

ORNITHOPHAGY IN *Rhinella icterica* (SPIX, 1824)ORNITOFAGIA EM *Rhinella icterica* (SPIX, 1824)Vagner Luis CAMILOTTI¹; André Felipe BARRETO-LIMA²

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ABSTRACT: In this work we report an observation of an ornithophagy event on *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus* by *Rhinella icterica* occurred in the central region of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

KEYWORDS: Ornithophagy. *Rhinella icterica*. *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*.

The yellow cururu toad, *Rhinella icterica* (SPIX, 1824) (Anura, Bufonidae, *Rhinella marina* group), occurs in central, southeastern and southern Brazil, Misiones and Corrientes, Northeastern Argentina, and Eastern Paraguay (KWET; DI-BERNARDO, 1999; SILVANO et al., 2010; FROST et al., 2011). The body length of *R. icterica* changes from 100 to 166 mm in males, and 135 to 190 mm in females (KWET; DI-BERNARDO, 1999). This species uses several kinds of habitats, from forested to open areas and it breeds in permanent or temporary ponds and streams, mainly in substantially disturbed habitats (SILVANO et al., 2010).

Bufonidae has been classified as ant-specialist family by some authors (TOFT, 1980; FLOWERS; GRAVES, 1995; ISACCH; BARG, 2002; ROSA et al., 2002) and as generalists by others (SMITH; BRAGG, 1949; EVANS; LAMPO, 1996; GRANT, 1996; FERREIRA; TEIXEIRA, 2009; BATISTA et al., 2011). Although some *Rhinella* species are opportunistic predators, including small vertebrates in their diet (ZUG; ZUG, 1979; MATTISON, 1994), Sabagh and Carvalho-e-Silva (2008) found only arthropods in the diet of *R. icterica* in southeastern Brazil.

During a field expedition on March 2010 in the central region (29°41'S, 53°48'W) of the State

of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, we observed an adult of *R. icterica* predated an adult of yellow-chinned Spinetail, *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus* (GMELIN, 1778) (posicionamento taxonômico). The size of *C. cinnamomeus* changes from 150 to 168 mm, and weigh from 15 to 16.5 g (BELTON, 1994; SICK, 1997). This bird is a common resident breeder of marches and edges of mangrove swamps (BELTON, 1994; SICK, 1997).

The predation event occurred at the margin of a pond covered by high grasses and shrubs. An adult bird with a broken wing was walking on the ground when, opportunistically, *R. icterica* jumped on and swallowed it. Although the bird injury could be allowed the predation event, this species also forage on or next to the ground, creating opportunity for terrestrial and opportunistic predators as *R. icterica*. There are records of *Rhinella marina* predation on eggs and nestlings of ground-nesting birds (BOLAND, 2004). Finally, we do not know any similar case reported before in literature about ornithophagy in *R. icterica*.

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RESUMO: Reportamos um evento de ornitofagia por *Rhinella icterica* sobre *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus* ocorrido em 2010, na região central do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul (29°41'S, 53°48'W), Brasil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ornitofagia. *Rhinella icterica*. *Certhiaxis cinnamomeus*.

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