

Diet of the black-headed forest racer *Taeniophallus affinis* Günther, 1858 in the Brazilian Atlantic forest

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Abstract. *Taeniophallus affinis* is a small dipsadid snake endemic to the Brazilian Atlantic forest. Information about its feeding biology is scarce but the species is usually referred as an anuran-eater. However, information available in the literature specify only a lizard (*Heterodactylus imbricatus*) and an amphisbaenid (*Amphisbaena dubia*) as identified items in gut contents of wild caught *T. affinis*. The present communication is the first report of the anuran *Leptodactylus marmoratus* as prey of *T. affinis* in wild.

Keywords. Dipsadid, amphibian, predation, *Leptodactylus marmoratus*.

Taeniophallus affinis is a small dipsadid snake endemic to the Brazilian Atlantic forest (Condez, Sawaya & Dixo, 2009; Argôlo, 1998; Di-Bernardo & Lema, 1988). Information about its feeding biology is scarce but it is usually referred to as an anuran-eater (Condez, Sawaya & Dixo, 2009; Palmuti, Cassimiro & Bertoluci, 2009; Marques, Eterovic & Sazima, 2004). However, the only prey recorded in the gut contents were an unidentified lizard species, the lizard *Heterodactylus imbricatus* (Sousa & Cruz, 2000), one amphisbaenid *Amphisbaena dubia* (Barbo & Marques, 2003) and unidentified anuran remains (Hartmann, Hartmann & Martins, 2009). Here we report the first record of the anuran *Leptodactylus marmoratus* in the stomach of *T. affinis* found in the wild.

During a herpetofaunal survey in November 2007 in Estação Biológica da Boracéia (municipality of Salesópolis, São Paulo state, Brazil), a young female *T.*

affinis (235 mm SVL, 75 mm tail length, mass 4,7g) was found coiled under a palm tree leaf, over leaf litter, near to a pond on the border of a secondary forest. We detected by palpation the presence of gut contents and using gentle massages induced the snake to regurgitate it. This snake had recently fed on the anuran *Leptodactylus marmoratus* (mass 0.130g, 14.88mm SVL, prey was partially digested) ingested vent-first. Prey's mass represented 2.77 % of snakes' mass. The snake and its prey are housed together in the Herpetological collection of Instituto Butantan (voucher: IBSP 76199). *L. marmoratus* is a small anuran species that inhabits Atlantic forest and leaves in leaf litter (Heyer & Maxson, 1982). The prey confirms that *T. affinis* eats anurans, as suggested in the literature. This dipsadid snake as well as coespecifics seems to forage mainly in leaf litter of forest areas (Di-Bernardo, 1992). Thus the litter seems to be a microhabitat essential to maintain populations of the genus *Taeniophallus* in the Atlantic forest.

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