

Reptilia: Squamata (snakes)

***Clelia clelia*. Predation on *Basiliscus basiliscus*.** *Clelia clelia* (Daudin, 1803) is a large dipsadid snake with a broad distribution that extends from southern Mexico southward to Bolivia, and Argentina, including the islands of Trinidad, Granada, and Dominica (Campbell, 1998; Wallach et al., 2014). This species is well known for its ophiophagous habits and feeds on a variety of snakes, including venomous ones (Savage, 2002; Solórzano, 2004; Chavarría and Barrio-Amorós, 2015). Savage (2002) and Solórzano (2004) indicated lizards and small mammals in its diet, but did not mention the species.

Herein we report a young adult *C. clelia* subduing and likely eating an adult female *Basiliscus basiliscus*. The event occurred at Finca Econaturalística La Tarde, located near La Palma, Cantón de Osa, Provincia de Puntarenas, Costa Rica. On 19 June 2016 at ca. 1225 h, in thick vegetation near the ground along a riverbank, DP discovered a *C. clelia*, total length (TL) > 1 m, attempting to eat an adult female *B. basiliscus*, TL ca. 40 cm. The *Clelia* was biting the *Basiliscus* on the throat while constricting its lower abdomen. The lizard remained motionless for a few minutes, with its front legs stretched, but at that point it was not subdued. After releasing the throat of the *Basiliscus*, the *Clelia* began flicking its tongue along the lizard's body. Upon reaching the head, the *Basiliscus*, in apparent desperation, bit the snake's lower jaw. The bite caused no harm to the *Clelia*, but the snake retracted its head from view while still constricting the lizard's lower body, and then reappeared and bit the *Basiliscus* on the neck, this time sinking its teeth in. The encounter lasted for 25 min, with the snake still holding and biting the lizard, which appeared subdued, but we left before witnessing the ingestion process. We show the sequence of events in Fig 1.



Fig. 1. A Young adult *Clelia clelia* subduing an adult female *Basiliscus basiliscus* at Finca Ecoturística La Tarde, Península de Osa, Provincia de Puntarenas, Costa Rica. © Sergei Timofeevski

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***Conophis lineatus* (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril, 1854) Diet.** *Conophis lineatus* is a colubrid with a distribution extending from Veracruz and Oaxaca, Mexico, to Costa Rica on the Atlantic versant, and on the Pacific versant from Chiapas, Mexico, to Costa Rica; this species inhabits dry and humid forests, secondary vegetation, savannas, pastures, and natural clearings (Campbell, 1998; Lee, 2000; Stafford and Meyer, 2000; Köhler, 2008; McCranie, 2011). Often encountered on trails, this snake commonly is referred to as the “guarda camino” (road guarder). *Conophis lineatus* is diurnal and its diet is known to include mainly lizards (*Aspidoscelis*, *Holcosus*, and *Sceloporus*), frogs (*Leptodactylus* sp.), toads (*Incilius luetkenii*) and snakes (*Micrurus* spp., in captivity); individuals also have been observed feeding on a juvenile *Ctenosaura similis*, a Gaumer’s Spiny Pocket Mouse (*Heteromys gaumeri*), and the eggs of ground-nesting birds (Wellman, 1963; Campbell, 1998; Rodriguez Garcia et al., 1998; Stafford and Henderson, 2006; Pérez-Higareda et al., 2007; Hernández-Gallegos et al., 2008; Köhler, 2008; Mays, 2010).

On March 8, 2014 at 1001 h, in the port of Sisal, Municipio de Hunucmá, Yucatán, Mexico (21.1669865°N, -90.024357°E; datum WGS 84; elev. 3 m), GMGR observed an adult *C. lineatus* among grasses in a coastal dune (mainly *Passiflora foetida*, *Ernodea littoralis*, and *Canavalia rosea*) consuming a *Holcosus gaigeae* (Meza-Lázaro and Nieto-Montes de Oca, 2015; Fig. 1). The *C. lineatus* captured the *H. gaigeae* by biting one of



Fig 1. A *Conophis lineatus* capturing an adult *Holcosus gaigeae* on a coastal dune at Sisal, Municipio de Hunucmá, Estado de Yucatán, Mexico. © Gilda María Gómez-de Regil