REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Successful Predation by a California Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*) on a Desert Rosy Boa (*Lichanura trivirgata*)

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Based on a comprehensive review by Wiseman et al. (2019), the diet of the California Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*) includes mammals, snakes, lizards, birds, and amphibians. No published records exist of *Lampropeltis californiae* eating any member of the snake family Boidae (family Charinidae of some authors; see Reynolds and Henderson 2018). However, Wiseman et al. (2019) reported a *Lampropeltis californiae* that was observed attacking but failing to eat a Coastal Rosy Boa (*Lichanura orcutti*) that was in a tight defensive coil. They speculated that this defensive behavior might have prevented the boa from being ingested by the kingsnake. We herein report the first case of successful predation by *Lampropeltis californiae* on a Desert Rosy Boa (*Lichanura trivirgata*).

At 1250 h on 14 April 2022, CAS found an adult female banded-morph California Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*) (Stevens [= "chancetologist"] 2022a; Fig. 1) crossing a sandy driveway in an oceanfront residential neighborhood (24.09342, -109.99361; elev. 15 m asl) in northern El Sargento, Municipio de La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico. Approximately 10 minutes later, the kingsnake began to regurgitate a large food bolus that proved to be a poorly digested young adult *Lichanura trivirgata* (Stevens [= "chancetologist"] 2022b; Fig. 1). We confirmed the identification of the boa based on three features: (1) reduced ventral scales, (2) blunt tail, and (3) longitudinally striped color pattern. Although we cannot rule out that the boa was scavenged, our observation suggests that the defensive coiling behavior of *Lichanura* is not universally effective at preventing ingestion by California Kingsnakes.

Literature Cited

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Figure 1. A partially digested Desert Rosy Boa (*Lichanura trivirgata*) (left) regurgitated by an adult female California Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*) (right) in Baja California Sur, Mexico (images not to scale). Photographs by Chance A. Stevens.

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