



A Common Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*) Feeding on a Saw-scaled Viper (*Echis carinatus*)

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The Common Krait, *Bungarus caeruleus* (Schneider 1801), is one of the most widespread and medically important venomous snakes in southern Asia (Whitaker and Captain 2004). They are known to scavenge dead snakes and lizards, even though their primary prey consists of lizards, frogs, rodents, and sometimes birds (Mohapatra 2011; Deshmukh et al. 2016; Debata 2017; Pandey et al. 2020). In regard to snakes, Common Kraits have been reported feeding on a Banded Racer (*Argyrogena fasciolata*), Whitaker’s Boa (*Eryx whitakeri*), Streaked Kukri (*Oligodon taeniolatus*), and Common Sandboa (*Eryx conicus*), and cannibalism is known to occur (Smith 1913; Dattatri 1984; Chowdhury and Chaudhuri 2017; Mohalik et al. 2019; Sahoo and Sahoo 2020; Yadav and Shinde 2021; Kulkarni and Gurav 2022).

At approximately 0020 h on 5 September 2022, in Ekta Nagar, Gujarat, India (21.874033 N, 73.697403 E), I observed at a distance an Indian Eagle Owl (*Bubo bengalensis*) on the road trying to catch an unidentified snake (Fig. 1). A car drove by and the owl took flight and perched on a street-light. I approached the snake, which was a Common Krait (total length ~30–35 cm) feeding on a Saw-scaled Viper, *Echis carinatus* (Schneider 1801) (Fig. 2). I was unable to accurately measure the *E. carinatus* because only half of its body was intact. After 20 minutes, the krait had ingested the viper. This is the first report of *B. caeruleus* feeding on an *E. carinatus*.

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Figure 1. An Indian Eagle Owl (*Bubo bengalensis*) trying to catch a snake on the road. Photograph by R Patel.



Figure 2. A Common Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*) feeding on a Saw-scaled Viper (*Echis carinatus*). Photograph by R Patel.