

were kept in the laboratory at room temperature (24°C) in a receptacle measuring 27 x 20 x 15 cm, containing 10 cm of vermiculite and covered with plastic mesh. The eggs were moistened with water every two days.

Hatching occurred on 9, 10, and 11 March. The animals first opened a small hole in the shell, just large enough to put their heads out (Figs. 2 and 3); this they did for several hours, appearing and retreating but without leaving the shell. During this process the animals displayed geotropic behavior; they turned towards the soil with the apparent intention of burying themselves (Figs. 2 and 3), but then withdrew once more into the shell. When they finally emerged, general examination showed them to have an egg-tooth.

The five hatchlings measured 150–170 mm total length (mean TL = 160.0 mm, SD = 0.707) and weighed 9.0–12.5 g (mean mass = 10.75 g, SD = 1.458).

The egg opened for species identification was well developed, and still had its yolk. The embryo had a conspicuous eye, proportionally larger than in the adult animal (Fig. 1); this was also the case in the young after hatching, and has been observed in *L. microcephalum* (Gans 1971. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. 144:379–464).

The eggs were laid and hatched during the summer rainy season; the same occurs in *L. wuchereri*, also from southern Bahia (Zamprogno et al. 1993. Resumos III Congresso Latino-Americano de Herpetologia, Campiñas (Brazil), p. 36).

We thank Fundação Butantan for financial support and CNPq (Brazilian National Research Council) for providing our grants (CJ and MMA). We thank A. J. S. Argôlo and Alasdair G. Burman for comments and criticisms.

AMPHISBAENIA

LEPOSTERNON INFRAORBITALE (Two-headed Snake). **REPRODUCTION.** Information regarding the laying, incubation and hatching of the eggs of amphisbaenians is sparse. This note describes the hatching of a clutch of eggs of *Leposternon infraorbitale* Berthold, 1859. It is probable this is the first observation of the actual hatching of amphisbaenian eggs; details also are given of the site where the eggs were collected.

Goeldi (1897. Zool. Jahrb., Abt. Syst. Geogr. Biol. Thieme, 10(5):640–676) reported a clutch of eggs of *Leposternon microcephalum* found in March near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. They had been laid in a pile of bricks and tiles which was inhabited by ants of the genus *Camponotus*. However, the author only gave the dimensions of the eggs. Gans (1971. Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist. 144:379–464) examined numbers of eggs in collections, mostly in a poor state of preservation.

On 20 February 1994, six eggs of *Leposternon infraorbitale* were found in the grounds of the Cacao Research Centre (Centro de Pesquisas do Cacau - Comissão Executiva do Plano da Lavoura Cacaueira, CEPEC-CEPLAC) in the town of Ilhéus on the south coast of the state of Bahia, Brazil (14°45'S, 39°13'W). One of the eggs was opened for species identification immediately after collection (Fig. 1). The specimens were deposited in CEPEC's zoological collections and at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (CZUFRJ).

The eggs were found in the ground beside a fallen tree in a cacao plantation. They were ca. 15 cm from the surface and covered in soil and decomposed wood. They measured ca. 60 x 25 mm, and were soft to the touch and yellowish-white in color. The eggs

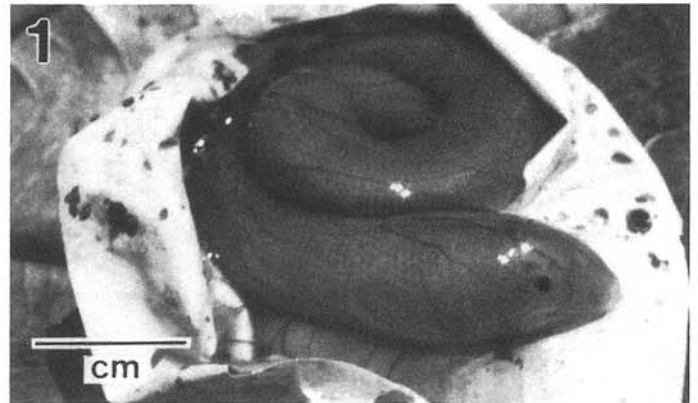


FIG. 1. Opened egg of *Leposternon infraorbitale* showing the appearance of an embryo one month before hatching.



FIG. 2. Hatching of a clutch of *Leposternon infraorbitale*.

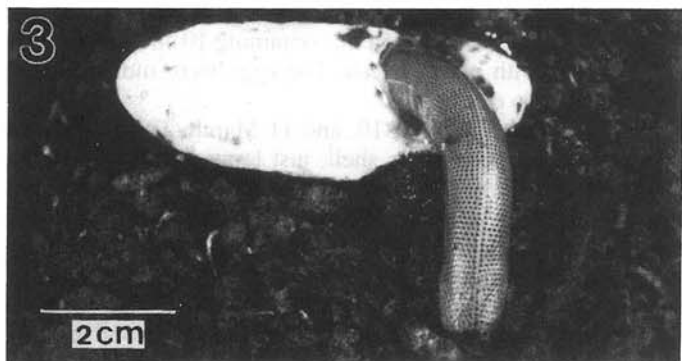


FIG. 3. Young of *Leposternon infraorbitale* exhibiting geotropic behavior.

Submitted by **CARLOS JARED**, **MARTA M. ANTONIAZZI** and **SELMA M. ALMEIDA-SANTOS**, Instituto Butantan, Av. Dr. Vital Brazil, 1500, CEP 05503-900 - São Paulo, Brasil.