



Rediscovery of the Altagracia Giant Galliwasp (*Caribicus anelpistus*) at Villa Altagracia, Dominican Republic

Nelvinson De Jesus¹, Cristian F. Marte-Pimentel², Ramón Joel Espinal³, and Sixto J. Incháustegui⁴

¹Instituto de Investigaciones Botánicas y Zoológicas Prof. Rafael M. Moscoso, Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

²Museo Nacional de Historia Natural Prof. Eugenio de Jesús Marcano, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

³Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

⁴Grupo Jaragua, Santo Domingo, República Dominicana

We herein report the rediscovery of the Altagracia Giant Galliwasp (*Caribicus anelpistus*) (Fig. 1) for the first time since its original description 44 years ago (Schwartz et al. 1979). The species is known from only a single location in a low-elevation humid forest, where it has been associated with the root systems of large trees (e.g., the Sandbox Tree, *Hura*

crepitans). These semi-fossorial lizards feed on arthropods and terrestrial mollusks and are mainly active at night (Henderson 1988; Schwartz and Henderson 1991; Henderson and Powell 2009). Little else is known about the species' natural history.

On 25 March 2020 at La Lomita, approximately 7 km SW of Villa Altagracia, San Cristobal Province, Dominican



Figure 1. An Altagracia Giant Galliwasp (*Caribicus anelpistus*) from La Lomita, Villa Altagracia, San Cristóbal Province, Dominican Republic. Photographs by Cristian F. Marte-Pimentel.



Figure 2. Google Earth® image showing the locations of La Lomita and Villa Altagracia, San Cristóbal Province, Dominican Republic.

Republic (18.665944 N; 70.222362 W) (Fig. 2), Starlin Emiliano, a local resident, caught an adult male *Caribicus anelpistus* (until recently assigned to the genus *Celestus*; Schools and Hedges 2021) on the ground during the day as farmers were clearing an agricultural parcel to plant Cacao Trees (*Theobroma cacao*). Sr. Emiliano showed the lizard to the first author and noted that locals had previously observed similar animals, especially at night, suggesting that a small population exists in the area.

The species is considered Critically Endangered on the Red List of the Dominican Republic (MIMARENA 2018) and on

the IUCN Red List (Landestoy et al. 2016), mainly due to habitat loss and a distribution restricted to a single known site.

The adult male had an SVL of 283.5 mm, head width of 134.2 mm, arm width of 24.1 mm, and characteristics that matched those of the original description (Schwartz et al. 1979). The specimen has been deposited in the herpetological collection of the National Museum of Natural History Prof. Eugenio de Jesús Marciano (MNHNSD 23.3999).

Acknowledgements

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