

NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

The Natural History Notes section is analogous to Geographic Distribution. Preferred notes should 1) focus on observations in the field, with little human intrusion; 2) represent more than the isolated documentation of developmental aberrations; and 3) possess a natural history perspective. Individual notes should, with few exceptions, concern only one species, and authors are requested to choose a keyword or short phrase which best describes the nature of their note (e.g., Reproduction, Morphology, Habitat, etc.). Use of figures to illustrate any data is encouraged, but should replace words rather than embellish them. The section's intent is to convey information rather than demonstrate prose. Articles submitted to this section will be reviewed and edited prior to acceptance.

Electronic submission of manuscripts is requested (as Microsoft Word or Rich Text format [rtf] files, as e-mail attachments). Figures can be submitted electronically as JPG files, although higher resolution TIFF or PDF files will be requested for publication. Please DO NOT send graphic files as imbedded figures within a text file. Additional information concerning preparation and submission of graphics files is available on the SSAR web site at: <http://www.ssarherps.org/HRinfo.html>. Manuscripts should be sent to the appropriate section editor: **Marc P. Hayes** (crocodilians, lizards, and *Sphenodon*; mhayesrana@aol.com); **Charles W. Painter** (amphibians; charles.painter@state.nm.us); **Andrew T. Holycross** (snakes; holycross@asu.edu); and **James Harding** (turtles; hardingj@pilot.msu.edu).

Standard format for this section is as follows: SCIENTIFIC NAME, COMMON NAME (for the United States and Canada as it appears in Crother [ed.] 2008, *Scientific and Standard English Names of Amphibians and Reptiles of North America North of Mexico*. SSAR Herpetol. Circ. 37:1–84, available from SSAR Publications Secretary, ssar@herplit.com; for Mexico as it appears in Liner 1994, *Scientific and Common Names for the Amphibians and Reptiles of Mexico in English and Spanish*. Herpetol. Circ. 23:1–113), KEYWORD. DATA on the animal. Place of deposition or intended deposition of specimen(s), and catalog number(s). Then skip a line and close with SUBMITTED BY (give name and address in full—spell out state names—no abbreviations). (NCN) should be used for common name where none is recognized. References may be briefly cited in text (refer to this issue for citation format).

Recommended citation for notes appearing in this section is: Lemos-Espinal, J., and R. E. Ballinger. 1994. *Rhyacosiredon leorae*. Size. Herpetol. Rev. 25:22.

CAUDATA – SALAMANDERS

AMBYSTOMA CALIFORNIENSE (California Tiger Salamander). **PREDATION.** *Ambystoma californiense* is an endemic species listed as threatened by the Department of the Interior (U.S. Fish Wild. Serv. 2004. Fed. Reg. 69:47212–47248) and as a species of special concern by the State of California (Jennings 2004. California Fish Game 90:161–213). Although many factors are stated for the decline of this salamander, wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*)—a game species first introduced into California in the 1920s—are suspected to eat juvenile and adult salamanders and also negatively impact salamander habitats (U.S. Fish Wild. Serv. 2003. Fed. Reg. 68:28648–28670). Here we report on the first documented incident of wild pigs negatively effecting *A. californiense* eggs.

On Blue Oak Ranch in Santa Clara County, California (USA), an early storm brought ca. 7.6 cm of rain between 7 and 9 Nov 2003, saturating the soil. The next storm delivered just over 2.5 cm of rain overnight on 14–15 Nov, causing Junction Pond (37.375556°N, 121.724444°W; elev. 599 m) to fill to a maximum depth of 33 cm in a basin ca. 4 m in diameter. On 20 Nov, we discovered 60 *A. californiense* eggs attached to the substrate of the pond, primarily on Dove Weed (*Eremocarpus setigerus*). No precipitation events occurred over the next 5 days. Humidity was quite low because of offshore winds, with high temperatures reaching almost 29°C and nighttime lows dipping to 2°C. As a result, the water level in Junction Pond dropped to ca. 15 cm, with the

diameter of the pond basin shrinking to ca. 2 m. While checking on the *A. californiense* eggs on the morning of 25 Nov, we discovered that wild pigs had used the pond basin as a wallow, crushing most of the eggs and detaching the remainder from their substrates. Those that were not crushed, eaten, or buried in the mud were frozen in the thin ice that covered the surface of the small area of remaining water. Pigs continued to wallow in Junction Pond until rains filled it completely in mid-December.

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ANURA – FROGS

ARGENTEOHYLA SIEMERSI PEDERSENI (*Rana* Tractor or *Rana* de Pedersen). **REPRODUCTION.** *Argenteohyla siemersi* is an uncommon Neotropical hylid frog listed as Endangered by IUCN (2006. Conservation International and NatureServe. Global Amphibians Assessment. <http://www.globalamphibians.org>. Accessed 01 Mar 2007). The main threat is habitat destruction caused by fires to expand/maintain pastures and pine forestry plantations. *Argenteohyla siemersi pedersenii* occurs in northwest Corrientes Province (Argentina), inhabiting the leaf axils of terrestrial *Aechmae* bromeliads in gallery forests along main river systems. Its population appears to be stable (IUCN 2006, *op. cit.*).

Reproduction in *A. siemersi pedersenii* takes place in temporary pools close to bromeliads. The larva was described by Céspedes (2000. Bol. Asoc. Herpetol. Esp. 11:75–80), who counted 1020 ova (1–1.5 mm diam) in a gravid female. Barrio (1969. Physis 26[71]:225–228) reported diurnal choruses of *A. s. siemersi*, from noon to late afternoon.

Here we provide data on clutch size and characteristics of the reproductive behavior in *Argenteohyla siemersi pedersenii*. On 28 Sept 2006, at 2330 h after heavy rains (air temp 14.5°C; water temp 17.5°C; humidity 74%), we observed several calling males and two pairs in axillary amplexus in a semi-permanent pond in the Reserva Provincial Iberá (28.68°S, 57.43°W, WGS 84; elev. 65 m), near Colonia Carlos Pellegrini, Corrientes, Argentina. We did not observe bromeliads near the pond. The males had paired vocal sacs and called from the water, floating in open spaces, or near of the edge of the pond among aquatic vegetation (Fig. 1). The vocalization occurred from 1800 h to past midnight in choruses of 3–4 males.

The next day a clutch with ca. 2464 eggs was found in the same pond. The eggs were dark at the animal pole and creamy yellow at the vegetal pole. Mean diameter was 1.73 mm (SD = 0.86, range 1.5–1.9 mm, N = 109). They were laid in gelatinous ribbons floating at the surface of the water or among aquatic vegetation (Fig. 2). Other species reproducing in the same pond were *Scinax squalirostris*, *Chaunus fernandezae*, *Pseudopaludicola falcipes*, and *Elachistocleis bicolor*.