



PRIMER REGISTRO DE MARGAY *Leopardus wiedii* (CARNIVORA: FELIDAE) EN SANTA MARÍA DEL ORO, NAYARIT, MÉXICO

FIRST RECORD OF MARGAY *Leopardus wiedii*
(CARNIVORA: FELIDAE) IN SANTA MARÍA DEL ORO,
NAYARIT, MEXICO

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FIRST RECORD OF MARGAY *Leopardus wiedii* (CARNIVORA: FELIDAE) IN SANTA MARÍA DEL ORO, NAYARIT, MEXICO

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Resumen

Se confirma la presencia de margay (*Leopardus wiedii*) en el municipio de Santa María del Oro, Nayarit, México. El registro fotográfico se obtuvo mediante cámara trampa a 1,187 m s.n.m., en bosque tropical caducifolio. Este representa el noveno registro confirmado de la especie en Nayarit y el primer registro para Santa María del Oro, extendiendo su distribución conocida hacia el sureste del estado, en la provincia de la Faja Volcánica Mexicana.

Palabras clave: Bosque tropical caducifolio, Ciencia Ciudadana, Distribución, Faja Volcánica Mexicana, Tigrillo

Abstract

The presence of margay (*Leopardus wiedii*) is confirmed for the municipality of Santa María del Oro, Nayarit, Mexico. The photographic record was obtained using a camera trap at 1,187 m a.s.l., in tropical deciduous forest. This represents the ninth confirmed record of the species in Nayarit and the first for Santa María del Oro, extending its known distribution to the southeast of the state within the Mexican Volcanic Belt province.

Keywords: Citizen science, Distribution, Mexican Volcanic Belt, Tigrillo, Tropical deciduous forest

Introduction

The margay, *Leopardus wiedii* Schinz, 1821 (Carnivora: Felidae), is one of six wild felid species present in Mexico (the jaguarundi, *Herpailurus yagouaroundi*, the ocelot *Leopardus pardalis*, the bobcat *Lynx rufus*, the puma *Puma concolor*, and the emblematic jaguar *Panthera onca*; Ceballos & Oliva, 2005). The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) categorizes it as "Near Threatened" (NT) (Oliveira et al., 2015), while NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 (DOF, 2019) classifies it as "Endangered" (P). The species primarily inhabits tropical and subtropical areas of the Pacific slope, from Sonora to Chiapas, and the Gulf, from Nuevo León and Tamaulipas to the Yucatan Peninsula (Ceballos & Oliva, 2005). Its known altitudinal range extends from sea level to 2,750 m a.s.l. (Aranda & Valenzuela-Galván, 2015). It is the second most vulnerable felid in Mexico, with declining populations due mainly to the conversion of forested habitats to agricultural areas and other anthropogenic activities (Aranda & Valenzuela-Galván, 2015; Oliveira et al., 2015).

Despite its wide distribution in Mexico, there is little information about the presence of the margay in Nayarit. Currently, eight confirmed records have been documented in the state: the first record was reported by Tapia-Ramírez et al. (2013) in the municipality of Ruíz; subsequently, the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (SEMARNAT-CONANP, 2013) documented its presence in

the Marismas Nacionales Biosphere Reserve, municipality of Rosamorada; Luja and Zamudio (2019) contributed the five record for the municipality of Xalisco; and three additional records have been documented through the citizen science platform iNaturalistMX in the municipalities of San Blas (iNaturalistMX: 2610047), Bahía de Banderas (iNaturalistMX: 83167783), Compostela (iNaturalistMX: 3307483146, 2242747168 and 3314241666), San Pedro Lagunillas (iNaturalistMX: 3881360797) and La Yesca (iNaturalistMX: 106920329). These records have contributed to knowledge of the state's mammal fauna (Arroyo-Cabrales et al., 2015; Ramírez-Silva et al., 2016; Ramírez-Silva & Hernández-Cadena, 2025).

This work reports for the first time the presence of the margay (*L. wiedii*) in the municipality of Santa María del Oro, Nayarit, expanding its known distribution area toward the southeast of the state in the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt province. The photographic record of *L. wiedii* (Figure 1) was obtained on June 30, 2022 at night in Manantial de Acuña, ejido La Labor, municipality of Santa María del Oro, Nayarit, Mexico (Figure 2; 21.342926° N, -104.714019° W; datum WGS 84; 1,187 m a.s.l.). The photograph was captured using a Browning Strike Force HD camera trap, installed as part of a riparian wildlife monitoring campaign in

the upper part of the Mololoa River basin. The site's habitat corresponds to tropical deciduous forest adjacent to the mountainous region of the Mexican Neo-Volcanic Axis province (Cervantes-Zamora et al., 1990). The record was deposited on the iNaturalistMX platform with observation number 128498364.

A photographic record of an adult individual of *L. wiedii* was obtained (Figure 1). This represents the ninth confirmed record of the species in Nayarit (Figure 2) and the first for the municipality of Santa María del Oro.

The record site is located approximately 12 km southeast (straight line) from the nearest record reported by Luja and Zamudio (2019) at La Montaña Natural Park, ejido La Curva, municipality of Xalisco.

This new record is relevant because it expands the known distribution area of the margay toward southeastern Nayarit, specifically in the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt province, a region where the species had been poorly documented.



Figure 1. Photographic record of margay (*Leopardus wiedii*) by camera trap in the municipality of Santa María del Oro, Nayarit, Mexico. Photograph by EAAM.

Considering that the margay is the second most vulnerable felid in Mexico and that its populations show a decreasing trend (Aranda & Valenzuela-Galván, 2015), it is essential to identify areas with confirmed presence and evaluate the availability and connectivity of remaining habitat in the state.

The margay plays an important ecological role as a regulator of reptile, bird, and small mammal populations (Cinta-Magallón et al., 2012), so its presence is indicative of functional ecosystems.

This study contributes to updated knowledge of the distribution of *L. wiedii* in Nayarit and highlights the need for continuous monitoring and conservation efforts for this emblematic species in the region.

Acknowledgments

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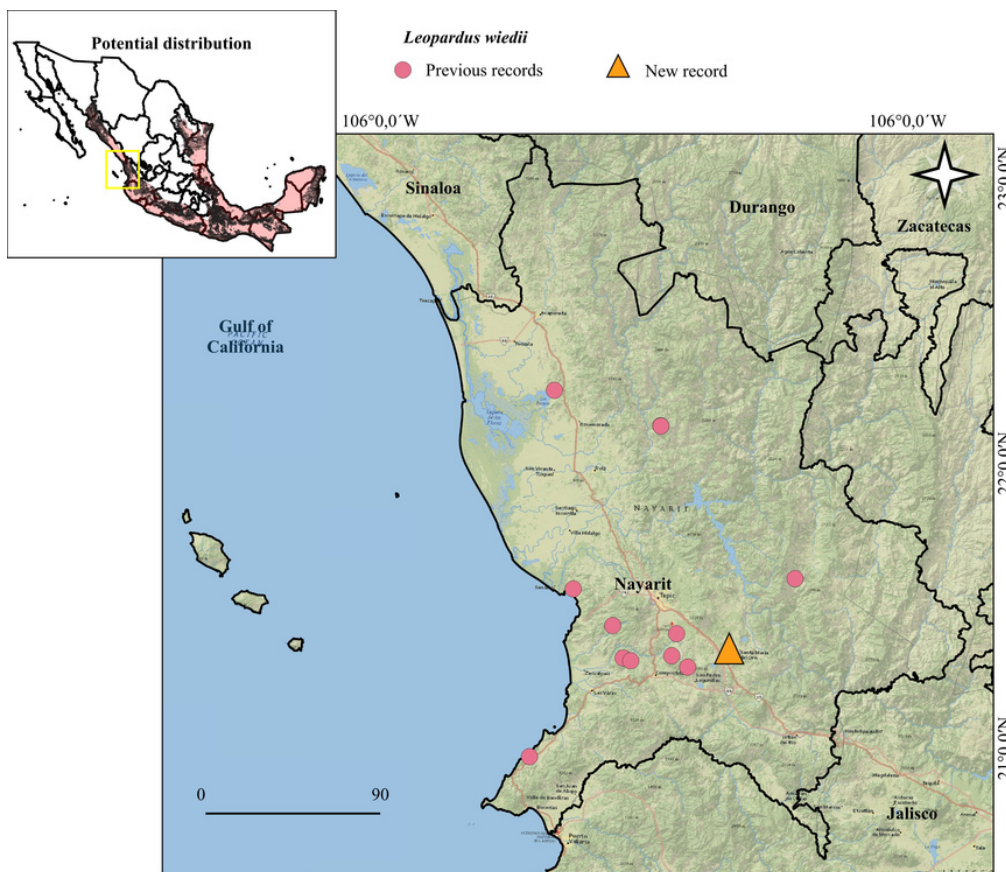


Figure 2. Records of Margay (*Leopardus wiedii*) in the State of Nayarit, Mexico.

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