Reptilia: Squamata (snakes)

Boa imperator Daudin, 1803. Diet. The Mesoamerican Boa Constrictor, *Boa imperator*, is distributed from northern Mexico, in Sonora and Tamaulipas, to northwestern South America (Hynková et al., 2009). The species is composed of populations previously assigned to three subspecies of *B. constrictor*: *B. c. imperator*, *B. c. longicauda*, and *B. c. sabogae* (Hynková et al., 2009); recently, however, Card et al. (*In Press*) proposed recognition of the lineage along the Pacific coast of Mexico, west of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as a distinct species, *B. sigma*. The diet of the snakes of the genus *Boa* is broad and includes a variety of mammals, birds, frogs, and lizards (Solórzano, 2004; Pérez-Higareda et al., 2007). At least 54 different prey items have been reported in the literature for mainland *Boa*, but reports of bird consumption are relatively rare (Boback, 2005). Most of the birds accounted as prey are passerines, but domestic fowl, New World vultures, and hummingbirds have been reported in the diet of *B. imperator* (Boback, 2004; Platt et al., 2016).

On 6 December 2015 at ca. 1200 h, at Hotel Xixim, ca. 9.7 km NNE of Celestún, Yucatán, Mexico (20.9439 N, 90.3708 W, WGS 84; elev. 5 m), we observed a juvenile *B. imperator* attempting to consume an adult Tropical Mockingbird, *Mimus gilvus* (Fig. 1A). The incident took place above a covered water tank located under a tree, in a shaded area with relatively dense undergrowth. The vegetation at the site was disturbed tropical dry forest. The snake was firmly coiled around the bird’s body and had swallowed it to around the chest level (Fig. 1B). By the time we arrived the bird was dead, so we are not certain if it was a predatory or scavenging event. Scavenging has been reported for the closely related Puerto Rican Boa *Chilabothrus inornatus* (Rodríguez-Durán, 1996), but the fact that the snake was strongly coiled around the bird’s body suggests the event was predatory. After around 5 min of observing the occurrence, we left the area to avoid further disturbing the snake. We returned to the site ca. 30 min later and the snake had left, leaving the bird behind (Fig. 1C). We are unaware of what caused the snake to desist ingestion, but possibly the food item was too large or the snake was disturbed by us and some of the hotel’s workers, as they had approached to observe it.

*Mimus gilvus* has been reported in the diet of introduced *B. constrictor* in Aruba (Quick et al., 2005; Bushar et al., 2015), but to our knowledge the incident reported herein constitutes the first record of either attempted or achieved ingestion of *M. gilvus* by *B. imperator*. 
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LITERATURE CITED


Clelia clelia (Daudin, 1803). Predation. Clelia clelia is a large snake that can reach an estimated total length (TL) of 2,750 mm (Solórzano, 2004). It also has a large geographic distribution extending from Guatemala to western Peru west of the Andes, and to central Bolivia, Argentina, and northern Brazil east of the Andes (McCranie, 2011). This species is common in the Mosquitia region of northeastern Honduras, in areas of primary broadleaf rainforest. Clelia clelia is listed as a CITES (II) species.

On 27 July 2015, about three hours after nightfall, my group captured a subadult Clelia (slightly less than 2 m TL) crawling on the ground in undisturbed broadleaf rainforest. We placed the snake in a cloth bag for photographing the next day, and carried it for 3.5 h before returning to our campsite. The campsite was at a site called Bachi (“catfish” in English) Kiamp (15°08.654’N, 84°24.942’W; elev. 40 m) that belongs to the Miskito people.

The following morning we noticed a stench coming from the bag with the Clelia, and upon opening it discovered several regurgitated prey items. The snake was bleeding from the mouth, so we released immediately it in primary forest. Apparently the bleeding had resulted from the regurgitation process, as we handled the snake gently when capturing it. The regurgitated items included a young C. clelia, still with its juvenile color pattern, an adult of the teiid Holcosus festivus, and two small mammals that appear to be mouse pups (Figs. 1A, B).

McCranie (2011; also see references cited therein) reported the following food items for C. clelia: rats and other small mammals; birds; various lizards; and various snakes, including the venomous Bothrops asper and other viperids. Clelia clelia is a generalist feeder well known for feeding on venomous viperid snakes. Lee (1996; also see references cited therein) reported similar food items, and Solórzano (2004) reported a similar varied diet, but added three venomous viperid species from Costa Rica: Atropoides mexicanus, Lachesis stenophrys, and Porthidium nasutum. Solórzano (2004: 204) also made the general feeding statement of “small mammals and lizards.” Chavarría and Barrio-Amorós (2014) added the venomous snake Bothriechis schlegelii from Costa Rica. Gaiarsa et al. (2013; also see references listed therein) similarly listed various snakes and lizards as prey, plus small mammals and birds, and made the first report of snake eggs as prey of a Brazilian specimen.

This apparently is the first report of cannibalism in C. clelia. Also, although teiid lizards have been reported in the diet of C. clelia (see above references), this report is the first to include H. festivus in the diet of this species.