

On 2 March 2008 at ca. 1830 h a Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) was observed attacking a juvenile *F. abacura* (238 mm SVL, 6.8 g) on a road at Lake Martin, St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, USA (30.214°N, 91.898°W). The owl fled when approached leaving the snake behind. The snake was collected alive without conspicuous external injuries although it expressed a slow righting response and locomotor difficulties. The snake died approximately one hour later. Ambient temperature was 20.9°C with 59% humidity.

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LAMPROPELTIS TRIANGULUM (Milksnake). **DIET.** Although *L. triangulum* is known to prey on snakes, *Arizona elegans* (Glossy Snake) has not been previously reported as prey (Ernst and Ernst 2003. Snakes of the United States and Canada. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 668 pp; Williams 1978. Systematics and Natural History of the American Milksnake, *Lampropeltis triangulum*. Milwaukee Public Mus. Publ. Biol. Geol. [2]:1–258). At 2355 h on 1 June 2006, we encountered an adult male *L. triangulum* (622 mm SVL, 63 mm tail, 83 g) in the process of swallowing an adult female *A. elegans* (561 mm SVL, 89 mm tail, 61 g) that was 74% of its mass at the Caprock Wildlife Area, Chaves County, New Mexico, USA (33.4541667°N, 103.7923611°W, WGS84). We monitored this interaction from discovery to complete ingestion which occurred at 0130 h on 2 June 2006. This is the first documentation of *L. triangulum* preying on *A. elegans*. Both individuals were collected and deposited in the University of New Mexico Museum of Southwestern Biology (MSB 72600, 72601).

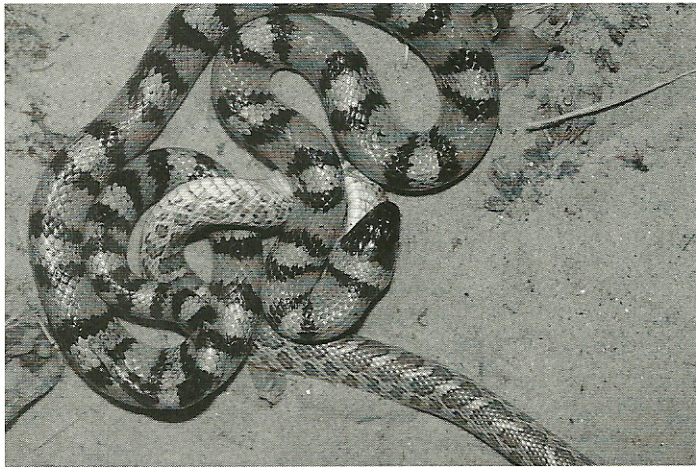


FIG. 1. Adult male *Lampropeltis triangulum* ingesting an adult female *Arizona elegans*. Chaves County, New Mexico. Photo taken on 1 June 2006.

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LAMPROPELTIS TRIANGULUM TRIANGULUM (Eastern Milksnake). **DICEPHALISM.** A dicephalic neonate *Lampropeltis triangulum* collected 26 September 2004 by Glen Tricarico beneath a rock in a rock wall surrounding a backyard in Winthrop, Maine (44.3356°N, 69.9850°W) measured 200 mm total length (TL) and weighed 4.0 g. The snake shed for the first time on 7 October 2004. Since then it has shed 35 times and currently measures 735 mm TL and weighs 98 g. After continued refusal of various invertebrate prey, it readily fed upon *Scincella lateralis* on 5 November 2004. It was weaned onto pinkie mice for its second meal and has eaten 303 since then. Of those feedings, 200 were by the right head and 103 by the left. Initially both heads fought over food but they have learned to cooperate in feeding.

Previously published records of dicephaly in *L. triangulum* include Bancroft (1769. An Essay on the Natural History of Guiana, in South America. Becket and De Hondt, London, 214 pp.) for a New York specimen, W. Smith (1882. Rep. U.S. Geol. Surv. Ohio 4:690) for a Michigan specimen, Blatchley (1906. Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia 58:421) for an Indiana specimen, Hyde (1925. Natural History 25:187) for another New York specimen, and Ernst (1960. Trans. Kentucky Acad. Sci. 26:67) for a Pennsylvania specimen. This is the sixth documented case of *L. triangulum* although three unverified reports exist (Cunningham 1937. Axial Bifurcation in Serpents. Duke Univ. Press, Durham, North Carolina. 91 pp.).

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LEPTODEIRA ANNULATA (Banded Cat-Eyed Snake). **DIET.** *Leptodeira annulata* is a nocturnal, arboreal colubrid snake which habits primary and secondary forests (Vitt 1996. Herpetol. Nat. Hist. 4:69–76). The dissection of 260 *L. annulata* specimens originally collected in southeastern and midwestern Brazil and deposited in the Instituto Butantan (IB) collection, revealed 22 prey items consumed by 17 snakes (three individuals consumed two prey each and one individual consumed three). Hylid, leptodactylid, and bufonid anurans constituted 77% of these prey items. Other identified prey include one *Hemidactylus mabouia* (ingested by a 449 mm SVL juvenile female), beetles and plant material (probably ingested incidentally), and two colubrid snakes. The colubrids were an *Atractus zebrius* (318 mm SVL, 41 mm tail length [TL]) consumed by a female *L. annulata* (612 mm SVL, 25.1 mm head length [HL]) and an *Oxyrhopus guibei* (195 mm SVL, 55 mm TL) consumed by a male *L. annulata* (526 mm SVL, 19.7 mm HL). Prey were consumed head-first excepted by the *A. zebrius*, which was consumed tail first. Our observations are consistent with previously published data suggesting that anurans comprise the majority of prey items consumed by this species (Martins and Oliveira 1999. Herpetol. Nat. Hist. 6:78–150) and that small lizards can be occasionally eaten as well (Amaral 1978. Serpentes do Brasil. Iconografia colorida. Melhoramentos/Univ. São Paulo, Brazil; Vitt 1996. Herpetol. Nat. Hist. 4:69–76; Cunha and Nascimento 1978. Ofidios da Amazônia. Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi, Brazil). However, these are the first records of ophiophagy in this species. *Atractus zebrius* is a terrestrial and fossorial snake, sympatric with *L. annulata* while *O. guibei* is a terrestrial snake which inhabits semi-deciduous forests, open,

and disturbed areas. There are no records of *O. guibei* in the area where *L. annulata* was collected. This suggests that *O. guibei* may have been consumed opportunistically after its collection while transported with other snakes or even in the captivity if it was kept with other specimens before it was preserved. Furthermore, our data suggest that this arboreal snake may forage both on the vegetation and on the ground.

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MASTICOPHIS MENTOVARIUS (Neotropical Whipsnake). **ATTEMPTED PREDATION AND DIET.** *Masticophis mentovarius* is a large diurnal species distributed from Sonora, México to Colombia (Savage 2002. The Amphibians and Reptiles of Costa Rica: A Herpetofauna Between Two Continents, Between Two Seas, University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 934 pp.). Little is known regarding the biology of northern populations and few predators or predatory attacks have been documented for the species.

On 1 August 2005 at 2219 h we observed a large adult (ca. 1070 SVL) Common Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula*) writhing on the road after being struck by a passing vehicle near Navajoa, Sonora. A large section of snake's gut was exposed revealing the partially digested remains of a recently consumed juvenile *M. mentovarius*.

On 3 August 2005 at 2249 h we observed a large adult *M. mentovarius* (ca. 1700 mm SVL) crawling rapidly onto a paved road between Navajoa and Minas Nuevas, Sonora. Upon stopping, we noticed the snake being chased by a small adult American Badger (*Taxidea taxus*). The badger repeatedly bit the snake and in one instance shook it at mid-body. Our presence caused the badger to retreat into the vegetation. Upon inspection we noticed that the snake was injured and bleeding from several sections of its body. The snake contained a large food bolus, which might have hindered its escape. The snake voluntarily regurgitated the prey item, an adult Norway Rat (*Rattus rattus*).

Masticophis mentovarius has been reported as a prey of both the Great Black Hawk (*Buteogallus urubitinga*) in Guatemala (Gerhardt et al. 1993. Biotropica 25:349–352), and the White Tailed Hawk (*Buteo albicaudatus*) in Colombia (Smith 1942. Copeia 2:85–88). Our observations provide novel information regarding the predators of this species in Sonora, Mexico.

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MICRURUS BRASILIENSIS (Brazilian Coralsnake). **DIET.** On 7 January 2005 we found what we believe to be an *Apostolepis assimilis* (500 mm SVL, 40 mm TL, 15 g) in the stomach of a DOR adult *Micrurus brasiliensis* (610 mm SVL, 40 mm TL, 32 g) collected at Fazenda Floryl (13.95°S 46.01°W), near the municipality of Correntina, Bahia. Specific identification of the prey species was not possible as the head was missing. The snakes

were deposited in the Coleção Herpetológica da Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, Brazil (*M. brasiliensis* - CHUNB 39081 and *A. cf. assimilis* - CHUNB 39079). Martins and Oliveira (1998. Herpetol. Nat. Hist. 6:78–150) recorded predation of *Apostolepis* sp. by *Micrurus spixii* in Manaus region, Central Amazon, Brazil. However, our observation is the first record of *Apostolepis* in the diet of *M. brasiliensis*.

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MICRURUS CORALLINUS (Painted Coralsnake). **DIET.** *Micrurus corallinus* is a fossorial and diurnal coralsnake that ranges from Rio Grande do Norte to Rio Grande do Sul states in Brazilian Atlantic Forest (Campbell and Lamar 2004. The Venomous Reptiles of the Western Hemisphere. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York). This species feeds primarily on elongate ectothermic prey such as snakes, lizards, and amphisbaenians (Cunha and Nascimento 1978. Mus. Par. Emílio Goeldi Publ. Avuls. 31:1–218; Marques and Sazima 1997. Herpetol. Nat. Hist. 5:88–93).

On 27 May 2007 at 1230 h, I observed an adult male of *M. corallinus* (MNRJ 15119; 430 mm SVL, 31 mm tail length [TL]) feeding on an adult male *Tantilla melanocephala* (Crowned Snake; MNRJ 15120; 205 mm SVL, 62 mm TL) above a rock at Boqueirão, Pontal do Atalaia, Arraial do Cabo, Brazil (22,5899°S, 41,9999°W, 28 m elev.). The *M. corallinus* was swallowing the *T. melanocephala* headfirst before I interrupted. Marques and Sazima (*op. cit.*) reported a positive correlation between prey total length and predator SVL in *Micrurus corallinus*. Prey length ranged from 21–93% of the snake SVL. This is the first record of *M. corallinus* preying on *T. melanocephala*.

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NERODIA SIPEDON (Northern Watersnake). **MORTALITY CAUSED BY MUSSEL.** Interactions between freshwater mollusks and aquatic vertebrates are not uncommon. Freshwater bivalves are prey items for many vertebrates (muskrats, fish, turtles, etc.) and many freshwater mollusks have larval stages that parasitize vertebrates. Freshwater mussels of the family Unionidae have larvae, “glochidia,” which are ectoparasites on vertebrates, generally fish species although one species parasitizes the Mud-puppy, *Necturus maculosus* (Parmalee and Bogan 1998. The Freshwater Mussels of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tennessee. 328 pp.). Freshwater mussels have evolved different methods of attracting their host to increase their reproductive success, the most dramatic example being species that produce an extension of their mantle that resembles small fish, complete with eye-spots and tails. Furthermore, brooding freshwater mussels will flap and wave these mantle displays to mimic