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LAMPROPELTIS GETULA NIGRA (Black Kingsnake). **OPHIOPHAGY.** Ophiophagy has been commonly documented for many kingsnake (*Lampropeltis*) species. For example, Black Kingsnakes have been documented to prey mainly on species of *Nerodia* and *Regina*, but also *Agkistrodon contortrix* (Copperhead) (Tilley and Huheey 2001, *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Smokies*, 2nd edition. Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association, Gatlinburg Tennessee, 143 pp.).

Recently, we observed the predation of an *A. contortrix* by a *L. g. nigra* during an ongoing radiotelemetry study of Copperhead habitat use at the Bankhead National Forest, Alabama, USA. On 23 July 2006, we captured a large male Copperhead (snout-vent length 75 mm; total length 858 mm; mass 326 g) in a drift-fence trapping array located in a recently thinned pine-hardwood forest stand. We surgically implanted the snake with a transmitter (Model SI-2, 9 g, Holohil Systems Ltd., Carp Ontario) following procedures described in Reinert and Cundall (1982. *Copeia*. 1982:702–705). The snake was released after 48 h and relocated every three days for a total of 11 unique locations. The last visual location was on 4 September 2006 in a large stream management zone next to the thinned forest stand. For two weeks following the 4 September 2006 location, the snake was located three separate occasions; twice inside a large rockpile and once underground at the edge of a wildlife management plot. On 21 September 2006, the snake was tracked inside the base of a newly downed *Quercus alba* (White Oak) (diameter at breast height 18 cm; length 690 cm; distance from ground 25 cm), ca. 500 m from the 4 September 2006 location. The radio signal remained in the downed tree for two weeks, during which we were unable to visually confirm its status. On 5 October 2006, we detected the radio signal in the adjacent stream management zone. When approached, we found a large male Black Kingsnake (SVL 1230 mm; total length 1370 mm; mass 699 g) basking under herbaceous cover and *Fagus grandifolia* (American Beech) saplings. Radio signals emanated from the kingsnake indicating that it had consumed the Copperhead. We captured the kingsnake and brought it back to the laboratory for further observations and to retrieve the transmitter. The transmitter was palpated to the mouth and then slowly removed using tweezers. The kingsnake was returned to the point of capture after three days in captivity and behaved normally upon release.

We believe that the kingsnake predated the Copperhead prior to 21 September 2006, and sought shelter in the downed White Oak to digest the large prey. This idea is supported because the only remains of the Copperhead were a small section of ribs stuck to the transmitter surface, indicating that digestion occurred for a considerable amount of time. Our observation of snake predation not only confirms the proclivity of Black Kingsnakes for Copperheads, but also illustrates the potentials of using radiotelemetry to identify predation rates of focal species during traditional radiotelemetry studies.

Submitted by **WILLIAM B. SUTTON** (e-mail: william.sutton@mailserver.aamu.edu), **MATTHEW G. BOLUS**, and **YONG WANG**, Alabama A&M University, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences, Normal, Alabama 35762, USA.

LEIOPYTHON ALBERTISII (Northern White-Lipped Python). **BEHAVIOR.** Little is known about the diet and behavior of this species in the wild, and it has received little attention by scientists. One record on the diet of this species in the wild suggests that it primarily preys on rats (Slip and Shine 1990. *Herpetologica* 46:283–290), but it is assumed that juvenile pythons also prey on skinks (O’Shea 1996. *A Guide to the Snakes of Papua New Guinea*. Independent Publishing, Papua New Guinea, p. 80). *Leiopython albertisii* exhibits some interesting behaviors in captivity: it regularly regurgitates fur balls (Froesch 1966. *DATZ* 19:255); juveniles and sub-adults build persistent tunnel systems in the substrate (D. G. Barker, pers. comm.; pers. obs.) through which they move; and individuals undergo a dramatic physiological color change (pers. obs., see <http://leiopython.de> for details and photographs). Additionally, individuals often sleep with the head resting laterally on the body coils (pers. obs., see <http://leiopython.de> for details).

Here I report an unusual and interesting behavior repeatedly shown by two of my long-term captive female *L. albertisii* (12 and 15 years old), caught in the vicinity of Sorong, West Papua. Approximately three weeks after feeding an adult rat each and one week after defecating and regurgitating fur balls, the snakes were observed raising their head and neck (about ¼ of the body) as well as their tail (including the cloacae). The mouth was opened wide and the glottis was shut. Within seconds, the snake’s mid-body inflated, and then deflated again accompanied by flatulence-like noise and minimum cloacal outcast of a mucilaginous substance. This was repeated four and five times, respectively. It looked as though the snakes were pumping air into their stomach, and then almost immediately releasing it through the cloaca.

To my knowledge, nothing has been reported on the digestive behavior of this species. Taking into consideration that ambush predators such as large pythons, which feed infrequently, are able to down-regulate their gastrointestinal tract after finishing digestion (Ott and Secor 2007. *J. Exp. Biol.* 210:340–356), this action might be a means of clearing the gastrointestinal tract prior to down-regulation. However, feces were found in other snake species in which the gastrointestinal tract already downregulated (S. Secor, pers. comm.). To the best of my knowledge, this is the first report of gastrointestinal ventilation behavior in snakes.

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Submitted by **WULF D. SCHLEIP**, Fichtenweg 11, 53340 Meckenheim, Germany; e-mail: publication@leiopython.de.