus, located in Sarasota, Florida (27.385°N, 82.557°W; WGS 84). All specimens were euthanized onsite via application of 20% benzocaine on the ventral surface (Chen and Combs 1999. *Herpetol. Rev.* 30:34) and were stored at -20°C at the University of Tampa campus. We subsequently collected morphometric measurements on 20 November 2024. While collecting these measurements, we noticed that two juveniles displayed polydactyly. Specifically, one individual had an extra digit on the right forelimb (Fig. 1), and another had an extra digit on its right hindlimb (Fig. 2). This suggested an overall polydactyly rate of 3.1% at the New College of Florida campus.

Limb malformation has previously been reported in *O. septentrionalis*. One individual exhibited polymelia at Pinar del Río, Cuba, in the species' native range (García-Padrón and Bosch 2017. *Herpetol. Rev.* 48:412–413). To our knowledge, our findings are the first reported cases of limb malformation in *O. septentrionalis* in its invasive range, and the first cases of polydactyly in *O. septentrionalis*. The polydactyly rate of 3.1% in this population is higher than the “natural” background rate of malformation, which has previously been estimated to be around 1% (Hoppe 2000. *J. Iowa Acad. Sci.* 107:86–89). The underlying cause of the observed polydactyly in this population

is unclear but could be the result of environmental conditions, such as a high parasite load or consistent exposure to chemicals common in urban landscapes. Subsequent studies should be conducted to determine the putative causes of polydactyly in this population.

ABIGAIL KIRKPATRICK (e-mail: abigail.kirkpatrick@spartans.ut.edu), **CAROLYN APPLEBY**, **GABRIELLA MORAGLIA**, **CARSON COOPER**, **FIONA TAFT**, and **JACOB LAFOND**, Department of Biology, University of Tampa, 401 W Kennedy Boulevard, Tampa, Florida, USA (e-mail: jclafond@ut.edu).

PRISTIMANTIS SIMOTERUS (Albania Robber Frog). **MICRO-HABITAT USAGE.** *Pristimantis simoterus* (Anura: Strabomantidae) is an endemic nocturnal frog of Colombia, occurring at elevations of 2700–4350 m in páramos of the Cordillera Central in the departments of Caldas, Quindío, Risaralda, Tolima, and Valle del Cauca (Lynch and Suárez-Mayorga 2002. *Caldasia* 24:471–480; Bernal and Lynch 2008. *Zootaxa* 1826:1–25; Castaño-Saavedra and Arriaga-Jaramillo 2019. *Cat. Anf. Rept. Colomb.* 5:55–61). Calling males of *P. simoterus* use the following microhabitats at night: grasses, low non-grass herbaceous plants, the bases of bushes, or the ground (Lynch et al. 1996. *Caldasia* 18:329–342; Romero-García et al. 2015. *Zootaxa* 4007:298–300). During the day, individuals can be found sheltering under rocks or fallen logs of *Espeletia*, commonly known as frailejones (big monks) (Lynch et al. 1996, *op. cit.*). Here, we report a new microhabitat used by *P. simoterus* as daytime refugia.

On 29 November 2023, at 1030 h, JPVV, VDH, and SAAD found individuals of *P. simoterus* sheltered in a cavity created by degradation of nonwoody pith of the stem of two standing dead *Espeletia hartwegiana*. The observation occurred in an area primarily dominated by this plant species in the buffer zone of the Parque Nacional Natural Los Nevados, Municipality of Villamaría, Caldas, Colombia (4.9714°N, 75.3580°W; WGS 84; ca.

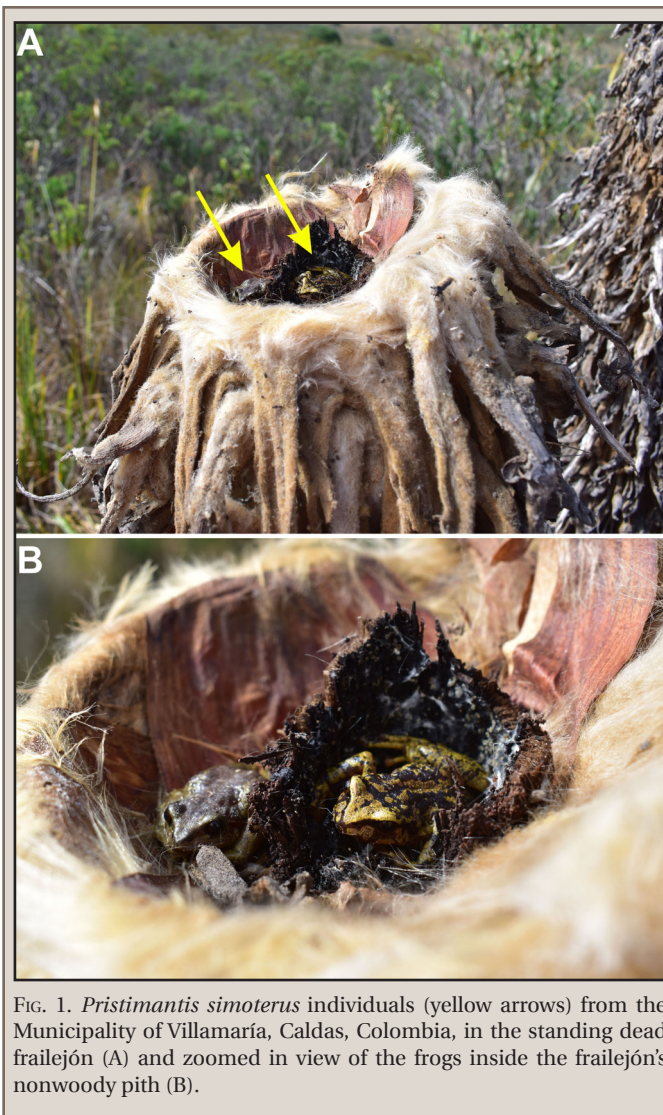


FIG. 1. *Pristimantis simoterus* individuals (yellow arrows) from the Municipality of Villamaría, Caldas, Colombia, in the standing dead frailejón (A) and zoomed in view of the frogs inside the frailejón's nonwoody pith (B).

3900 m elev.). Three *P. simoterus* of different sizes were found in one of the dead frailejones (Fig. 1A, B). A juvenile frog was found in the other dead frailejón. On 19 March 2024, at 0945 h, during a survey in the same area where the *P. simoterus* records were made in 2023, another *P. simoterus* was found sheltered inside the stem of a standing dead frailejón (4.96838°N, 75.35515°W; WGS 84; ca. 3931 m elev.). To our knowledge, these are the first records of *P. simoterus* using cavities in the stem of standing dead *Espeletia* as daytime refugia. Nothing similar has been observed in frogs of the genus *Pristimantis* that inhabit the Colombian páramos. In those species for which natural history data are available (e.g., *P. bogotensis*, *P. curtipes*, *P. lasalleorum*, *P. nicefori*, *P. ocreatus*, *P. peraticus*, *P. repens*, *P. satagiui*, *P. simoteriscus*, and *P. thymelensis*), it has been observed that during nocturnal activity the frogs are found on the leaves of frailejones or at the base of their stems (Carvajalino-Fernández et al. 2011. *S. Am. J. Herpetol.* 6:73–78.; Duarte-Marín 2024. *Herpetol. Bull.* 170:38–41), while during daytime inactivity the frogs hide under rocks or the trunks of frailejones (Lynch 1981. *Mus. Nat. Hist. Univ. Kansas Misc. Publ.* 72:1–46; Lynch 1984. *Herpetologica* 40:234–237; Rivero 1986. *Caribb. J. Sci.* 22:107–114; Lynch 1994. *Rev. Acad. Colomb. Cienc.* 19:195–203; Lynch 1995. *J. Herpetol.* 29:513–521; Lynch et al. 1996. *op. cit.*; Navas 1996. *Oecologia* 108:617–626).

Given that in the páramo ecosystem night temperatures can be very low (<6°C) (Navas 1996, *op. cit.*; Navas 1997. *J. Therm. Biol.* 22:467–477), *P. simoterus* could be using these cavities in the standing dead frailejones exposed to the sun as microhabitats to thermoregulate through basking behavior. However, these ideas need to be examined by assessing the costs and benefits associated with daytime use by *P. simoterus* of these exposed microhabitats.

JUAN PABLO VALENCIA-VALDERRAMA (e-mail: jpablito7712@gmail.com), **VALENTINA DOMINGUEZ HENAO** (e-mail: valedo172000@gmail.com), **SERGIO ALBERTO AVENDAÑO-DELGADO** (e-mail: sergio-avendano42@gmail.com), and **PAUL DAVID ALFONSO GUTIÉRREZ-CÁRDENAS**, Grupo de Ecología y Diversidad de Anfibios y Reptiles, Departamento de Ciencias Biológicas, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas y Naturales, Universidad de Caldas, Calle 65 #26-10, A.A. 275, Manizales, Colombia (e-mail: paul.gutierrez@ucaldas.edu.co).

PSEUDACRIS TRISERIATA (Western Chorus Frog). EPIBIONTS.

Pseudacris triseriata is a small, cold breeding hyliid of eastern North America. It typically calls and breeds in small ephemeral ponds in early spring over four to five weeks and then disperses into adjacent terrestrial habitats, living under leaf litter and woody debris over the rest of their annual cycle. In 2023, we observed multiple ostracods attached to the skin of three male *P. triseriata*, two from eastern Ontario, Canada (44.216°N, 76.698°W; WGS 84) (Fig. 1A and 1B), and one male from northern Michigan, USA (45.650°N, 84.452°W; WGS 84) (Fig. 1C). Most ostracods were attached to the vocal sac, with one Ontario male having >10 ostracods on its vocal sac (Fig. 1A). All three males were calling when captured. We collected the Michigan individual for subsequent genomics work (Michigan Scientific Collector's Permit FSCP01202023161507 under animal care UACC protocol 2021-2137) and observed that a portion of the ostracod appeared to be embedded within the skin (Fig. 1D).

Ostracods are microcrustaceans (class Ostracoda) found in virtually all aquatic environments, including rivers, lakes, ponds,

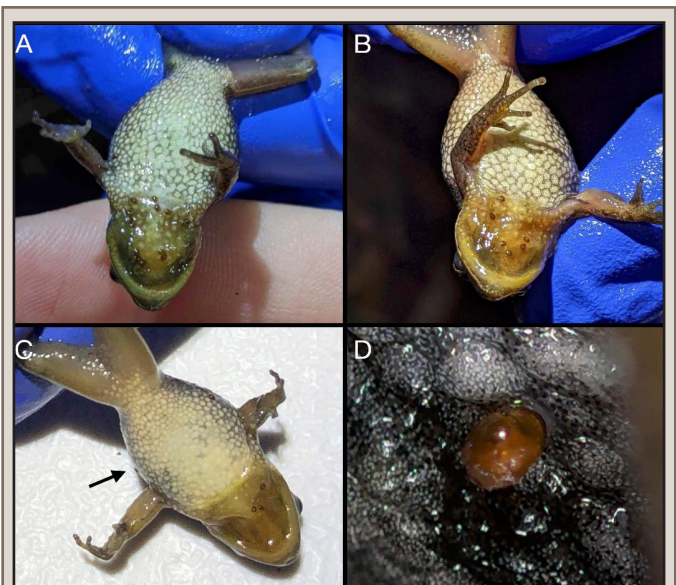


FIG. 1. Male *Pseudacris triseriata* from eastern Ontario, Canada, with ostracods on the vocal sacs (A, B). Male *P. triseriata* from northern Michigan, USA, with ostracods on the vocal sac and side of the body (C). Ostracod (black arrow) attached to the skin on the flank of the male *P. triseriata* from Michigan (D).