



# First Record of Predation on a Red-tailed Coralsnake (*Micrurus mipartitus*) by an Antioquian Coralsnake (*Micrurus dumerilii antioquiensis*)

Felipe Barrera-Ocampo<sup>1</sup> and Ronald A. Díaz-Flórez<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Grupo Herpetológico de Antioquia (GHA), Instituto de Biología, Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia (felipe.barrerao@udea.edu.co [corresponding author])

<sup>2</sup>Independent researcher, Fómeque, Cundinamarca, Colombia (ronalddias\_10@hotmail.com)

The Capuchin Coralsnake (*Micrurus dumerilii*) ranges from northwestern Venezuela through northern and central Colombia to the Pacific Coast from southeastern Panama to northern Ecuador (Campbell and Lamar 2004), where it occurs in lowlands and montane forests at elevations of 0–2,600 m asl (Roze 1996). The Antioquian Coralsnake (*Micrurus d. antioquiensis*) is endemic to Colombia, where it ranges from the Cauca Valley at the end of the Central Cordillera to the Middle Magdalena Valley at the western end of the Eastern Cordillera (Schmidt 1955; Campbell and Lamar 2004). The natural history of *M. d. antioquiensis* has been poorly studied, and only one instance of predation (on a Thompson’s Caecilian, *Caecilia thompsoni*) has been documented (Herrera-Lopera et al. 2018). However, other subspecies of *M. dumerilii* are known to eat snakes (Vera-Pérez et al. 2019), and small vertebrates such as swamp eels, lizards (Roze 1996), and caecilians (Fernández-Roldán and Gómez-Sánchez 2021).

The Red-tailed Coralsnake (*Micrurus mipartitus*) ranges from northern and northwestern Venezuela through northern and central Colombia to eastern Panama and south along the Pacific slope (including Gorgona Island) into western Ecuador and northern Peru at elevations from sea level to 2,700 m asl; in addition, a puzzling record exists from the Amazon Basin of Rondônia, Brazil (Roze 1996; Campbell and Lamar 2004).

At 1530 h on 3 September 2022, on a road in the municipality of Nariño, Colombia (5.645139°N, 75.199333°W, WGS 84; 1,737 m elev.), an adult female *Micrurus dumerilii antioquiensis* was encountered while ingesting a juvenile *Micrurus mipartitus* headfirst (Fig. 1). The snakes were moved to the side of the road and observed for about 5 minutes.

No specimens were collected, the event was documented only with photographs.

Closely related *Micrurus dumerilii* and *M. mipartitus* are sympatric throughout almost all of their ranges (Campbell and Lamar 2004) and are ecologically similar (Vera-Pérez et al. 2019). The only known predators of *M. mipartitus* are birds (Ayerbe et al. 1990), but mammals (Gómez-Martínez et al. 2008; Carrillo and Fuller 2018), frogs (Campbell and Lamar 2004), and other snakes (Zúñiga-Baos and Vera-Pérez



**Fig 1.** An adult female Antioquian Coralsnake (*Micrurus dumerilii antioquiensis*) ingesting a juvenile Red-tailed Coralsnake (*Micrurus mipartitus*) in Nariño, Antioquia, Colombia. Photograph by José Ramiro Lopéz.

2020) are known predators of coralsnakes. Reports of predation by coralsnakes on congeners, which Roze (1996) called interspecific cannibalism, are rare, with records limited to *M. diutius* feeding on *M. circinalis*, *M. obscurus* feeding on *M. a. annellatus* (Roze 1996), and *M. albicinctus* feeding on *M. hemprichii* (Masseli et al. 2018). In this note, we report the first record of predation of *Micrurus dumerilii* on another coralsnake, which is also the first record of congeneric predation in coralsnakes in Colombia.

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