REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Coprophagy and Cannibalism in the Cuban Green Anole, *Anolis porcatus* Gray 1840 (Squamata: Dactyloidae)

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Coprophagy in herbivorous reptiles, such as many iguanids, has been interpreted as a mechanism for reinforcing the intestinal microflora (Burghardt and Rand 1985), but it might also serve as a means for some parasitic nematodes to reach their hosts (Goldberg et al. 1995; Abarca 2006).

The very common and widely distributed Cuban Green Anole (*Anolis porcatus* Gray 1841) is a facultative omnivore that consumes a considerable diversity of food (Armas 2020 and references therein), but coprophagy has not been recorded for this or other species of anoles. At 1205 h on 27 July 2020, in a home terrace located in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa Province, Cuba (22.89°N, 82.50°W; 70 m asl), I observed a large male *Anolis porcatus* (SVL ~65 mm) on the floor consuming an unidentified food item. When examined more closely, I determined without a doubt that the item was fresh feces (not more than 24-hours old) of a House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). Neither flies nor ants were present, so the anole was not eating insects attracted to the feces. At 1126 h on 31 October 2020 in the same location, I observed a second instance of coprophagy involving two adult Cuban Green Anoles, a male and a female, consuming very fresh feces of a House Sparrow (Fig. 1). Coprophagy appears to be rare in anoles but these observations suggest that it, like nectivory, might occur more frequently than previously assumed.

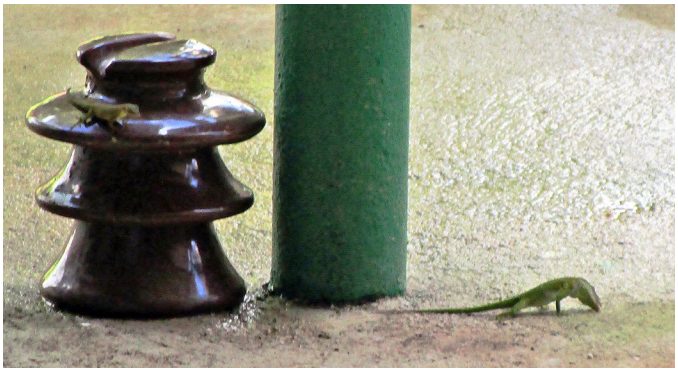

Fig. 1. An adult male Cuban Green Anole (*Anolis porcatus*) consuming the fresh feces of a House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) in a residential backyard in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa Province, Cuba. The female visible to the left of the male later ate some of the same fecal mass. Photograph by the author.

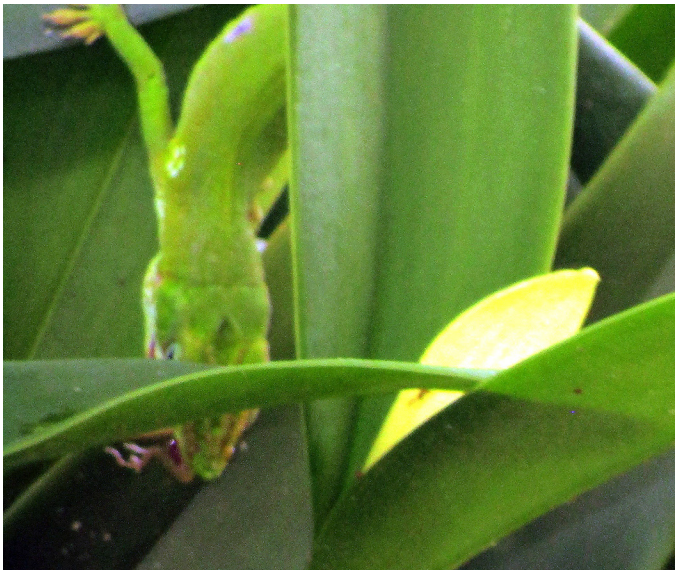

Fig. 2. An adult male Cuban Green Anole (*Anolis porcatus*) consuming a small conspecific in a residential backyard in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa Province, Cuba. Photograph by the author.

The only record of cannibalism in *A. porcatus* was a report of an adult male eating a hatchling as it emerged from an egg (G. Alayón García in Socarrás et al. 1988). At 1420 h on 11 October 2020, I observed a large male (SVL ~65 mm) consuming a juvenile conspecific (SVL ~22 mm) on leaves of orchid plants 1.2 m above the ground in the yard at the same location described above (Fig. 2). As suggested by Rodríguez Schettino et al. (1999), cannibalism in *A. porcatus* (and likely other species of anoles) may be more common than is generally supposed.

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