

LIOPHIS POECILOGYRUS (Yellow-bellied Liophis). COPULATION. *Liophis poecilogyrus* (Fig. 1) is a common Colubridae species in Rio Grande do Sul state, southern Brazil, occurring mainly in open areas (Lema, 2002; Quintela & Loebmann, 2009). The reproductive pattern and diet of this species has previously been described in southeast Brazil (Pinto & Fernandes, 2004), but without observations on its copulatory behaviour. Despite its abundance in the southern Rio Grande do Sul, there is no detailed information available for their reproductive behaviour. Data is presented here on the copulation of *L. poecilogyrus* that was observed in nature and captivity.

On September 9, 2004, at about 13:30 h, in Campus Carreiros of Federal University of Rio Grande, municipality of Rio Grande, state of Rio Grande do Sul, southern Brazil (32°04'28" S; 52°09'78" W; 3 m a.s.l.), four individuals of *L. poecilogyrus* were found in copulatory activity. The four specimens were interlaced, partially submersed in a pluvial channel near a natural shallow lake (depth 5 cm), under a wooden plate. A few moments after being discovered, two individuals (later identified as males) left the cluster. These males presented the following measurements: male A snout-vent length (SVL) 361 mm, vent-tail length (VTL) 81 mm; male B SVL 364 mm, VTL 82 mm. The other two individuals, a male and a female connected by their sexual organs, were carefully placed in a terrarium. The couple was observed at 30 minute intervals until the end of the copulatory activity.

The duration of the copulatory activity from the first (September 9, approximately 13:30 h) to the last observation (retraction of the hemipenis - September 10, about 19:00 h) was recorded at around 29 hours and 30 minutes. Considering the period that preceded the discovery of the cluster, the duration of the copulatory activity was probably longer than the period determined by the observations.



Figure 1. *Erythrolamprys poecilogyrus* male (SVL = 297 mm, VTL = 66 mm) from coastal southern Brazil.

Upon completion of copulation, the male and female were measured and had the following values: male SVL 365 mm, VTL 85 mm; female SVL 52 mm, VTL 99 mm. This is the first observation of both a mating cluster and duration of copulation for *L. poecilogyrus*, which contributes to the understanding of reproductive biology of such a Neotropical colubrid.

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