

Predation on Ihering's Fathead Anole, *Enyalius iheringii* Boulenger, 1885, by Duméril's False Coralsnake, *Oxyrhopus clathratus* Duméril et al., 1854, in southern Brazil

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Duméril's false coralsnake (*Oxyrhopus clathratus*) inhabits rainforests, seasonal forests, grasslands, and the ecotones between them. It is found in Brazil, from Bahia to Rio Grande do Sul, and in Misiones Province in Argentina (Bernardo et al., 2012). This predominantly nocturnal and terrestrial snake frequently moves through the forest floor and lower understorey while foraging (Marques et al., 2001).

False coralsnakes are active foragers that frequently inspect leaf litter in search of prey. Around 38% of their prey are lizards (Alencar et al., 2013), a habit they share with snakes in general (Seigel and Collins, 1993; Hamilton et al., 2012; Schalk and Cove, 2018). Records of predation by *O. clathratus* include house geckos (*Hemidactylus mabouia*; Morato, 2005); gymnophthalmid lizards, such as *Epleopus gaudichaudii*, *Colobodactylus dalcyanus*, and *Placosoma cordylinum* (Marques and Sazima, 2004; Dill Orrico and Da Costa, 2009; Bernardo et al., 2012); worm lizards, genus *Ophiodes* (Dias et al., 2023); as well as rodents (Marques and Sazima, 2004) and birds (Gaiarsa et al., 2013).

Enyalius iheringii (Leiosauridae) is an arboreal lizard endemic to the Atlantic Forest (Rautenberg and Laps, 2010). It is typically associated with the understory of tropical and subtropical forests from Rio de Janeiro to Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil (Colli et al., 2014). It uses vegetation up to 5 m high but frequently descends to the ground while moving through the habitat. It is a thermoconformer and uses a sit-and-wait strategy

to acquire prey, which consists primarily of insects (Jackson, 1978). The maximum snout–vent length (SVL) of adult *E. iheringii* is 100 mm, which is similar to that described for its congeners (110 mm; Santos, 2019).

On 14 January 2025 at 09:14 h we observed an adult *O. clathratus* (SVL ca. 550 mm) preying on an *E. iheringii* (SVL 90 mm, prey/predator SVL ratio 0.16) at the edge of a 1.5 m wide trail in an Araucaria Forest (Fig. 1A). We made this observation at the Pro-Mata Private Natural Heritage Reserve of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul (29.4791°S, 50.1750°W, elevation 890 m). Only part of the lizard's tail and left hind limb protruded outside the snake's mouth (Fig. 1B). As we approached to within 1 m of the snake and extended a tape measure about 10 cm from its head to estimate its size, the snake regurgitated its prey (Fig. 1C) and left the site. We did not handle either predator or prey at the time of the sighting. At 13:39 h, we returned to the site and found the lizard in the same spot where it had been regurgitated. We collected the lizard (Fig. 2) to obtain its measurements and deposited it in collection of the university's Museum of Science and Technology (specimen number MCP 19869).

The prey/predator size ratio falls within the range commonly reported for snake-lizard interactions (King, 2002). The lizard's passive foraging behaviour (Jackson, 1978) may have increased its vulnerability to the active *O. clathratus* predator (Alencar et al., 2013).

The regurgitation of prey following our arrival at the scene is a well-documented response in snakes when they are disturbed, and it is believed to be a strategy that optimises the predator's mobility (Greene, 1988). While this response may enhance escape and survival, abandoning a captured prey can be costly, particularly in environments where food is scarce (Claunch et al., 2023). These records provide valuable insights into the natural history of predator-prey interactions among

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Figure 1. Encounter of a Duméril's False Coralsnake, *Oxyrhopus clathratus*, preying on the lizard *Enyalius iheringii* in an Araucaria Forest at the Pro-Mata Private Natural Heritage Reserve, Brazil. (A) The forest trail near which the coralsnake was seen. (B) The snake has ingested almost the entire lizard, with only part of the lizard's tail and left foot protruding from the snake's mouth. Image [from a video](#) by Ana V.D. Porto. (C) The scene after the coralsnake regurgitated the lizard. Photos by Ana V.D. Porto.

poorly studied species and underscore the importance of opportunistic observations in revealing ecologically relevant behaviours that are seldom observed directly in the wild.

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Figure 2. *Enyalius iheringii*, after regurgitation by *Oxyrhopus clathratus* in an Araucaria Forest at the Pro-Mata Private Natural Heritage Reserve, Brazil. Photo by Júlio César Bicca-Marques.