



Attempted Predation of a Large Oriental Garden Lizard, *Calotes versicolor* (Daudin 1802), by a Common Catsnake, *Boiga trigonata* (Schneider 1802)

Reyhan Motiwala¹, Pramod Aher¹, Mandar Sawant², and Arvind Shahare³

¹Kalyan, Maharashtra, India (iamreyhan@gmail.com [corresponding author], prehahe4276@gmail.com)

²Ambarnath, Maharashtra, India (sawantmandar4812@gmail.com)

³Nagpur, Maharashtra, India (arvindshahare143@gmail.com)

Nearly all snakes swallow their prey whole, which is possible due to a series of adaptive evolutionary changes that facilitate the ingestion of large prey (e.g., Gans 1961; Shine 1991; Shine and Wall 2008; Siers et al. 2018). Common Catsnakes (*Boiga trigonata*) (Fig. 1), known locally as Manjrya (= cat), are nocturnally active, mildly venomous, and typically consume lizards, small birds, and mice (Whitaker and Captain 2008).

At 1640 h on 17 November 2021 near Kuhi, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India (20.0191°N, 79.3674°E), we encountered a dead Common Catsnake (*Boiga trigonata*) with the legs of an Oriental Garden Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*) protruding from its venter (Fig. 2). The snake had evidently ingested the proportionately large lizard but was unable to digest it. Because the lizard had only recently been ingested (indicated by the state of digestion), putrefaction was not responsible

for the penetration of the snake’s body by the lizard’s limbs. Consequently, we assume that the prey was simply too large for the snake’s digestive system to handle.

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Fig. 1. A Common Catsnake (*Boiga trigonata*) from Kalyan, Thane District, Maharashtra, India (left), and a dead Common Catsnake that had ingested a proportionately large Oriental Garden Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*), two limbs of which were protruding through the snake’s body. Photographs by Reyhan Motiwala (left) and Arvind Shahare (right).

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