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Distributional Records of Amphibians and Reptiles from the Prairie Coteau, South Dakota, USA

The Prairie Coteau is a large ecoregion characterizing much of northeastern South Dakota, including most of Day County (Omernik 1987). Scattered throughout the Prairie Coteau are numerous lakes and wetlands that were formed when glacial ice melted and left depressions across the landscape. Tallgrass prairies historically dominated this region, much of which is now used for grazing and row-crop agriculture. Although enrollment of remaining grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program has declined throughout northeastern South Dakota in recent years, these declines are most severe in Day County (Wright and Wimberly 2013). With habitat conversion still occurring across the landscape, it remains critically important to have a thorough understanding of species distributions so that informed management decisions can be made (Davis 2018a).

Here, we report new distributional records of three species of amphibians and reptiles from Day County, South Dakota, USA. These records help to fill in distributional gaps of these species in South Dakota. County records were determined by examining Ballinger et al. (2000), Platt et al. (2005), Davis et al. (2016, 2017a, b), Austin et al. (2017), Davis and Farkas (2018), Davis (2018b), individual accounts published in *Herpetological Review*, and a thorough review of museum holdings. Specimens were deposited at the Biodiversity Collections, University of Texas at Austin (TNHC). Genetic tissue samples (liver) were collected from all individuals and were deposited alongside the specimens at TNHC. All identifications were verified by Travis J. LaDuc, locality information was collected using a handheld GPS (WGS 84), and nomenclature used follows that of Crother (2017). All specimens were collected under a South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Scientific Collecting Permit (2019_#9) issued to DRD and followed an approved University of Texas Rio Grande Valley IACUC protocol (AUP 18-28).

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ANURA — FROGS

***HYLA CHRYSOSCELIS* (Cope's Gray Treefrog).** Day Co.: Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area, east unit (45.48471°N, 97.26227°W). 26 August 2019. Dennis R. Skadsen. TNHC 114356 (DRD 6099). Adult female (12.9 g, 50 mm SVL) collected on the exterior of the campground shower house. This specimen represents a new county record and expands the distribution of this species in northeastern South Dakota (Ballinger et al. 2000). *Hyla chrysoscelis* is known from adjacent Marshall and Roberts counties (Ballinger et al. 2000; Davis et al. 2017b). Fisher et al. (1999) suggest the presence of *H. versicolor* from Day County and only report *H. chrysoscelis* from southeastern South Dakota; however,

recent data only confirm the presence of *H. chrysoscelis* from northeastern South Dakota (DRD, unpubl. data; T. Jessen, pers. comm.), and we speculate that previous reports of *H. versicolor* in northeastern South Dakota were misidentified *H. chrysoscelis*. Both Backlund (2005), Jessen (2005), and Skadsen (2019) describe increased abundance and the perceived expansion of *H. chrysoscelis* in northeast South Dakota. The nearest known specimen record is from ca. 18.4 km to the east in Roberts County (Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas [KU] 288814).

SQUAMATA — LIZARDS

***PLESTIODON SEPTENTRIONALIS* (Prairie Skink).** Day Co.: Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area, west unit (45.50402°N, 97.28714°W). 13 August 2019. Dennis R. Skadsen. TNHC 114404 (DRD 6100). Adult individual (5.4 g, 79 mm SVL, 45 mm tail length [incomplete]) collected under a piece of artificial cover. This specimen represents a new county record and partially fills a gap in the distribution of this species in eastern South Dakota (Ballinger et al. 2000). *Plestiodon septentrionalis* is known from adjacent Brown, Marshall, and Roberts counties (Ballinger et al. 2000; Davis et al. 2017b). The nearest known specimen record is from ca. 21.4 km to the north in Marshall County (Louisiana Museum of Natural History, Louisiana State University [LSUMZ] 87774).

SQUAMATA — SNAKES

***STORERIA OCCIPITOMACULATA* (Red-bellied Snake).** Day Co.: Pickerel Lake State Recreation Area, west unit (45.50402°N, 97.28714°W). 17 September 2019. Dennis R. Skadsen. TNHC 114353 (DRD 6313). Adult female (4.9 g, 229 mm SVL, 60 mm tail length) collected under a piece of artificial cover. Another female specimen (TNHC 114354 [DRD 6314]: 4.0 g, 207 mm SVL, 52 mm tail length) was collected at this same locality on 18 October 2019. These specimens represent a new county record and fill part of the patchy distribution of this species in eastern South Dakota (Ballinger et al. 2000). Thompson and Backlund (1998) suggested that *S. occipitomaculata* likely occur in eastern Day County, which is now confirmed by these two recently collected specimens. *Storeria occipitomaculata* is known from adjacent Brown, Marshall, and Roberts counties (Ballinger et al. 2000; Williams et al. 2007; Davis et al. 2017b). The nearest known specimen record is from ca. 22.8 km to the north in Marshall County (University of Nebraska State Museum [UNSM] 15965).

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