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

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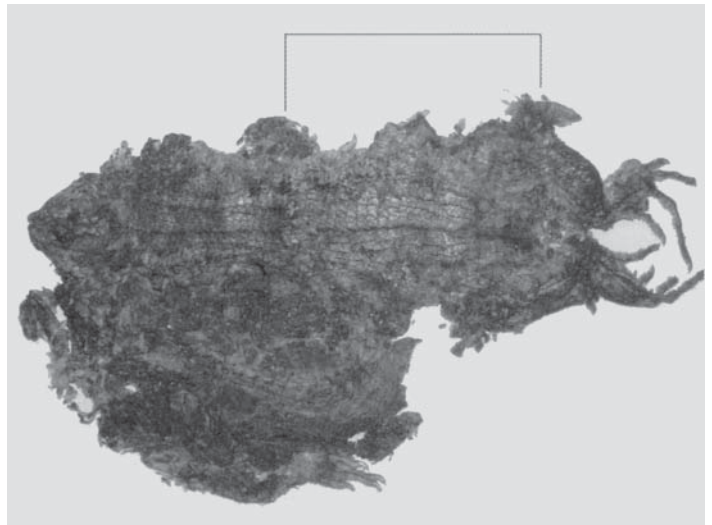


FIG. 1. Roadkilled *Leiocephalus carinatus armouri*; the bracket indicates the area chewed on by a *Sciurus carolinensis*.

**LEIOCEPHALUS CARINATUS ARMOURI** (Northern Curlytail Lizard). **SCAVENGED ROAD-KILL.** Little is known about the vertebrate predators and scavengers of *Leiocephalus carinatus armouri* within its introduced range in Florida, with few of these consumers currently documented (e.g., Meshaka et al. 2004. The Exotic Amphibians and Reptiles of Florida, Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, Florida. 155 pp.; Smith and Engeman 2004a. Herpetol. Rev. 35:169–170; Smith and Engeman 2004b. Florida Field Nat. 32:107–113; Dean et al. 2005. Herpetol. Rev. 36:451). Thus far, only one mammal in Florida has been verified, feral cats (*Felis catus*) (Smith and Engeman 2004b, *op. cit.*). Here we report Eastern Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) scavenging of a road-killed *L. c. armouri* in Florida.

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, completely flattened, adult *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.

Submitted by **HENRY T. SMITH**, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Park Service, 13798 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455, USA; **RICHARD M. ENGEMAN**, National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Ave., Fort Collins, Colorado 80521-2154, USA, **WALTER E. MESHAKA, JR.**, The State Museum of Pennsylvania, 300 North Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-0024, USA; and **ERNEST M. COWAN**, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Park Service, 13798 S.E. Federal Highway, Hobe Sound, Florida 33455, USA.