



Notes on the Diet of the Cuban Giant Blue Anole, *Anolis equestris cyaneus* (Squamata: Dactyloidae)

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Cuban Giant Blue Anoles (*Anolis equestris cyaneus* Garrido and Estrada 2001) (SVL to 165 mm) have a blue, occasionally brown dorsum and sides, with a profusion of yellow scales that form vague crossbands on the body, limbs, and tail (Garrido et al. 2001). The venter is yellow; the top of the head, nape, and loreals bear a profusion of white dots; lateral stripes extend from the snout and pass below the eyes and across the ears before ending on the sides of the neck; prominent black-bordered axillary bars cross the shoulders; and the gular fold is generally pale pink, almost whitish.

The range of *Anolis equestris cyaneus* is restricted to Cayo Coco, Archipiélago de Sabana-Camagüey, off the northern

coast of Cuba (Garrido et al. 2001), where it occurs in coastal microphyllous evergreen forest and xeromorphic shrubland, particularly in less anthropogenically altered areas (Martínez-Llanes, pers. comm.). Workers at the Ecological Reserve “Centro Oeste Cayo Coco,” which covers 92% of the key (Zulueta et al. 2022), are studying this anole as part of a program focusing on the biodiversity of this protected area.

Due to their large size, anoles of the “*equestris* complex” have exceedingly diverse diets (Schwartz and Henderson 1991; Henderson and Powell 2009). Although other subspecies have been subjects of ecological studies (e.g., Rodríguez-Schettino et al. 2013; Rodríguez-Batista 2014; Torres-López



Figure 1. Maidenberry (*Crossopetalum rhacoma*) tree with fruit (left) and a Cuban Giant Blue Anole (*Anolis equestris cyaneus*) with Maidenberry fruits in its mouth. Photographs by Odey Martínez Llanes.



Figure 2. A Cuban Giant Blue Anole (*Anolis equestris cyaneus*) ingesting a beetle (Coleoptera) larva. Photographs by Odey Martínez Llanes.

et al. 2017), natural history data for *A. e. cyaneus* are largely lacking. We herein provide three new dietary records for this anole.

At 1045 h on 15 August 2023, we observed an adult male (SVL 159 mm) 2.1 m above the ground ingesting mature Maidenberry fruits (Fig. 1). When we captured it, intact fruits were still evident in its mouth (Fig. 1).

At 1103 h on 4 October 2023, we encountered an adult of undetermined sex ingesting a large coleopteran larva (Fig. 2) in the branches of a Coastal Ateje (*Bourreria succulenta*). We were unable to capture the lizard and definitively identify its prey. Shortly after taking photographs, we lost sight of it.

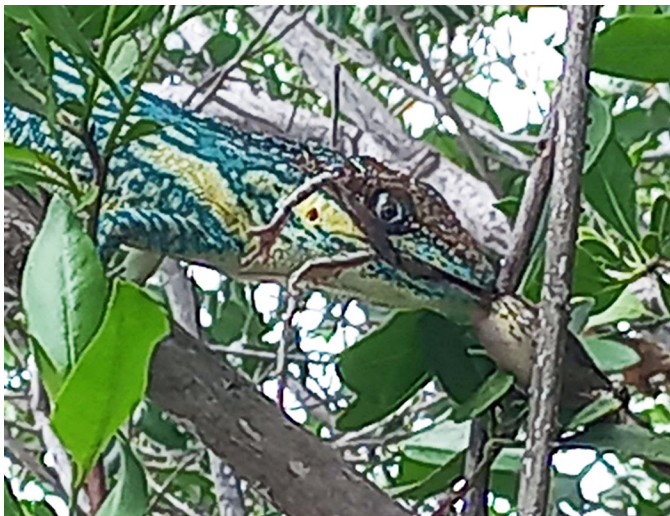


Figure 3. A Cuban Giant Blue Anole (*Anolis equestris cyaneus*) ingesting a Cuban Treefrog (*Osteophilus septentrionalis*). Photograph by Odey Martínez Llanes.

At 1033 h on 7 February 2024 we observed an adult male 3.5 m above the ground in a Gumbo-limbo Tree (*Bursera simaruba*), known locally as an Almácigo tree, preying on a Cuban Treefrog (*Osteophilus septentrionalis*) (probably an adult female) (Fig. 3). The lizard had grasped the frog by the abdomen and hindlimbs of the frog. We lost sight of the lizard before we were able to determine if it ingested its prey.

Acknowledgements

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