



Predation on Earthworms (*Oligochaeta*) by Cuban Brown Anoles, *Anolis sagrei* (Squamata: Dactyloidae)

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Although frugivory (e.g., Simmon et al. 2005; Fläschendräger and Wijffels 2009) and nectarivory (e.g., Colón 2010; Cajigas-Gandia et al. 2018) have been reported, anoles usually prey on insects and other arthropods (e.g., arachnids, terrestrial isopods, millipedes, centipedes) and occasionally consume mollusks and small vertebrates, including congeners and conspecifics (e.g., Henderson and Powell 2009 and references therein; Rodríguez-Cabrera and Fong 2015). Among West Indian species, the Hispaniolan Stout Anole (*Anolis cybotes*), Puerto Rican Crested Anole (*A. cristatellus*), Puerto Rican Giant Anole (*A. cuvieri*), Puerto Rican Yellow-chinned Anole (*A. gundlachi*), and Dominica Anole (*A. oculatus*) are known to prey on earthworms (Henderson and Powell 2009 and references therein).

During the summer of 2018, we observed three incidents of Cuban Brown Anoles (*A. sagrei*) preying on earthworms in the backyard of a residence in San Antonio de los Baños (22°53'36.49"N, 82°30'35.21"W; 75 m a.s.l.), Artemisa Province, Cuba. The first observation at 1035 h on 13 July

involved an adult male, perched on a stone 20 cm above the substrate, consuming an earthworm (Fig. 1A).

A second observation at 1527 h on 8 August involved an adult female (SVL approx. 50 mm) on the ground eating an earthworm nearly 80 mm in length. When the lizard grasped it, it broke in two parts. The lizard then ate the first part and later the other one. Complete consumption lasted about 10 min.

The last observation was at 1236 h on 1 September and likely involved the same female observed in August. On this occasion, the lizard, perched on the rim of a metallic potsherd 23 cm above the substrate, was eating an earthworm 47 mm in length and 57 mm in diameter (Fig. 1B). Consumption lasted about 15 min.

Because *A. sagrei* is a definitive sit-and-wait predator (e.g., Schwartz and Henderson 1991; Rodríguez-Schettino 2003), the earthworms probably were captured above the ground, perhaps forced to the surface by water saturating the soil. Moreover, three observed cases in the span of a month and a half suggest that earthworms might be relatively common

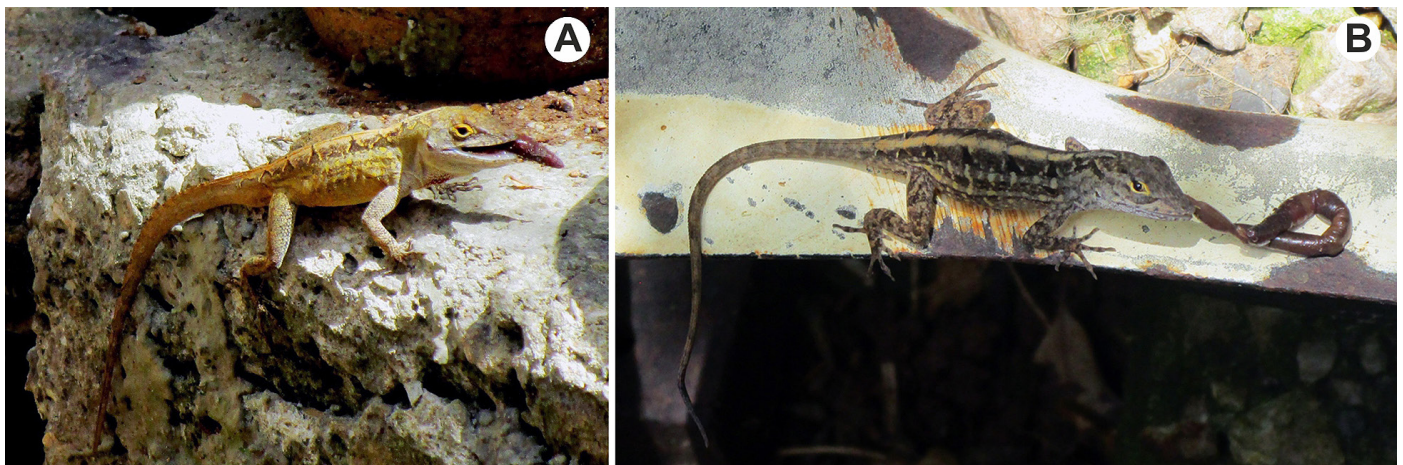


Fig. 1. Predation on earthworms by Cuban Brown Anoles (*Anolis sagrei*) in a residential backyard in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa Province, Cuba on 13 July 2018 (A) and 1 September 2018 (B). Photographs by Luis F. de Armas.

prey of *A. sagrei*. Certainly, earthworms, which are rich in lipids and proteins (e.g., Brusca and Brusca 2003), represent a highly nutritious resource for lizards.

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