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***Enulius flavitorques* (Cope, 1869). Feeding behavior.** The Thick-tailed Snake, *Enulius flavitorques*, is a wide-ranging species distributed on the Pacific versant from Jalisco, Mexico, to Panama, and on the Atlantic versant in Chiapas, Mexico; Honduras, and from central Panama to Colombia and thence to northwestern Venezuela (Köhler, 2008; McCranie, 2011). In Costa Rica, this nocturnal, terrestrial and semifossorial snake occurs primarily in Tropical Dry Forest in the northwestern part of the country, as well as in Tropical and Subtropical Rainforest on the Meseta Central, at elevations from sea level to 1,300 m (Savage, 2002, Solórzano, 2004; Sasa et al., 2010). Recently, however, the presence of this species was verified in southwestern Costa Rica (Abarca and Bolaños, *This issue*).

Scott (1983) indicated that *E. flavitorques* specializes in feeding on small reptile eggs, and McCranie et al. (2005) reported on an individual from Isla de Utila on the Bay Islands of Honduras that was found 35 cm deep in sand next to a clutch of *Cnemidophorus lemniscatus* eggs, which it might have been intending to eat (Gutche, 2003; McCranie, 2011). Further, Solórzano (2004) noted that the enlarged rear teeth of *E. flavitorques* are used to perforate the shell of small reptile eggs.

On 23 March 2017 between 1900 and 2000 h, one of us (BM) found four adult *E. flavitorques* inside an open enclosure used to house and reproduce Green Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*) in captivity (Fig. 1), at Barrio Las Mesas, Brasil de Santa Ana, Provincia de San José, Costa Rica (9°56.331'N, 84°13.831'W; WGS 84). For several years,

individuals of *E. flavitorques* had been found in the iguana enclosures from February to May, but especially in March, which corresponds to the time of year when the iguanas deposit their eggs and bury them in the soil of the enclosures. During these events, the snakes often were observed piercing and entering the shells of the eggs to feed on their contents. On this particular occasion, soon after the snakes were found one of the eggs was removed from the enclosure, and all of the snakes and the egg were placed in a plastic container with soil from the enclosure in an effort to document the snakes' feeding behavior. Subsequently, one of the snakes began piercing the shell of the egg by using its enlarged rear teeth (Fig. 2), after which two other snakes began showing the same behavior, as each attempted to push their head into the egg (Fig.3) and eventually two of the snakes succeeded (Fig. 4). The snakes then ingested the contents of the egg.

These observations apparently indicate that the *E. flavitorques* were attracted to the eggs through their olfactory senses, and gathered in groups at night to prey on the eggs. Our observation confirms that these small snakes are able to consume reptile eggs of considerable size, and thus we suggest the possibility that this species might consume the eggs of marine and terrestrial turtles, as well as those of lizards and snakes.



Fig. 1. Enclosures at Barrio Las Mesas, Brasil de Santa Ana, Provincia de San José, Costa Rica, used to house and reproduce Green Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*) in captivity.

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Fig. 2. An *Enulius flavitorques* using its enlarged rear teeth to pierce the shell of a Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*) egg.

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Fig. 3. Once the shell of the egg was pierced, the *Enulius flavitorques* began trying to push their heads into the eggs.

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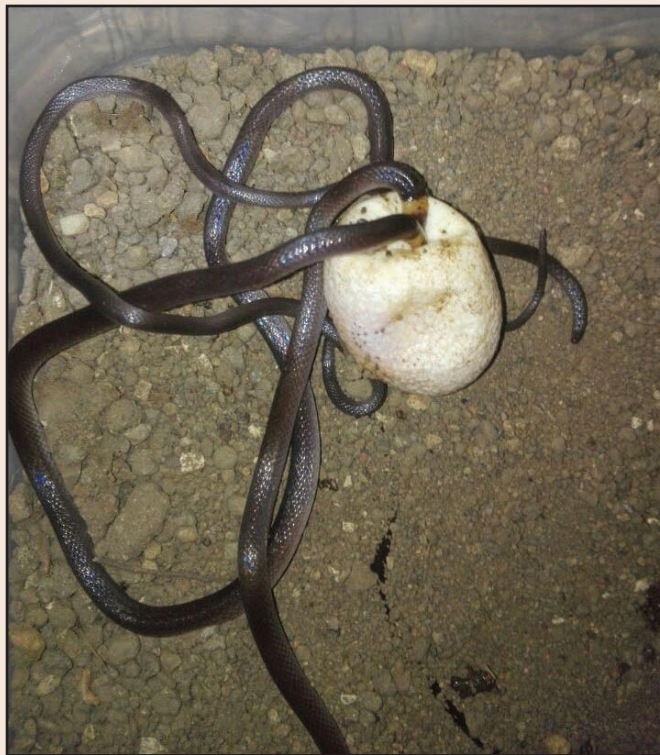


Fig. 4. Eventually, two of the *Enulius flavitorques* succeeded in pushing through the shell, and entered the egg and ingested the contents.

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***Hydrophis platura*. Predation by a Common Black-Hawk (*Buteogallus anthracinus*).** The Yellow-bellied Seasnake, *Hydrophis platura*, is a common species with the broadest distribution of any snake; in the eastern Pacific Ocean, it occurs from extreme southwestern California, United States, southward to northern Peru and the warm waters surrounding Isla de Pascua, Chile (Campbell and Lamar, 2004; Wallach et al., 2014). This species is a pelagic sea dweller, with its life cycle occurring in the water, where individuals often are seen floating at the surface 1–20 m from the shore (Kropach, 1975; Voris, 1983; Campbell and Lamar, 2004). In Costa Rica this species often is encountered in gulfs and bays, and at the beginning of the dry season individuals sometimes are encountered stranded along the shore after a combination of strong seasonal winds and ocean currents (Solórzano, 2004; Solórzano and Kastiel, 2015).

Relatively few predation events on this marine species are known (Heatwole, 1999; Solórzano 2004), perhaps owing to its aposematic coloration and putative toxic skin that, as reported by Kropach (1975), discourage predatory fishes and sharks. Sheehy et al. (2011) found scars on the bodies of swimming *H. platura*, possibly caused by unsuccessful predation attacks by birds that capture and rapidly release the snakes in the water. Because of the shape of the injuries sustained, these authors considered such predatory attempts by birds the most likely explanation for the scars, and suggested that such incidents might be relatively common in the area. Predatory attacks also occur when