



A New Item in the Diet of the Black-and-White Tegu, *Salvator merianae* (Squamata: Teiidae)

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The Black-and-White Tegu (*Salvator merianae* Duméril and Bibron 1839), one of the largest Brazilian lizards, has an extensive geographic distribution in southern South America, including most of Brazil (Costa and Bérnils 2018; Uetz et al. 2023). As generalist omnivores, these lizards feed on a wide variety of animals and plants (Diniz et al. 2021).

At about 1515 h on 24 December 2023, we found a young *S. merianae* (SVL = 410 mm) dead on a rural road in the Municipality of Tiradentes, an ecotone region between Atlantic Forest and Cerrado, Minas Gerais, Brazil (21.12795, -44.14781) (Fig. 1). Viscera and some stomach contents,

including Piracicaba Tree (*Nectandra* cf. *megapotamica*, Lauraceae) fruits, were expelled through the mouth. The bowels also were evacuated and partially digested fruits and seeds were present in the feces.

The lizard probably had been feeding below a Piracicaba Tree about 10 m from the roadkill. When initially observed, two Crested Caracaras (*Caracara plancus*) were feeding on the carcass and had consumed almost all of its tail (Fig. 2). Although Black-and-White Tegus are known to consume a wide variety of fruits and seeds, this is the first report of *S. merianae* feeding on fruits of *Nectandra* spp. (Paixão and

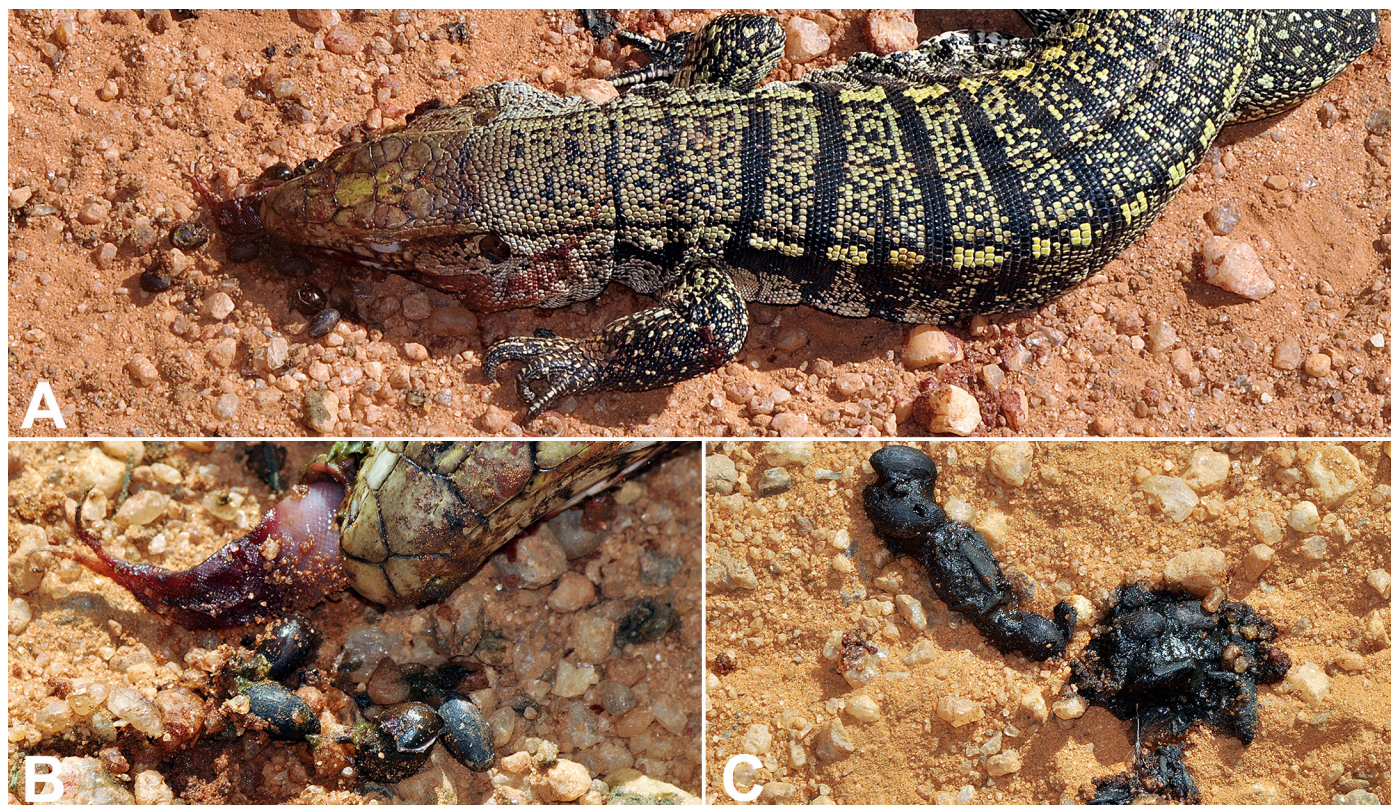


Figure 1. A Black-and-White Tegu (*Salvator merianae*) road-killed in Tiradentes, Minas Gerais, Brazil, with Piracicaba Tree (*Nectandra* cf. *megapotamica*) fruits expelled from its mouth (A–B) and fruits and seeds in the feces (C). Photographs by G.C.S. Oliveira.



Figure 2. The tail of the road-killed Black-and-White Tegu (*Salvator merianae*) partially consumed by Crested Caracaras (*Caracara plancus*). Photography by G.C.S. Oliveira.

Venticinque 2020; Diniz et al. 2021) and reinforces its potential role as a seed disperser (Castro and Galetti 2004).

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