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The Checkerbelly Snake, *Siphlophis cervinus* (Laurenti 1768) is a comparatively rare snake found throughout northern South America from Panama down to Bolivia and across to Brazil. It is also present in Trinidad but with very few specimens having been encountered (Murphy 1997; Boos 2001).

The first sighting was made by Russell Thomas, an employee of the University of the West Indies (UWI), at approximately 800 h on 10 September, 2012. While standing outside his house in Calvary, Arima Valley, Trinidad, he saw the snake crawling up the brick wall of the house about one metre off the ground; there was no vegetation next to the wall but the garden backs on to secondary forest. This species has been recorded from the Arima Valley before but not for several years.

The snake was captured and taken to the UWI campus at St. Augustine where it was eventually given into my care. The snake was kept in a plastic terrarium with a substrate of leaves, twigs and wood shavings and given access to fresh water in a shallow bowl. Over a period of three months the snake was fed approximately twice a week on a variety of small lizards. These included *Gonatodes vittatus*, *Gymnophthalmus underwoodi*, *Hemidactylus mabouia* and *Anolis aeneus*. All lizards were placed into

the tank in the evening between 1800 h and 2000 h and although no direct predation events were observed, the lizards would be gone in the morning. Other reports tend to favour a more nocturnal activity pattern as well (Murphy 1997). During the three-month period, the snake shed its skin twice with no complications.

The second sighting was made at the North Deck, Paramin, north-west Trinidad at approximately 1900 h on 8 June 2013. Again there are records of this snake from this area but not for several years.

REFERENCES

Boos, H. 2001. The Snakes of Trinidad and Tobago. Texas A&M University Press. 270 p.

Murphy, J.C. 1997. Amphibians and Reptiles of Trinidad and Tobago. Krieger Publishing Company: Florida. 245 p.

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