Natural History Notes features short articles documenting original observations made of amphibians and reptiles mostly in the field. With few exceptions, an individual 'Note' should concern only one species, and authors are requested to choose a keyword or short phrase which best describes the nature of their observation (e.g. Diet, Reproduction). Format details and other guidelines are available in *Herpetological Bulletin* No. 78, Winter 2001.

***NATRIX NATRIX* (Grass Snake): INTRASPECIFIC PREDATION**. Grass Snakes are known to feed mainly on amphibians and fish. Occasionally a (nestling) rodent, bird or lizard may be taken (Kabisch, 1999). To our knowledge there are no published records of cannibalism, let alone ophiophagy, for *N. natrix* under natural circumstances. In this note we report for the first time a case of cannibalism for the Grass Snake from the field. From July 1997 to October 1997 Grass Snakes were caught at a site near Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and translocated several kilometres away from the capture site. This action was a mitigation measure since the capture site had previously been a dumping ground for chemical waste and needed to be sanitised. On the 24th of July a female of 83 cm total length was caught in this area (52° 21' 0" N, 4° 59' 37" E) underneath a wooden board. She was kept in an empty cloth bag while the search for other Grass Snakes continued. The next time the cloth bag was checked it was found to contain a second, dead Grass Snake, which the original female had apparently regurgitated. The front part of the dead snake's body was missing. It could not be deduced whether this was still inside the female, digested or not, or was already missing when swallowed. The remains of the body, including tail, measured about 46 cm. The absence of hemipenes proved it to be a female. The specimen has been deposited in the Zoological Museum of Amsterdam (ZMA 12839).

Among reptiles, conspecifics form a consistent but small part of the diet of opportunistic generalist predators (Polis & Myers, 1985). In these cases of cannibalism the prey consists nearly always of young conspecifics. Grass Snakes in the study area feed almost exclusively on locally abundant amphibians (pers. ob.) indicating a rather narrow prey spectrum. Considering the large size of the incomplete body it can be inferred that the prey was not an immature animal. It is therefore likely not be a case of opportunistic catching and eating a smaller conspecific. Another explanation could be opportunistic feeding on carrion (Capula et al., 1997). However, no eggs or larvae of flesh-flies could be found on the regurgitated snake. The most plausible explanation for this case of intraspecific predation is that a conspecific was accidentally ingested. Accidental predation of conspecifics has been observed in captivity for another *Natrix* species, namely the Viperine Snake *N. maura* (Hailey, 1981). When two snakes get hold of the same prey item at the same time, one snake might ingest not only the prey but also the other snake. The presence of frog or toad remains in the cloth bag would have given further evidence to support this hypothesis, yet no amphibian remains were found.

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