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LEIOCEPHALUS CARINATUS ARMOURI
(Northern Curlytail Lizard) SCAVENGED ROAD-KILL

Henry T. Smith
Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Park Service

Richard M. Engeman
USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services, richard.m.engeman@aphis.usda.gov

Walter E. Meshaka Jr.
State Museum of Pennsylvania

Ernest M. Cowan
Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Park Service

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At 1155 h on 1 April 2005 (sunny, air temperature ca. 28.3°C), HTS observed an adult *S. carolinensis* at the Woolbright Road colony of *L. c. armouri* located in Boynton Beach, Florida (see previous colony site descriptions in Smith and Engeman 2003. Herpetol. Rev. 34:245–246), sitting on its haunches in the parking lot of the Woolbright Road site gnawing on a large, flattened, wafer-like object. Holding the “wafer” in its forelimbs, the squirrel spun it slowly while chewing off and swallowing the edge portions. This behavior was observed for 3–4 min, at which time the squirrel was more closely approached. The squirrel then nervously flicked its tail, gave two distress barking-chatters, and attempted to flee with the wafer in its jaws. The large and unwieldy size and shape of the wafer caused it to be dropped by the squirrel after it had moved only 5 m. The wafer was collected and identified as a road-killed *L. c. armouri* (see Fig. 1).

*Leiocephalus c. armouri*, present at the Woolbright Road site since at least 1986 (Smith and Engeman 2003, *op. cit.*), has been intensively studied there since 1993 (Smith and Engeman 2004b, *op. cit.*) and road-kills are common. During regular morning walks around the site, *L. c. armouri* road-kills are often found, only to disappear within a day or two. Feral cats (*Felis catus*) and exotic rodents were previously thought largely responsible for these disappearances. However, *S. carolinensis* have always been the most common mammal at the colony site.

In Florida, the diet of *S. carolinensis* generally consists of plant material including fruits, acorns, other mast and drupes, vegetative buds, bulbs, fungi, and staminate cones (Brown 1997. Mammals of Florida, Windward Publishing, Inc., Miami, Florida. 224 pp.; HTS, pers. obs.). However, *S. carolinensis* are also known to be carnivorous at some localities and times of the year, consuming insects, bird eggs, birds, and even chipmunks (Layne and Woolfenden 1958. J. Mammal. 39:595–596; Korschgen 1981. J. Wildl. Manage. 45:260–266; Faccio 1996. Can. Field Nat. 110:538). The relative abundance of *L. c. armouri*, alive and as road-kill, at the Woolbright Road colony may make it an important protein and trace element (e.g., calcium) dietary component of *S. carolinensis* at this location, especially during the bimodal squirrel breeding season peaks in Florida of late winter/early spring, and late spring/summer (Brown, *op. cit.*). Future observations/examinations/collections of *L. c. armouri* carcasses at this site will attempt to further clarify such a relationship.


![FIG. 1. Roadkilled *Leiocephalus carinatus armouri*; the bracket indicates the area chewed on by a *Sciurus carolinensis*.](image)