

Another case of *Rhinella schneideri*
(WERNER, 1894), devoured by
Salvator merianae DUMÉRIL &
BIBRON, 1839

Salvator merianae DUMÉRIL & BIBRON, 1839, the largest member of its family, is a South American teiid which inhabits both forested and open areas (VANZOLINI et al. 1980; AVILA-PIRES 1995). These terrestrial lizards are dietary generalists, preying actively on invertebrates and vertebrates, as

well as feeding on fruits, eggs, carrion and fungi (KIEFER & SAZIMA 2002; TOLEDO et al. 2004; SAZIMA & D'ANGELO 2013; KASPEROVICZUS et al. 2015). However, among vertebrates reported as prey of *S. merianae*, there are few well-documented records with anurans (SILVA & HILLESHEIM 2004; TOLEDO et al. 2007; MAFFEI et al. 2009; ALMEIDA et al. 2015), being even rarer the predation of venomous species, such as *Rhinella* toads (TOLEDO et al. 2007; ALMEIDA et al. 2015). This note describes another instance of predation by the tegu lizard *S. merianae* upon the venomous bufonid toad, *Rhinella schneideri* WERNER, 1894.

At 15:00 h on 09 October 2017, the author witnessed an adult female *S. merianae* holding in its mouth and subduing an adult male *R. schneideri* (Cururú Toad), on the banks of the Tietê River, located within the municipality of Barbosa, State of São Paulo, southeast Brazil (21°15'01.7" S, 49°55'16.8" W; 371 m a.s.l.). Even though the toad inflated itself as a defensive mechanism, the tegu bit and held it by the head, crunching and shaking its prey laterally, until the toad deceased and was swallowed by the lizard. After ingesting the toad, the lizard continued moving and hid itself in a small forest nearby, being out of sight. That the toad was seized and carried in the mouth is shown in the video available at < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oic7O6HdV_E > .

Anurans are part of the diet of a variety of vertebrate groups (TOLEDO et al. 2007). However, because bufonid species, including *R. schneideri*, have paratoid glands, which secrete potent skin toxins (JARED & ANTONIAZZI 2009), many vertebrate species avoid consuming such venomous toads (BECKMANN & SHINE 2009; CROSSLAND et al. 2011). Indeed, some birds developed the ability of eating just the less toxic body parts of *Rhinella* toads (BECKMANN & SHINE 2009). In the case of South American lizard predators, only two species of Teiidae are recognized feeding on South American toads of the genus *Rhinella*: *S. merianae* and *Crocodylurus amazonicus* SPIX, 1825 (TOLEDO et al. 2007; OLIVEIRA et al. 2017). The present observation was the second report of *S. merianae* feeding on a whole *R. schneideri* individual in the last ten years, suggesting

that *R. schneideri* is not a typical prey item to *S. merianae*.

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