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Functional characterization of neotropical snakes peripheral blood leukocytes subsets: Linking flow cytometry cell features, microscopy images and serum corticosterone levels.

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Abstract

Reptiles are the unique ectothermic amniotes, providing the key link between ectothermic anamniotes fish and amphibians, and endothermic birds and mammals; becoming an important group to study with the aim of providing significant knowledge into the evolutionary history of vertebrate immunity. Classification systems for reptiles' leukocytes have been described by their appearance rather than function, being still inconsistent. With the advent of modern techniques and the establishment of analytical protocols for snakes' blood by flow cytometry, we bring a qualitative and quantitative assessment of