

Texas, comparable to the observations from southeast Oklahoma, and smaller than that observed in northeast Arkansas. Mean egg mass in this clutch is nearly 4 g lighter than observed in Smith County, Texas, despite the fact that our female is only 6 mm smaller. After data collection, the eggs were held at ambient temperature and misted daily until signs of mold appeared accompanied by a foul odor (18 June 2006). At this time the eggs were fixed in 10% formalin and deposited in a private (MLM) teaching-research collection. This observation fills a geographical void in our knowledge of the reproductive biology of *M. flagellum* in this region.

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MASTICOPHIS SCHOTTI SCHOTTI (Schott's Whipsnake). **DIET.** Although documentation of the feeding habits of *Masticophis schotti schotti* is lacking (Werler and Dixon 2000. Texas Snakes: Identification, Distribution, and Natural History. University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas. 437 pp.), its diet is assumed to be similar to that of other *Masticophis*, which prey chiefly on lizards and birds. At 1730 h on 28 October 2006, I collected a DOR adult female *M. s. schotti* (945 mm SVL, 425 mm TL, 162 g) 1.1 mi N of the intersection of Texas Hwy 16 and Farm Road 2295 on Hwy 16 (27.59304°N, 098.65605°W, 193 m elev.) in Duval County, Texas, USA. The snake had an adult male (TD = 15 × 6 mm) *Peromyscus leucopus* in its stomach that was consumed headfirst. The mouse's measurements were: total length 178 mm, tail length 80 mm, hind foot 18 mm, ear 15 mm, and it weighed 23 g. The snake (ASNHC 14197) and mouse (ASNHC 13039) are deposited in the Angelo State Natural History Collection, Angelo State University, San Angelo, Texas.

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MEHELYA NYASSAE (Black File Snake). **FEEDING.** On the evening of 23 February 2006 a female *Mehelya nyassae* (450 mm SVL, 44 mm tail length, 30 g) was discovered swallowing an *Acontias plumbeus* (Giant Legless Skink; 252 mm SVL, 44 mm tail length, 34 g) on the road in Mtunzini, South Africa. The two animals had been recently hit by a vehicle and both were dead. The anterior 150 mm of the skink had been swallowed by the snake before the snake had been hit by the vehicle and thus it is unclear whether the snake would have completely ingested the prey. Shine et al. (1996. J. Zool. London 240:327–340) indicate that the diet of *M. nyassae* consists largely of scincid lizards, but did not record any members of the subfamily Acontinae in the diet of this species. Shine et al. (*op. cit.*) also report the mean prey mass to predator mass ratio as being 0.15 with a maximum ratio of 0.45. Assuming that this snake would have completely ingested the prey item, this feeding record would represent a prey mass to predator mass ratio of 1.14, well exceeding the reported range.

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NOTECHIS SCUTATUS (Australian Tiger Snake). **CANNIBALISM.** Incidental cannibalism in young snakes is frequently observed in captivity in a wide range of species, and usually occurs while the animals are being fed in a communal space. High frequency of cannibalism has been previously reported in *Notechis scutatus* from island populations during feeding events (Worrel 1963. Reptiles of Australia. Angus and Robertson, Sydney. pp. 132). Cannibalism between young *N. scutatus* was also recorded in the absence of food (Firmage and Shine 1996. Amphibia-Reptilia 17:55–65).

In March 2006, four pregnant female *N. scutatus* were captured on Williams Island, South Australia (35°01'54"S, 135°58'28"E) and two pregnant females were captured at Herdsman Lake, Western Australia (31°55'16"S, 115°48'17"E). In April 2006, 79 *N. scutatus* were born in captivity to these six females. Island neonates (22.8 ± 1.9 cm SVL, 8.9 ± 1.5 g; N = 50) and mainland neonates (17.8 ± 0.7 cm SVL, 4.4 ± 0.3 g; N = 29) significantly differed in snout–vent length ($F_{1,77} = 183.4$; $P < 0.01$) and in body mass ($F_{1,77} = 256.4$, $P < 0.01$) at birth. All snakes were housed individually under standardized conditions and fed dead mice every two weeks.

In the course of conducting other experiments, the now two-month-old snakes (body mass ranging from 4–11 g) were kept in groups of 3–16 individuals in small plastic boxes for three days. Cannibalism was observed on seven occasions, always in the absence of food stimuli and several days from the last feeding event. Victims ranged from 41% lighter up to 25% heavier, and from 17% shorter up to 11% longer than their attackers. Island snakes (Williams Island, South Australia) as well as mainland snakes (Herdsman Lake, Western Australia) displayed cannibalism. Island snakes preyed upon island snakes (2 occurrences) as well as mainland snakes (3 occurrences), while mainland snakes only consumed mainland snakes (2 occurrences), possibly reflecting the much larger size (and presumably strength) of island juveniles compare to their mainland counterparts (see above). Biting and other fighting behaviors were often observed, once involving two snakes biting a third individual. In most instances, snakes were separated by hand before cannibalism could occur. No bitten snakes seemed to suffer in an observable way from the effect of their attacker's venom. This report indicates that island and as well as mainland young *N. scutatus* are capable of cannibalism in captivity. There is no evidence that cannibalism occurs in the wild in this species. However it seems likely that some Island Tiger Snakes would display such behavior, especially in the absence of small prey items such as frogs (*Crinia*) and skinks (*Ctenotus*) that are the staple diet of mainland neonates (Aubret et al. 2004. Amphibia-Reptilia 25:9–17).

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PSAMMOPHIS LEIGHTONI TRINASALIS (Fork-marked Sand Snake) and **PSAMMOPHIS NOTOSTICTUS** (Karoo Sand Racer). **ENDOPARASITES.** *Psammophis leightoni trinasalis*