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NATURAL HISTORY NOTES

TROPIDODRYAS STRIATICEPS (Vine-snake): REPRODUCTION. Snakes of the genus *Tropidodryas* occur exclusively in the Atlantic rainforests of southeastern and southern Brazil (Amaral, 1937; Thomas & Dixon, 1977), and also Bahia state (Argôlo, 1999a,b). Two species are currently recognized: *Tropidodryas serra* (Schlegel, 1837) and *Tropidodryas striaticeps* (Cope, 1869), the first found at sea level, and the latter at higher altitudes (Sazima, pers. com.; in Marques, 1998). They have semiarborescent habits and diurnal activity patterns, feeding on lizards, amphibians and rodents (Thomas & Dixon, 1977; Sazima & Puerto, 1993). The young are known to

use caudal luring to attract prey (Sazima & Puerto, 1993). This paper presents information on oviposition, hatching, clutch size, relative clutch mass, size and sex ratio in newborn *T. striaticeps*, a snake with broad distributional range in Brazil including ES, MG, PR, RJ, SC e SP states (Amaral, 1937), with a recent record from RS (Puerto & Albuquerque, 2000; Puerto *et al.*, 2001) and BA (Argôlo, 1999b). This species appears on the Red List of Threatened Species of Rio Grande do Sul (www.mat.pucrs.br/livrovermelho/princip.htm).

One female *T. striaticeps* (IB 65086: 840 mm in snout-vent length (SVL), 225 mm in tail length

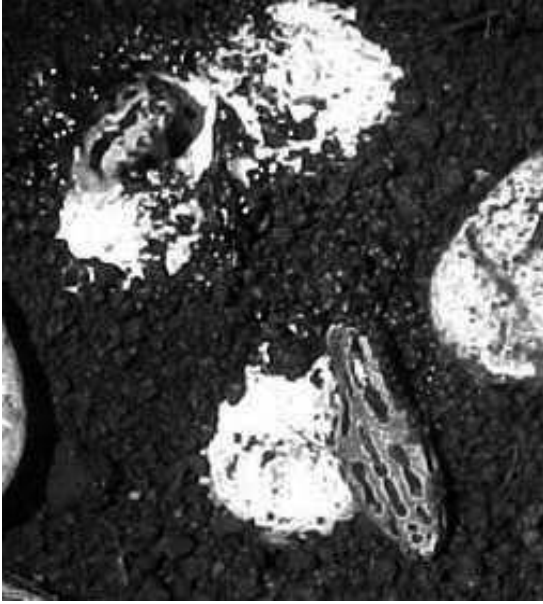


Figure 1. Hatching of *Tropidodryas striaticeps* after 162 days of incubation.

(TL) and 150 g after oviposition) collected in Arujá, São Paulo (23°24'S; 46°20'W), was brought to Instituto Butantan (IB) and laid 8 eggs on 16th January 2002. The eggs averaged 39.6 mm in length (range = 37.0–43.0 mm), 19.0 in width (range = 16.9–20.8 mm) and 8.5 in mass (range = 7.3–10.1g). The RCM (relative clutch mass) was 0.40. The eggs were incubated in a box with soil as substrate, at room temperature varying from 20 to 27°C. Hatching occurred after 162 days, there being a period of 13 days between the first and the last neonate to hatch. Male newborns ($n = 5$) averaged 250 mm SVL (range = 230–270 mm), 77 mm TL (range = 75 – 80 mm) and 7.7 g mass (average = 6.4–8.7 g). Female new-borns ($n = 3$) averaged 238 mm SVL (range = 220–250 mm), 75 mm TL (range = 70–80 mm) and 7.3 g mass (average = 6.7–8.0 g). No still-borns were observed. Sexual dimorphism did not occur in the SVL, TL and mass. It would be interesting to compare measurement data for adult specimens to verify the possibility of ontogenetic variation in morphometric data. This is the first report about egg-laying and hatching in *T. striaticeps*. Three of the newborn snakes have been deposited in the Coleção Herpetológica do Instituto Butantan (IB67862; IB67957; IB68054).

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