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Crisantophis, A New Genus For *Conophis nevermanni* Dunn

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ABSTRACT. — Studies on the dentition, hemipenis and vertebrae of the snake *Conophis nevermanni* indicate that this species cannot be associated with *Conophis* nor any other known genus. The generic name *Crisantophis* is proposed for this species.

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In a recent paper I questioned the generic status of *Conophis nevermanni* Dunn on the basis of the hemipenial structure of a single specimen, KU 86181 (Villa, 1969). I regarded *nevermanni* as closer to *Coniophanes* than to *Conophis* but, pending further study, proposed no taxonomic changes. Two additional male specimens, recently collected in Nicaragua, permit further studies that suggest that *nevermanni* cannot be associated with either genus but belongs to a distinct phyletic stock. As no other generic designation (except *Coniophanes,* by Wettstein, 1934) has been applied to this species, the erection of a new genus seems necessary.

I take the pleasure of naming this genus after Miss Crisanta Cháves, who for more than 50 years has directed the Museo Nacional de Nicaragua and whose life-long devotion to this institution has been a stimulus to many of us.

Crisantophis, gen. nov.

Definition.— Medium sized snakes of generalized colubrid features (superficially resembling *Coniophanes* and *Conophis*) with 19-19-17 rows of smooth, pitless dorsal scales; head distinct from neck; pupil round; maxillary teeth 13-14, increasing in size posteriorly and followed by a short diastema; one or two enlarged fangs, laterally compressed and grooved throughout their length; hemipenes long (13-15 caudals), slender, subcylindrical and bilobed, lacking basal hooks, flounces or calyces; spinules covering distal half of hemipenis including lobes, which are awned; sulcus spermaticus dividing near junction of lobes (Figs. 1, 2c); vertebral hypapophyses present on all trunk vertebrae.

Type species. — *Conophis nevermanni* Dunn, 1937: 214-215.

Content. — Monotypic so far as known.

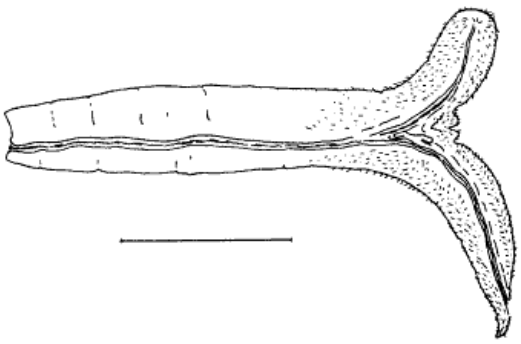

FIGURE 1. Left hemipenis of *Crisantophis nevermanni* (JV 69019) fully everted except for left lobe. Line = 10 mm.

Dentition. — There are 14 (13 in right maxilla of JV 69014) prediastemal maxillary teeth (including empty sockets) that increase in size posteriorly (Fig. 3). A short diastema precedes an enlarged posterior fang which occupies less than half of a large socket, or fossa, formed by a knob of the posterior maxilla (where presumably the replacement fang is set). The fang is twice the size of the largest prediastemal tooth, somewhat compressed laterally and bears a deep grove along the entire anterolateral side; 3 to 5 fangs of variable size are in the epithelium surrounding the functional fang but are not attached to the

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