



Predation by a Giant Spotted Gecko, *Hemidactylus maculatus* Duméril and Bibron 1836, on an Indian Violet Tarantula, *Chilobrachys fimbriatus* Pocock 1899

Omkar Nar¹, Sagar Mahajan^{1,2}, Rohan Bhagat^{1,3}, and Prathamesh Joshi^{1,4}

¹304, Tirupati Darshan, Balaji Complex, Sagarli, Dombivli (E) 421203, Maharashtra, India (<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3497-8114>) (omkar.nar97@gmail.com [corresponding author])

²Conservation Education Centre, Bombay Natural History Society, General Arun Kumar Vaidya Road, Near Film City, Goregaon (E), Mumbai-400063, India (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1530-5232>) (s.mahajan@bnhs.org)

³Conservation Department, Bombay Natural History Society, Hornbill House, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Lion Gate, Fort, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400001, India (<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6598-3173>) (r.bhagat@bnhs.org)

⁴Natural History Collection Department, Bombay Natural History Society, Hornbill House, Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Lion Gate, Fort, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400001, India (<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4910-0067>) (p.joshi@bnhs.org)

The Giant Spotted Gecko, *Hemidactylus maculatus* Duméril and Bibron 1936, is one of the largest nocturnal geckos (SVL to 122 mm) on the Indian Subcontinent (Sharma 2002). This rock-dwelling lizard ranges throughout the Western and Eastern Ghats (Tikader and Sharma 1992; Agarwal et al. 2011; Srinivasulu et al. 2014). This and other large closely related congeners are known to feed on insects, other geckos (including conspecifics and sympatric congeners), agamid lizards, skinks, blindsnakes, and small birds and mammals (Daniel 2002; Tikader and Sharma 1992; Karunarathna and Amarasinghe 2011; Patel et al. 2014).

At about 2300 h on 9 August 2021, we encountered a Giant Spotted Gecko (total length ~18–20 cm) holding an Indian Violet Tarantula (*Chilobrachys fimbriatus*) by the cephalothorax (Fig. 1) on a wall about 3 m above the ground on the campus of the Conservation Education Centre of the Bombay Natural History Society (CEC-BNHS), Mumbai, India. We left the site to avoid disturbing the gecko. When we returned after about 30 min, we found no remains of the tarantula and concluded that the gecko had completely ingested it. Although tarantulas are known to feed on geckos (Reyes-Olivares et al. 2020), to the best of our knowledge, this is the first record of a Giant Spotted Gecko feeding on a tarantula.



Fig. 1. A Giant Spotted Gecko (*Hemidactylus maculatus*) feeding on an Indian Violet Tarantula (*Chilobrachys fimbriatus*) on the campus of the Conservation Education Centre of the Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, India. Photograph by Rohan Bhagat.

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