

Only two previous records of predation on various species of *Bradypodion* by *Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia* could be found. These are *B. ventrale* (Haagner and Branch 1993) and *B. dracomontanum* (Raw 1993).

Due to the scarcity of the event which we observed, we decided to publish this note formally instead of adding it to the Facebook group “Predation Records – Reptiles and Frogs (Sub-Saharan Africa)”. The authors are fully aware that Facebook groups, such as the one named above, are of great importance; however, we do also feel that many people do not have access to such platforms. Consequently, observations which lie outside the norm should be officially published in a reputable source.

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LAMPROPHIIDAE: APARALLACTINAE

Aparallactus modestus ubangensis
(Boulenger, 1897)
Ubangi Centipede-eater

REPRODUCTION

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The Western Forest Centipede-eater, *Aparallactus modestus*, is a small burrowing snake from Western and Central Africa (Wallach 2014; Spawls et al. 2018). Recent phylogenetic work on the Aparallactinae reveals that *A. modestus* is a species complex



Figure 1: μ CT tomogram of the holotype of *Aparallactus modestus ubangensis* (BE-RMCA-VERT-R.12) showing four eggs in situ. Scale bar represents one centimetre.

with two major lineages: a Western African lineage (*A. m. modestus*) and a Central African lineage (*A. m. ubangensis*) (Portillo et al. 2018). So far only two specimens of *A. modestus* have been identified as gravid females. The first (MCZ 48436; snout-vent length 435 mm), collected in Mabira Forest, Uganda (0°23'54"N 33°0'59"E) on 13 November 1938, contained seven eggs measuring about 25 x 8 mm (Loveridge 1942, 1944). The second (MCZ R-7847), collected in Kribi, Cameroon (02°56'06"N 09°54'36"E, collecting date unknown)—identified in 1910 by Thomas Barbour as *Polemon barthii* (according to the Museum of Comparative Zoology's catalogue, scanned and made available online by Ernst Mayr Library), but later re-identified as *A. modestus* by Loveridge (1944)—also contained seven eggs, measuring 20 x 5 mm (Loveridge 1944).

The holotype of *Aparallactus modestus*

ubangensis (BE-RMCA-VERT-R.12) from Zongo near the Ubangi Rapids, Democratic Republic of the Congo (4°20'36"N 18°35'34"E), was described by Boulenger (1897) as *A. ubangensis*. We digitised this specimen, a female with a snout-vent length of 335 mm, using high resolution x-ray computed tomography (Fig. 1; RX EasyTom 150, 110 kV, 30 W, 35.24 μ m voxel size; segmentation and rendering done using Dragonfly software version 4.0 for Windows [Object Research Systems Inc., Montreal, Canada, 2019; software available at <http://www.theobjects.com/dragonfly>]). From the 3D rendering of the reconstructed slices it was evident that she contained four eggs with dimensions ranging from 22.4–29.5 x 5.3–5.8 mm. The eggs were measured in Dragonfly ORS using the measuring tool.

As mentioned above, until now the only reproductive data available for *A. modes-*

tus was derived from two gravid females. The specimen from Cameroon (Loveridge 1944) was found within the geographical range of *A. m. modestus* according to the map in Portillo et al. (2018). The Uganda specimen (Loveridge 1942, 1944) was found east of the eastern-most confirmed record of *Aparallactus modestus ubangensis* according to Portillo et al. (2018), and its identity should therefore be re-evaluated. Our clutch size report thus represents the second, if not the first, for this eastern subspecies. It also documents a much smaller clutch size than previously recorded for *A. modestus*.

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