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## ***LEPTODEIRA SEPTENTRIONALIS* (Northern Cat-eyed Snake)**

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**LEPTODEIRA SEPTENTRIONALIS (Northern Cat-eyed Snake).**

**DIET AND PREDATION.** Beginning at 1838 h on 30 May 2014 at the Caves Branch Jungle Lodge in Belize, we observed an encounter between a *Leptodeira septentrionalis* and an *Incilius valliceps* that appeared to have initiated as a predation attempt by the toad on the snake. The toad (SVL ca. 9 cm) had the dorsal portion of the snake's head in its mouth (Fig. 1); however, the toad was motionless and the snake (with its head in the toad's mouth) was retracting backwards up a stone wall into a crevice, pulling the toad with it. The snake's lower jaw was beneath the lower jaw of the toad, meaning that teeth of the snake's upper jaw were undoubtedly imbedded in the toad's lower mouth, thereby allowing the snake to envenom the toad, indicated by the toad's lack of motion (for information on toxicity of venom within



FIG. 1. *Leptodeira septentrionalis* found with the dorsal portion of its head in the mouth of an *Incilius valliceps* in Belize.



FIG. 2. In a quick motion 20 min after observations were initiated, the *Leptodeira septentrionalis* removed its head from inside the mouth of the *Incilius valliceps* and captured the toad's snout in its mouth.

genus *Leptodeira* see Weinstein et al. 2014. Clin. Toxicol. 52:277–282). Within 2 min the snake had retracted nearly its whole body into the crevice, but it was also clear that the toad would not fit into it (Fig. 1). At approximately 1858 h, the snake made a quick

motion to simultaneously extract its head from the immobilized toad and put the toad's snout in its mouth. It then began an attempt to swallow the toad (Fig. 2). To do so the snake gradually began to exit the crevice and stretch downwards. By 1941 h, the snake had engulfed nearly the whole head of the toad. The next morning the toad was found dead about 2 m from where the encounter was first observed. There was no indication of the fate of the snake. Our only explanation for the encounter was that the toad attempted to predate the snake, but the snake was able to bite inside the toad's mouth to envenom and kill the toad. This provided the counter-opportunity for the snake to attempt to eat the toad, which may have been too large to consume.

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