



# A Flat-tailed House Gecko (*Hemidactylus platyurus*) Preying on a Lesser Brown Scorpion (*Isometrus maculatus*)

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Flat-tailed House Geckos (*Hemidactylus platyurus*) generally are thought to be insectivorous but actually are opportunistic omnivores (Weterings 2017). Like other house geckos, this species often lives in close association with humans and is known to forage for insects attracted to artificial lights (e.g., Perry et al. 2008). Flat-tailed House Geckos in particular take mostly soft-bodied insects, possibly due to their ease of digestion and energy efficiency, and apparently avoid harder-bodied prey like Coleoptera and Heteroptera (Tkaczenko et al. 2014).

At 2050 h on 18 August 2024, we observed a *Hemidactylus platyurus* preying on a Lesser Brown Scorpion (*Isometrus maculatus*) in the Geetanagar area of Guwahati, Assam, India (26.174242, 91.800523) (Fig. 1). Scorpions are not part of the documented diet of *H. platyurus*, reinforcing the notion that these geckos are opportunistic predators capable of exploiting a wide range of prey types.

Although predation of scorpions by geckos has not been widely reported, instances of geckos preying on scorpions or other potentially dangerous arthropods have been documented for species of similar size. For example, *Geckolepis*

*maculata* (Glaw et al. 2002), *Hemidactylus mabouia* (de Albuquerque 2012), and *Aristelliger georgeensis* (White et al. 2017) are known to prey on scorpions. Additionally, geckos such as *Ptyodactylus* spp. demonstrate tolerance to scorpion venom and predatory behavior toward scorpions (Zlotkin et al. 2003), suggesting that geckos, possibly including *H. platyurus*, could possess behavioral or physiological adaptations that allow them to prey on scorpions. Interestingly, geckos are not only predators of scorpions but can also be their prey (Bauer 1990; Nicolau et al. 2022), indicative of a complex predator-prey dynamic.

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**Figure 1.** A Flat-tailed House Gecko (*Hemidactylus platyurus*) feeding on a Lesser Brown Scorpion (*Isometrus maculatus*) in Guwahati, Assam, India. Photograph by Pranjal Swargiary.

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