

TUPINAMBIS MERIANAE (Tegu Lizard). **FUNGIVORY.** Tegu lizards (genus *Tupinambis*) are generalist consumers with a diet based on diverse vertebrates (fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and small mammals) and invertebrates (millipedes, arachnids, insects, and mollusks), as well as seeds, fruits, eggs, and carrion (Dessem 1985. *Copeia* 1985:245–247; Donadio and Gallardo 1984. *Rev. Mus. Ciênc. Nat. Bernardino Rivadavia* 13:117–127; Kiefer and Sazima 2002. *Amphibia-Reptilia* 23:105–108; Martuscelli and Olmos 1996. *Herpetol. Rev.* 27:21; Mercolli and Yanosky 1994. *Herpetol. J.* 4:15–19; Milstead 1961. *Copeia* 1961:493–495; Sazima and Haddad 1992. *In: Morellato (ed.), História natural da Serra do Japi*, pp. 212–236. Editora da Unicamp, Campinas, Brazil; Rivas et al. 2001. *Herpetol. Rev.* 32:108; Souza et al. 2002. *Herpetol. Rev.* 33:209). However, fungivory is unreported. Hence, we provide an observation of the tegu, *T. merianae*, feeding on mushrooms.

On 2 December 2002 around 1200, we observed a subadult (ca. 28 cm SVL) male *Tupinambis merianae* feeding on the fruiting body (mushroom) of the basidiomycete, *Macrocybe praegrans*, growing on a lawn on the campus of the Universidade Estadual Paulista, Rio Claro, São Paulo, Brazil. The lizard was seen taking a small bite atop one of three fruiting bodies available; it ate half the fruiting body (15 cm in diameter) in less than a minute. The lizard readily ingested the mushroom and showed no apparent sign that would suggest distastefulness. However, the lizard fled just after noticing the observer, which occurred after 20 sec of observation. This individual is part of a group of about a dozen free-ranging, semi-tame tegus that live on the University grounds. These lizards receive no other management beyond occasional food supplementation that consists of one-day-old chicks and bananas. Over the 14-day period during which the fruiting body of this fungus persisted, no other feeding episode was recorded, even though disappearance of more of the fruiting body implied continued consumption.

To our knowledge, among reptiles (in the historic paraphyletic sense), only tortoises of the genus *Kinixys* are known to regularly consume fungi (Hailey et al. 1997. *J. Trop. Ecol.* 13:469–474), although trace amounts of fungi are recorded in the diet of *Gopherus agassizii* (Hansen et al. 1976. *Herpetologica* 32:274–251). Thus, our observation may represent the first record of fungivory in a squamate reptile. Our observation of fungivory could reflect either atypical ingestion by a naive animal, or inclusion of previously unrecognized food item that may be difficult to identify from stomach content analysis. As no other tegus were seen feeding on this mushroom after the initial observation, the former alternative is most likely.

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