



FIG. 1. Bullet Ants (*Paraponera clavata*) hold a *Kentropyx pelviceps* from Ecuador with their mandibles after subduing it with venom.

*cit.*) reported a similar observation with an ant carrying the head of a small frog. To our knowledge, no direct observation of *P. clavata* predation on a lizard has been published, and herein we sent the first report of such an event from Ecuador.

Between 1108 and 1115 h on 17 March 2023 we observed a subadult *Kentropyx pelviceps* (ca. 60 mm SVL) being attacked by a swarm of *P. clavata* along a trail near Sacha Lodge in the Sucumbios Province of Ecuador (0.4678°S, 76.4601°W; WGS 84; ca. 239 m elev.). At 1108 h we startled the *K. pelviceps* while walking on the trail and it fled into a nearby hole, but almost immediately resurfaced and was already under attack by large ants. We quickly concluded the lizard must have fled into an active *P. clavata* nest. The lizard had between 4 and 8 ants clinging to its head and body with their mandibles and stinging it. The lizard attempted to escape but was quickly overwhelmed and paralyzed by venom from the ant stings within ca. 20 sec. After the *K. pelviceps* stopped moving we observed the ants biting and carrying the lizard for ca. 7 min. before we continued down the trail (Fig. 1).

The ant attack on the *K. pelviceps* may have started as a defense response when it entered the nest, but we believe that the *P. clavata* switched to predation once the lizard was immobilized by venom. Once immobilized, the ants appeared to cease stinging but continued to carry and manipulate the lizard with their mandibles. This observation revealed a novel ant predator for *K. pelviceps* and likely other lizards and, to our knowledge, is the first direct evidence of *P. clavata* preying upon a vertebrate.

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**LIOLAEMUS FAMATINAE (Famatina Lizard). PARENTAL CARE.** *Liolaemus famatinae* is small lizard known from Famatina Mountains in the La Rioja Province of western Argentina (Cei 1980. *J. Herpetol.* 14:57–64). It is a small-sized lizard that runs agilely among the bushes during the sunniest hours. It inhabits high elevation grasslands, on stony often limonitic soils,



FIG. 1. Adult female *Liolaemus famatinae* and one of her hatchlings from western Argentina.

with low vegetation and little is known about its reproductive ecology (Cei 1986. *Reptiles del Centro, Centro-Oeste y Sur de la Argentina: Herpetofauna de las Zonas Áridas y Semiáridas*. Mus. Reg. Sci. Nat. Torino, Turin, Italy. 527 pp.) except that they are viviparous like other *Liolaemus* species living in high-elevation terrain (Cabrera and Monguillot 2007. *Herpetol. Bull.* 101:34–35.). Viviparity seems to have emerged multiple times among squamate reptiles inhabiting cooler environments found at high latitudes and elevations (Schulte et al. 2000. *Biol. J. Linn. Soc.* 69:75–102). Our observation is also congruent with this reproductive pattern observed in most *Liolaemus* inhabiting harsh cold environments (Fernández et al. 2015. *Herpetol. J.* 25:101–108). Here, we report notes on clutch size and possible parental care.

On 6 January 2023, at 1230 h, we found a group of *L. famatinae*, an adult female (ca. 5.5 cm SVL, ca. 11 cm total length) and four hatchlings (one measured; ca. 2.4 cm SVL, ca. 5 cm total length), in the Famatina Mountains (28.8437°S, 67.7748°W; WGS 84; 3208 m elev.). At first, we observed the female basking on a stone and when we came closer to catch her, she ran to a refuge between stones in a rock outcrop but

we were able to find her under a rock as she stood in front of a small hole ca. 5 cm wide. She then fled inside the hole but emerged a few minutes later with the four neonates following, but we are not sure if additional neonates were in the hole. The female appeared abnormally skinny, and based on neonate size we suspect these lizards were born recently. To our knowledge this is the first reported clutch size for *L. famatinae* and possible use of a nesting hole. In addition, the presence of the female with the neonates suggests extended parental care to further protect offspring against predators, share shelter and food resources until the neonates can disperse (Halloy et al. 2013. Cuad. Herpetol. 27:15–26).

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**NOTHOBACHIA ABLEPHARA. THANATOSIS.** *Nothobachia ablephara* is a fossorial lizard associated with sandy soil habitats endemic to the São Francisco River in eastern and northeastern Brazil (Rodrigues 1984. Pap. Avulsos Zoo. 35:361–366; Ramiro et al. 2019. South Am. J. Herpetol. 12:76–88). Besides information on their diet, little is known about this species' natural history (Rocha and Rodrigues 2005. Pap. Avulsos Zool. 45:261–284), including its defensive behaviors. Here, we report thanatosis, or death feigning, in *N. ablephara*.

On 4 March 2023 at 1403 h, we found a *N. ablephara* that was dug up during vegetation removal in the Municipality of Dom Inocência (8.6989°S, 41.6841°W; WGS 84; 340 m elev.), in Piauí, northeastern Brazil, exhibiting thanatosis. The animal was already in the death feigning state when found and we placed it in a plastic container for monitoring. Shortly afterwards we removed the lizard from the container and placed it on the ground whereupon it moved about quickly and appeared to be in good health. We then placed the lizard back in the container where it returned to a the thanatosis state and only ceased the behavior when it was released back to an undisturbed area. To our knowledge this is the first report of thanatosis in *N. ablephara*, and only the third instance in the family Gymnophthalmidae (Machado-Filho et al. 2018. Acta Amazon. 48:151–153).

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**OPHISAURUS VENTRALIS (Eastern Glass Lizard). DIET.** At 1100 h on 3 June 2023 on Brays Island, South Carolina, USA (32.58379°N, 80.82593°W; WGS 84; 1.6 m elev.) a large adult *Ophisaurus ventralis* (25 cm SVL, 56 cm total length) was found deceased on a dirt road adjacent to a tidal brackish marsh. We dissected the lizard at the Brays Island Nature Center to examine stomach contents and found an unidentified caterpillar and the entire dismembered carcass of a Squareback Marsh Crab (*Armases cinereum*). The Squareback Marsh Crab is a small, common crustacean in the supralittoral zone of saltmarshes in the Southeastern United States (Ruppert and Fox 1988. Seashore Animals of the Southeast. University of South Carolina Press. Columbia, South Carolina. 263 pp.). *Ophisaurus ventralis* is also commonly observed in this habitat. While it is not clear if this food item represents a predation event or if it was scavenged, we are submitting this observation as the first report of *O. ventralis* consuming this crab species.

*Ophisaurus ventralis* is known to prey on hard-shelled invertebrates such as beetles, mole crickets, mollusks, and crayfish (Hamilton and Pollack 1961. Herpetologica 17:99–106) and recently Watts et al. (2019 Herpetol. Rev. 50:788) reported the first crab, Mud Fiddler Crab (*Minuca pugnax*), in their diet. These observations, combined with the abundance of multiple small crab species and *O. ventralis* along the edge of saltmarshes, suggests *O. ventralis* may consume crustaceans more than has been reported.

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**PHRYNOSOMA HERNANDESI BREVIROSTRIS (Plains Short-horned Lizard). OVERWINTERING.** Cold-climate terrestrial reptiles must find subterranean shelter during the inclement portion of the year, particularly in areas with long harsh winters, such as the Canadian Prairies (Pendlebury 1977. Can. Field-Nat. 91:122–129; Gregory 1982. In Gans and Pough [eds.], Biology of the Reptilia. Vol. 13. Physiology D, pp. 53–154. Academic Press, London, UK.). Overwinter mortality associated with midwinter thaws and unsuitable overwintering site selection can be important limiting factors for high-latitude reptile populations (Dupuis-Desormeaux et al. 2022. Can. Field Nat. 136:309–315). Mathies and Martin (2008. J. Herpetol. 42:163–171) observed pre-overwintering behavior in *P. hernandesi bauri* (Baur's Short-horned Lizard) in Colorado and noted one lizard apparently burying itself in loose sand for the winter. They posited that animal burrows were commonly used as overwintering shelters.

We made the following observations while radiotracking *P. hernandesi brevirostris* at Lecuyer's Coulee (49.3507°N, 110.4643°W; WGS 84; 1040 m elev.). The site was an ecotonal area between mixed-grass prairie and thinly vegetated Bearpaw shale badlands, generally sloping to the SW (Powell and Russell 1998. Can. Field-Nat. 112:1–16). Lizards were marked with unique toe-clips and carried Holohil Systems Ltd. BD-2AT transmitters (Holohil Systems Ltd., 112 John Cavanaugh Drive - Unit 12, Carp,