

Mammalia, Chiroptera, Molossidae *Molossops neglectus* Williams and Genoways, 1980: Range extension and first record for Corrientes Province, Argentina

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ABSTRACT: In Argentina *Molossops neglectus* was only known from Misiones Province through specimens collected at a single locality. Here, we report a second locality from Argentina that includes the species in the province of Corrientes. In addition, this locality extends the southern limit and represents the southernmost known locality for the distribution of the species.

The distribution of *Molossops neglectus* Williams and Genoways, 1980 was described by Eger (2008) as tripartite: Guyanan (Venezuela, Surinam, Guyana and Brazil), western (Peru and southern Colombia) and southeastern (Argentina and Brazil). The species was originally described from Suriname (Williams and Genoways 1980), and since then just a few localities have been cited showing that the species, even when rare with respect to records and captures, has a wide distributional range. The inclusion of this species in Misiones Province, Argentina (Barquez 1987) was an unexpected extension representing the second known record and being a great distance from the type locality in Suriname. Barquez (1987) indicated he had observed specimens deposited at the United States National Museum (Washington) from Pasco (Peru) and Pará (Brazil) that belonged to this species. All these records were later published, constituting the known distribution for this species (Ascorra *et al.* 1991; Gregorin *et al.* 2004; Bernardi *et al.* 2007; Eger 2008; Gregorin and Loureiro 2011). Barquez (1987) also observed morphological differences between specimens from Suriname and Argentina, and indicated that argentine specimens have larger forearms and shorter skulls (see also Gregorin *et al.* 2004), which led him to suggest that the Argentine specimens represented a new subspecies, *Molossops neglectus olrogi*. This was not published, though it was included in Barquez's doctoral thesis. Additional specimens are required in order to confirm the validity of a new subspecies.

Twenty six years after the first citation of this species for Argentina, a second locality has been encountered in Corrientes Province and constitutes the southernmost locality for the species. The specimen was captured at Santo Tomé (28°32'30" S, 56°02'26" W), Corrientes Province, and extended the southern limit of its geographical distribution more than 280 km southward (Figure 1). The individual was an adult female found by José Da Silva in his house near

the city of Santo Tomé on June 14, 2011, and photographed (Figure 2); unfortunately the specimen was not preserved. The characters of the individual are identical to those from Misiones mentioned in Barquez *et al.* (1999), with dark cinnamon brown coloration, ears and membranes almost black, ears well separated and triangular, and the free portion of the tail long (approximately 10 mm); the forearm was 36 mm. This character combination is unique and there is no doubt that this specimen corresponds to *M. neglectus*.

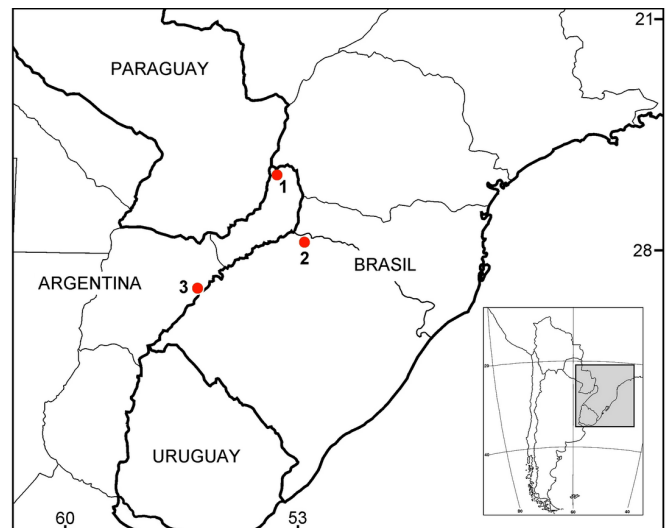


FIGURE 1. Southernmost known localities for the distribution of *Molossops neglectus*: 1) Parque Nacional Iguazú (Misiones, Argentina) 25°41'04" S, 54°27'15" W; 2) Frederico Westphalen (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil) 27°21'33" S, 53°23'40" W; 3) Santo Tomé (Corrientes, Argentina) 28°32'30" S, 56°02'26" W.

This species was known from captures with mist nets in natural areas but this specimen is the first collected in a house in a town. The collection site was a plant sales outlet surrounded by native vegetation and close to the water, approximately 1 km West of the Uruguay River

and 1 km South Arroyo Itacúa. The area corresponds to the Fields and Weedlands ecoregion in the sense of Burkart *et al.* (1999), which adds a new ecoregion for the distribution of the species, since the locality of Misiones is in the Paranean Forest. The region around Santo Tomé is strongly anthropized by the presence of rice fields, cultivations of yerba mate, and forestry.



FIGURE 2. Frontal (a) and dorsal (b) view of the specimen of *Molossops neglectus* from Santo Tomé, Corrientes, Argentina. Photo: José Da Silva.

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