



Predation on Zaw’s Wolfsnake (*Lycodon zawi*) by a Malaysian Cherry Red Centipede (*Scolopendra dehaani*)

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Zaw’s Wolfsnake (*Lycodon zawi*) has been recorded from the northeastern states of India (Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura), Myanmar, and Bangladesh (Uetz et al. 2022). These snakes have a dark brown dorsum with white transverse bands, a cream-colored venter, and 17 dorsal scale rows at midbody (Slowinski et al. 2001). The species is found in low- to mid-elevation moist tropical evergreen to semi-evergreen forests at elevations lower than 500 m in India and Myanmar (Slowinski et al. 2001).

Very little is known about the prey and predators of the species. Slowinski et al. (2001) mentioned feeding on skinks (likely *Sphenomorphus maculatus*) and geckos (*Hemidactylus frenatus* and *H. garnotii*) in captivity. However, no report documents predation on *L. zawi*.

Herein we report predation on *L. zawi* by an invertebrate. At 2210 h on 23 June 2022, we encountered a Malaysian Cherry Red Centipede (*Scolopendra dehaani*) about 200 mm in length preying on a *L. zawi* about 350 mm in length in a residential area of Narengi in Guwahati, Assam, India (26.1764 N, 91.8340 E). By 2345 h, the centipede escaped after devouring much of the snake’s body (Fig. 1).

Centipedes are known to prey on insects, amphibians,

reptiles, small birds, bats, and rodents (e.g., Vazifdar et al. 2021). In particular, species of *Scolopendra* are ferocious predators that use a neurotoxic venom and strong jaws to immobilize and kill their prey (Hodge and Goodyear 2021). Vazifdar et al. (2021) recorded a *S. dehaani* preying on an Andaman Wolfsnake (*Lycodon hypsirhinooides*) from Havelock Island, Andaman Islands, India. To our knowledge, this is the first record of *S. dehaani* preying on *L. zawi* and the second documented record of *S. dehaani* preying on a species of *Lycodon*.

Literature Cited

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Figure 1. A Malaysian Cherry Red Centipede (*Scolopendra dehaani*) feeding on Zaw’s Wolfsnake (*Lycodon zawi*) (A), the remains of the *L. zawi* where the *S. dehaani* was feeding (B), and (C) the recovered carcass of the *L. zawi* showing the portion of the mid body the *S. dehaani* fed on. Photographs by Arnab Deb.