



Predation on a Gecko (*Hemidactylus* sp.) by a Common Treefrog (*Polypedates maculatus*) in Kataragama, Sri Lanka

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Anurans have a diverse diet that includes a broad range of prey, including arthropods and even small vertebrates such as other amphibians (Vitt and Caldwell 2009). The majority of frogs and toads are opportunistic, consuming whatever prey is available and capable of being ingested (Vitt and Caldwell 2009).

The Common Treefrog (*Polypedates maculatus*) is abundant in many South Asian countries, including India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, and Bangladesh (Pankaj 2020). In India, it is found throughout peninsular India except in Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan (Daniel 2002). This adaptable species is known for its ability to thrive in diverse habitats, ranging from forests and scrublands to rainforests and even human settlements (pers. obs.).

At 1748 h on 17 April 2018 on Leopard Trails Yala National Park near Kataragama, Sri Lanka, VT observed an adult *P. maculatus* in the process of swallowing a gecko (*Hemidactylus* sp.) (Fig. 1). The frog had already ingested roughly half of the gecko's body, with only the hindlimbs and tail protruding. Remarkably, the gecko was alive and was

moving its tail. Eventually, the frog succeeded in consuming the entire gecko.

A comparable observation was reported by Supekar and Kasambe (2020) at the Conservation Centre of Education in Mumbai, India, suggesting that the consumption of geckos by *P. maculatus* might not be an isolated incident. Although data concerning their dietary habits are sparse (Kanamadi et al. 1993; Lillywhite et al. 1997, 1998), these frogs are generally characterized as opportunistic feeders (Wells 2007) and are frequently observed preying on insects and small invertebrates. These instances of *P. maculatus* consuming relatively larger prey, such as geckos, expands our knowledge of their dietary preferences and capabilities.

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Figure 1. A Common Treefrog (*Polypedates maculatus*) ingesting a gecko (*Hemidactylus* sp.) in Kataragama, Sri Lanka. Photograph by Varun Taneja.