Eunectes murinus (Serpentes, Boidae): Diet

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Eunectes murinus is a semi-aquatic snake that occurs in lowlands of South America (Beebe, 1946). This species is considered euryphagic, feeding on all kinds of vertebrates and even dead animals and conspecifics (Martins and Oliveira, 1998; Rivas and Owens, 2000). Here we report the first record of the passeriform bird *Furnarius rufus* (Rufous Hornero) as a prey item of anacondas.

On 14 January 2010 at 19:40 h we captured a female *Eunectes murinus* (SVL 1500 mm, tail 219 mm, 1880 m.) at the Estação Ecológica do Jataí (21°34'755"N; 47°47'176"W), Luis Antonio municipality, São Paulo State, southeastern Brazil, in a temporary pond on an unpaved road. Prior to fixation in 10% formaldehyde, we noticed content in its stomach, corresponding to two prey items. The items were two Passeriformes. The first was an adult *Furnarius rufus* (approximately 62 m after drying excess alcohol), for which the estimated predator/prey mass ratio was 0.03. The second item was an unidentified bird.

Rivas (2000) suggests that smaller anacondas feed mainly on birds and as they grow they shift to larger prey. Given the small body size of the captured snake, our observation corroborates this hypothesis. *Furnarius rufus* is distributed from Argentina to Bolivia and is one of the most common birds in Brazil, inhabiting open natural and urban environments (Sick, 1988). Insofar as *Eunectes murinus* hunts actively by ambush and active strategies (Strüssmann, 1997), this event suggests an opportunistic case of predation of a small prey. A possible scenario for this predation was the foraging activity of *Furnarius rufus* near the pond where the snake was ambushing larger prey.

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Hylodes asper, Picinguaba, Ubatuba, SP. (Foto: M. Martins).