



Fig.1: Adult female Regal Coralsnake *Micrurus ancoralis ancoralis* (JAN, 1872) and its prey, a Speckled Worm Lizard *Amphisbaena fuliginosa varia* LAURENTI, 1768; Province of Esmeraldas, Ecuador.

prey (at head) is 15.2 mm and the minimal diameter of predator (at neck) is 12.6 mm.

Several species of coralsnakes are known to prey upon amphisbaenians: *Micrurus brasiliensis* ROZE, 1967, *M. circinalis* (DUMÉRIL, BIBRON & DUMÉRIL, 1854), *M. filiformis* (GÜNTHER, 1859), *M. frontalis* (DUMÉRIL, BIBRON & DUMÉRIL, 1854), *M. hemprichii* (JAN, 1858), *M. ibiboboca* (MERMER, 1820), *M. lemniscatus* (LINNAEUS, 1758), *M. mipartitus* (DUMÉRIL, BIBRON & DUMÉRIL, 1854), *M. pyrrhocryptus* (COPE, 1862), *M. serranus* (HARVEY, APARICIO & GONZALEZ, 2003), and *M. tschudii* (JAN, 1858) (CAMPBELL & LAMAR 2004). This is to my knowledge the first record of predation upon an amphisbaenid by *M. ancoralis*.

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KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Squamata: Elapidae: *Micrurus ancoralis ancoralis*; Amphisbaenidae: *Amphisbaena fuliginosa varia*; coralsnake; diet; predation; venomous snakes; Esmeraldas; Ecuador

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Taxonomic status of *Colostethus parvus* RIVERO, 1991 and *Colostethus exasperatus* DUELLMAN & LYNCH, 1988

In the original description of *Colostethus exasperatus*, DUELLMAN & LYNCH (1988) mentioned the absence of an oblique lateral stripe and the presence of discrete markings on the chest. In his diagnosis of *C. exasperatus*, COLOMA (1995: 29) listed the presence of a short oblique lateral stripe and the absence of discrete marks in the gular-chest region, and in his section on description and variation, he insisted on the absence of spots on the throat: "I am unable to distinguish two discrete marks on the chest as originally stated.". My examination of two paratypes of *C. exasperatus* (Natural History Museum, The Kansas University - KU 147100 and KU 209648) revealed no differences from the original description of DUELLMAN & LYNCH (1988). However, the statements by COLOMA (1995) creates confusion about the recognition of *C. exasperatus*. I suggest that the characters in the original description of *C. exasperatus* (presence of discrete marks on gular-chest region, lack of an oblique lateral line, and the dark throat and chest) be maintained. On the other hand, after examining paratypes of *C. parvus* RIVERO, 1991 (National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution - USNM 282532-34), COLOMA (1995) placed *C. parvus* in the synonymy of *C. exasperatus*. He concluded that the ob-

lique lateral line of *C. parvus* had been confused with the dorsolateral stripe present in *C. exasperatus*. My examination of the holotype of *C. parvus* (USNM 282819, male) and its comparison with the paratypes of *C. exasperatus* (listed above) revealed differences between the species. *Colostethus parvus* does not have a black armband or swollen black gland on the inner surface of the elbow, which are present in *C. exasperatus*. In addition, the black armband or swollen black gland on the inner surface of the elbow are present in *C. fascianigrus* GRANT & CASTRO, 1998, *C. lehmanni* SILVERSTONE, 1971, and *C. ramosi* SILVERSTONE, 1971, which form the monophyletic *C. ramosi* group based on this character (GRANT & CASTRO 1998). *Colostethus parvus* has a narrow oblique lateral line that does not reach the eye and joins the dorsal color-pattern at the level of the shoulder; in *C. exasperatus* this line is absent. *Colostethus parvus* has a white longitudinal streak in the middle of the throat, giving the impression that the throat has two lateral dark spots; in *C. exasperatus* the throat is dark with small white spots. *Colostethus parvus* does not have the dorsolateral stripe that is present in *C. exasperatus*. *Colostethus parvus* has two metatarsal tubercles and the inner tarsal fold is short, oblique, and does not reach the inner metatarsal tubercle; in *C. exasperatus* three metatarsal tubercles are present, and the inner tarsal fold is long, L-shaped, and extends from the inner metatarsal tubercle to more than half the length of the tarsus. Because of this suite of differences, I recommend that *C. parvus* RIVERO, 1991, is recognized as a species distinct from *C. exasperatus* DUELLMAN & LYNCH, 1988 and that the name *C. parvus* be removed from the synonymy of *C. exasperatus*.

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