Autoren / Authors:
ALEXANDRE MAMIN, 1012 Lausanne, Switzerland, E-Mail: maminalexandre@gmail.com
ALEXANDRE LE BAIL, La aldea de san Nicolás, Gran Canaria, E-Mail: abreizh@gmail.com

Zitat / Citation:
Evidence of active hunting on a common mouse, *Mus musculus*, by *Gallotia stehlini*

**Abstract**

*Gallotia stehlini* is an endemic lizard of Lacertidae from Gran Canaria in the Canary Islands. This lizard is omnivorous with a large range of food. As omnivorous lizards, it is commonly admitted that *G. stehlini* is more herbivorous than carnivorous, with very few data about active hunting on other animals than lizards and arthropods. Here we share what we think is the first record of active hunting on an adult rodent (*Mus musculus*) by *Gallotia stehlini* in the wild.

**Zusammenfassung**

**Introduction**

*Gallotia* is a genus of lacertid lizard which are endemic from Canary Islands. Among Lacertidae family, *Gallotia stehlini* is its biggest extant representant with specimens reaching more than 900 mm. Various studies and observations converge towards an omnivorous diet of *Gallotia stehlini* with a major part made of various plant matter.

**Observation**

On 1st July 2020, Alexandre Le Bail observed and recorded a video in which an adult *Gallotia stehlini* feeding on an adult mouse, *Mus musculus*, in San Nicolás on Gran Canaria.

Le Bail was at home when he heard a noise outside his house and looked from his window what was happening, thinking he was going to observe a fight between two rodents. When he looked outside, he saw an adult *G. stehlini* with a freshly hunted mouse in its mouth.

At the beginning of the observed scene, the mouse was strongly struggling in the mouth of the lizard. Quickly, Le Bail decided to turn on his camera to record the scene. In the meantime, the rodent began to move slower and showed signs of imminent death. Unfortunately, the lizard noticed the observer and ran away with its prey. Thus, the ingestion of the mouse by the lizard has not been recorded.

**Discussion**

This observation has been made one year after the record of an adult *Gallotia stehlini* trying to feed on a young African blue tit, *Cyanistes teneriffae*, on Gran Canaria. (Ayllón et al. 2020). These observations ask the question of the role of the canine-like teeth in *G. stehlini*. It was assessed that these teeth have a role in piercing chitinous arthropods. (Mateo et López-Jurado 1992)

If this hypothesis is correct, it is also probable that these teeth have a role in catching bigger prey than arthropods. Although *Gallotia stehlini* shows a dentition tending towards herbivory, there is evidence this species still has a meat part in its diet.

**Conclusion**

This observation of active hunting on micromammals is interesting as it allows to understand that the diet of lizards from the genus *Gallotia* is more complex than we think. It is known that *Gallotia* sp. can feed on mice, but this behaviour had been observed only in captivity until now as it is common to feed *Gallotia simonyi* with new-born laboratory mice (Rodríguez-Domínguez et al. 1998).

The fact they can feed on mice in the wild and moreover on adult specimens seems to be new to science. It also demonstrates the high adaptability of the feeding behaviour of *Gallotia stehlini*. 
Evidence of active hunting on a common mouse, *Mus musculus*, by *Gallotia stehlini*

**Fig. 3** – *Gallotia stehlini*, details of the teeth.

**Fig. 4** – *Gallotia stehlini*, skull.

**Fig. 5** – *Gallotia stehlini*, details of the teeth.

**References**


