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In 2005, Alex De Verteuil, Reginald Potter, Stephen Broadbridge and myself were filming frogs along the Exchange Road between Waterloo and Couva (grid ref: 667800E- 1158300N) when we observed a frog, *Rhinella beebei*, Beebe's toad, being preyed upon by a spider. Heavy rainfall earlier in the day had provoked choruses of frogs including *R. beebei* alongside *Dendropsophus microcephalus misera*, *Rhinella marina* and *Scinax ruber* in this location. The habitat was the edge of a grassy ditch, bordering a narrow road surrounded by abandoned sugar cane fields. The ditch was choked with grasses and held standing water. At the time, we believed the spider to be a wolf spider but were unable to confirm the identification.

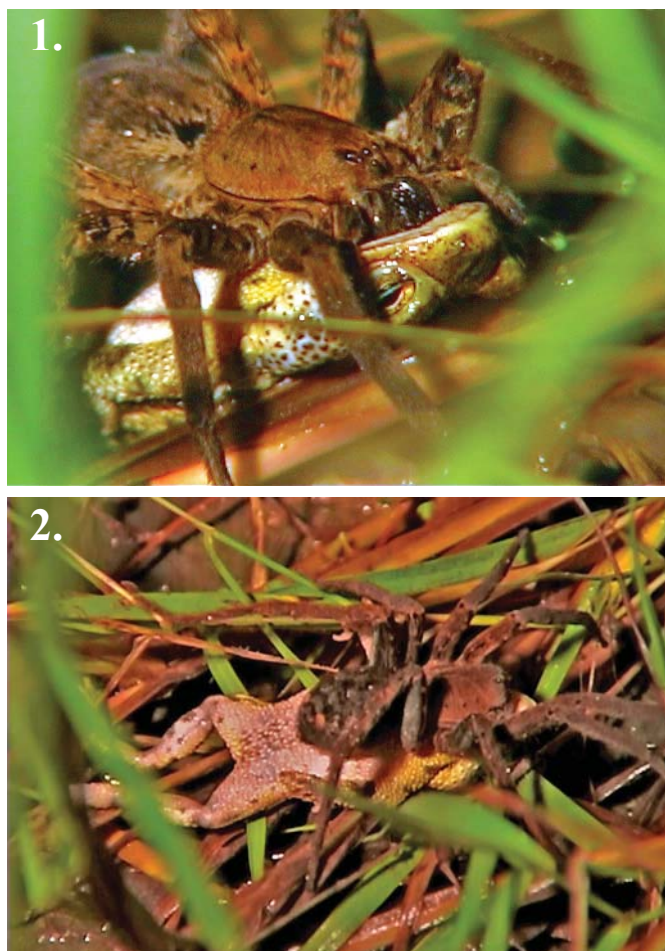
In this volume of Living World, two Nature Notes were submitted which describe predation by the giant fishing spider *Ancylometes bogotensis* (Keyserling 1877) of the family Ctenidae (tropical wolf spiders). Deacon *et al.* (2015) observed this spider preying on a killifish *Anablepsoides hartii* (= *Rivulus hartii*) when it jumped out of the water to escape pursuit by the observer. Subsequently, at the Aripo Savannas, Bhukal *et al.* (2015) observed several individuals of this same species feeding on the freshwater crab *Dilocarcinus dentatus*. In both of these cases the spider was identified from the photographs by Dr Hubert Höfer of the State Museum of Natural History Karlsruhe in Germany.

Reading these observations prompted me to send photos from my own 2005 observation to Dr Höfer, who subsequently confirmed that the spider that I witnessed preying on the frog was most probably the same species as that observed preying on the killifish and the crab. Therefore, it seemed pertinent to include this third observation alongside the others.

Spiders of the genus *Ancylometes* are known to feed on frogs, among other prey. For example, Moura and Azevedo (2011) noted an instance of *A. rufus* preying on the tree frog *Dendropsophus melanargyreus* in Amazonia. Indeed Toledo (2005), in a review of the subject, describes invertebrate predation on post-metamorphic amphibians as quite common and lists 31 published accounts of a spider preying upon an anuran; there are also several You-Tube videos of anurans being preyed upon by fishing spiders. Toledo (2005) highlighted the value of reporting such predation events especially where the behaviour of the predator, prey interaction and the nature of the immediate surrounding habitat is described. In this case the prey was already captured when we noticed it and it is likely that our presence altered the behaviour we observed. At the time, the frog appeared to be still breathing though otherwise

motionless. The spider's fangs were moving slightly as it probed the frog and we assumed that the spider was waiting for the enzyme action to kick in. We did not observe the eventual outcome.

The photographs show, however, that despite the frog being larger than its predator (Fig. 2), the spider was able to move it effectively. Toledo *et al.* (2007) attempted to seek relationships between invertebrate predator and anuran prey size. In this case neither the spider nor the frog were measured *in situ*, however Figure 2 allows us to calculate that the frog (snout-vent length) is 1.39 times larger than the spider (total length). In addition, we expect an adult *R. beebei* to be 51-61mm in length (Murphy 1997). This places it within expectations for the prey of a venomous



Figs. 1 and 2. Giant fishing spider *Ancylometes bogotensis* feeding on *Rhinella beebei*, screen-shots from the documentary Wild T&T directed by Alex De Verteuil and produced by Pearl and Dean Caribbean Limited in association with Caribbean Discovery Tours in 2005. This shot was filmed by Reginald Potter. Figure 1 (above) shows the spider holding onto its prey, and Figure 2 (below) shows the spider capably transporting the frog despite its large size relative to the spider.

invertebrate anuran predator (Toledo *et al.* 2007).

Prior to these reports, two genera of the family Ctenidae have been recorded in Trinidad (Sewlal 2013), including *Ctenus trinidadensis* and *Ancylometes* sp. In a review of the genus *Ancylometes*, Höfer and Brescovit (2000) list just the one species, *A. bogotensis*, as occurring in Trinidad.

The three recent observations of *A. bogotensis* preying on a fish, a crab and a frog, highlight the important role that this spider may play as a generalist predator. Until detailed studies of the natural history of this species are conducted, such observations help to piece this picture together.

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