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Author: Adriana María Albino

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New macrostomatan snake from the Paleogene of northwestern Argentina ✡

Adriana María Albino *

CONICET, Departamento de Biología, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Funes 3250, B7602AYJ Mar del Plata, Argentina

* E-mail address: aalbino@mdp.edu.ar.

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Abstract

The lower Eocene Lumbrera Formation in Salta province, northwestern Argentina, outstands for providing snake remains from a non-Patagonian Paleogene site. The material consists of articulated precloacal vertebrae that represent a new medium-sized macrostomatan snake, namely *Amaru scagliai* nov. gen., nov. nov. The vertebral characters of *Amaru scagliai* nov. gen., nov. nov., suggest affinities with advanced clades, which is consistent with the recognition of derived macrostomatans in the early Paleocene of Bolivia and early Eocene of Brazil. The new snake confirms the presence of macrostomatan snakes in South America as early as the Eocene and suggests that the southern continents may have played an unsuspected role in the origin and evolution of advanced macrostomatans during the earliest Cenozoic.

Keywords:
Ophidia
Mactrostomata
New genus and species
Paleogene
Eocene
Argentina
South America