

ALSOPHIS SIBONIUS (NCN). **COPULATION.** *Alsophis sibonius* is a diurnal, actively foraging snake inhabiting the Commonwealth of Dominica, West Indies. The snake was formerly considered a subspecies of *A. antillensis* but was recently elevated to full species status (Hedges et al. 2009. *Zootaxa* 2067:1–28). In general, little is known about mating behavior for *Alsophis* (*sensu stricta* Hedges et al. 2009, *op.cit.*) and to our knowledge, no accounts for mating behavior exist for *A. sibonius* (Henderson and Powell *In press*. *Natural History of West Indian Reptiles and Amphibians*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville). Here we report a field observation of copulation for *A. sibonius* from the Caribbean side of Dominica.

At 1125 h on 27 April 2009, we discovered a mating pair of *A. sibonius* on the forest floor in the Batali River Valley (15.44999°N, 61.44223°W, datum: WGS84), ca. 550 m from the Caribbean Sea. The snakes were partially concealed by leaf litter and were thus captured for identification before realizing they were in coitus. The pair differed both in color and size (Fig. 1). The male (SVL = 563 mm; total length = 772 mm) was black with a double alternating series of white blotches anteriorly, which graded to solid black posteriorly. The female (SVL = 683 mm; total length = 859 mm) had a stub tail and exhibited the same dorsal pattern as the male but with a light brown ground color and tan blotches.

The pair remained in coitus while they were manipulated for



FIG. 1. *Alsophis sibonius* copulating on Dominica, West Indies. Note the body cavity bulge anterior to the cloaca on the larger female (left of the head).

photographs and measured. When released on the ground for brief periods, the female attempted to escape while dragging the smaller male behind her. After 20 minutes the snakes disengaged and moved apart. Throughout the observation period, the female exhibited a swollen body cavity ca. 5 cm anterior to the cloaca (Fig. 1). Timing of this copulation event is consistent with a 6 April report for *Alsophis manselli* (*sensu* Hedges et al. 2009, *op.cit.*) on Montserrat (Schwartz and Henderson 1991. *Amphibians and Reptiles of the West Indies: Descriptions, Distributions, and Natural History*. University of Florida Press, Gainesville, Florida. 720 pp.).

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BOA CONSTRICTOR OCCIDENTALIS (Argentine Boa).

DIET. *Boa constrictor occidentalis* is the southernmost subspecies of *Boa constrictor* and is distributed from 33°–36° S. It is found in extreme climates in the semiarid plains of the Phytogeographic regions of Chaco, Monte, and Espinal of Argentina (Chiaraviglio et al. 1998. *Gayana Zool.* 62:83–85; Di Cola et al. 2008. *Amphibia-Reptilia* 29:299–310). In central-eastern San Juan Province, this subspecies occurs in Chaco Árido, an ecotonal region between the Chaco and Monte Phytogeographic regions (Acosta et al. 2000. *Cuad. Herpetol.* 14:163). In Argentina, *B. c. occidentalis* is considered a “threatened” species (Lavilla et al. 2000. *Categorización de Anfibios y Reptiles de la República Argentina*. *Asoc. Argentina Herpetol.* 79 pp.) due to hunting pressure and habitat loss related to human population growth and agricultural expansion. Sightings of this species in Argentina are uncommon and data on trophic ecology are limited.

On 15 December 2008, we observed a free-ranging adult *B.*



FIG. 1. *Boa constrictor occidentalis* consuming a *Chunga burmeisteri* in Sierra de Guayaguas, Argentina (photo by JM).

c. occidentalis (total length ca. 3 m) in Sierra de Guayaguas, 25 de Mayo Department, corresponding to the Chaco Árido Phytogeographic Region in Argentina (31.85°S, 67.17°W, datum WGS84; elev. 557 m). The snake was apparently in an ambush posture on the ground beneath the canopy of *Ximenia americana* (albaricoque) shrubs along a trail used by “walking birds” (*Chunga burmeisteri*; “chuña patas negras,” Carriamidae). Later, a *C. burmeisteri* that was passing along the trail was caught by a fast strike from the snake and was subsequently constricted and ingested over the course of ca. 25 min (Fig. 1). *Boa constrictor* are opportunistic predators that are known to feed on a variety of mammals, birds, and lizards, and are sit-and-wait foragers (Savage 2002. The Amphibians and Reptiles of Costa Rica. Univ. of Chicago Press, Illinois, 934 pp.; Solorzano 2004. Snakes of Costa Rica. Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad, Costa Rica, 791 pp.). This note constitutes a first record of predation on *C. burmeisteri* by *B. c. occidentalis* and confirms that this snake uses ambush foraging to feed on “walking birds.”

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BOTHROPS MOOJENI (Brazilian Lancehead). **DIET.** The pitviper *Bothrops moojeni* occurs throughout the Cerrado region of central and southeastern Brazil, mainly in open and forested riparian areas (Campbell and Lamar 2004. The Venomous Reptiles of the Western Hemisphere, Vol. I. Cornell Univ. Press, Ithaca, New York. 475 pp.; Nogueira et al. 2003. J. Herpetol. 37:654–659). This terrestrial lancehead has a variable diet that includes mammals, frogs, lizards, snakes, birds and even centipedes, with adults preying more frequently on mammals (Nogueira et al. 2003, *op. cit.*). On 5 December 2008 at 1930 h, we captured an adult male *B. moojeni* (SVL = 958 mm) in a palm swamp (“vereda”) site in Área de Proteção Ambiental do Rio Pandeiros (15.43°S, 44.81° W, datum SAD1969), a conservation unit in municipality of Januária, north of Minas Gerais State, southeastern Brazil. After dissection, we found an adult *Leptodactylus fuscus* (SVL = 41.7 mm) in snake’s stomach, that had been ingested head-first. *Leptodactylus fuscus* has been recorded in the diet of *B. moojeni* and *B. atrox*, an Amazonian lancehead closely related to *B. moojeni* (França et al. 2008. Copeia 2008:23–28; Macedo-Bernarde and Bernarde 2005. Herpetol. Rev. 36:456; Nogueira et al. 2003, *op. cit.*). This observation supports the hypothesis of diet similarity between these species and corroborates the idea that despite ontogenetic dietary shifts, adult *B. moojeni* do not eliminate small prey from their diets (Martins et al. 2002. In Schuett et al. [eds.], Biology of the Vipers, pp. 307–328. Eagle Mountain Publ., Eagle Mountain, Utah). Voucher specimens were deposited in the herpetological collection of Museu de Zoologia João Moojen, Universidade Federal de Viçosa, in Viçosa, Minas Gerais, Brazil (*B. moojeni*, MZUFV 1639; *L. fuscus* MZUFV 9258).

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COLUBER CONSTRICTOR (North American Racer). **PULL-TAB ENTANGLEMENT.** Entanglement of reptiles and amphibians in human-made materials is increasingly evident (reviewed by Vann et al. 2005. Herpetol. Rev. 36:322; Dean et al. 2005. Herpetol. Rev. 36:179–180; Stuart et al. 2001. Herpetol. Rev. 32:162–164). Most previous reports have involved entanglement in plastic materials (but see Dean et al., *op. cit.*; Herrington 1985. Herpetol. Rev. 16:11). Here I report the first case of girdling of a snake by an aluminum pull-tab, apparently from a soft drink can.

On 5 July 2009, I discovered a male *Coluber constrictor* (total length = 121 cm) in a window well at my rural residence (Indiana, Wayne Co., USA, ca. 7 km WSW Richmond: 39.7978°N, 84.9658°W, datum: WGS84). Although it was typically robust and feisty, its torso was encircled by an aluminum pull-tab at a point ca. 30 cm from the tip of the snout (Fig. 1). The pull-tab was the removable kind used on soft drink cans in the USA between 1962 and 1975 (www.squidoo.com/canpulltab), but with only the circular ring left intact. Based on the apparent health of the snake and the evident (but not extensive) external damage to the snake, it must have been girdled for only a short time (estimated at 2–4 weeks). Upon removal of the pull-tab, the snake was released; it moved into a forest edge quickly with no apparent long-term locomotor damage. This observation demonstrates that although



FIG. 1. Aluminum pull-tab girdling a male *Coluber constrictor* from Wayne Co., Indiana, USA.