

## TESTUDINES — TURTLES

**CHELONOIDIS DENTICULATA (Yellow-Footed Tortoise). DIET.** *Chelonoidis denticulata* (= *Geochelone denticulata*) is a member of the Testudinidae found in South American forests. *C. denticulata* and the related species, *C. carbonaria*, have been shown to primarily be frugivorous, however they supplement their diet with protein-rich food items such as insects and vertebrate carrion (Wang et al. 2011 South Am. J. Herpetol. 6:11–19; Moskovits and Bjorndal 1990. Herpetologica 46:207–218). Previous studies indicate that fungi can compose a significant portion of the diet (up to 22%) of *C. denticulata* (Guzman and Stevenson 2008. Amphibia-Reptilia 29:468).

Fungal components in the diet of *C. denticulata* have been documented, but the taxonomic identity of the fungi consumed is rarely reported. Here we report observing *C. denticulata* consuming a *Russula* aff. *puiggarii* mushroom in the tropical rainforests of Guyana.

On 20 June 2013 during field research in the Pakaraima Mountains of Guyana our team found a *C. denticulata* juvenile along the Upper Potaro River at approximately 5.267°N, 59.9°W (WGS 84). The tortoise was placed with several mushroom fruiting bodies in a makeshift enclosure roughly 4 m<sup>2</sup> in area. After approximately an hour the tortoise was observed feeding on the fruiting body of *Russula* aff. *puiggarii* (Fig. 1). According to conversations with native people in the area, *C. denticulata* is frequently observed to feed on fungi, also observed previously by one of us (TWH). They are often found eating fruitings of kapiokwok mushrooms (*Lentinula* sp.).

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FIG. 1. *Chelonoidis denticulata* feeding on *Russula* aff. *puiggarii* mushroom in Guyana.

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**CHELYDRA SERPENTINA (Snapping Turtle). ALIEN NESTING.** Here we describe a nesting record for a captive *Chelydra serpentina* in southern Brazil. The species is distributed over much of eastern and central North America (Iverson et al. 1997. Herpetologica 53:97–117), and has been introduced in Japan, China, and Taiwan (www.iucnredlist.org; accessed 16 Mar 2016.). *Chelydra serpentina* has a high reproductive potential in its natural environment (Congdon et al. 1987. Herpetologica 43:39–54; Congdon et al. 2008. In Steyer-mark and Brooks [eds.], Biology of the Snapping Turtle, pp. 123–134. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland). In the wild, nesting occurs from May to June and incubation varies from 75 to 95 days. The nest generally has a narrow opening with a wide globular egg chamber, constructed in sand or soil (Ernst and Lovich 2009. Turtles of the United States and Canada. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 827 pp.).

In March 2012, a captive female Snapping Turtle constructed a nest in the typical manner and deposited 33 eggs at a registered wildlife conservation center (“Noah’s Ark”—register number 2/43/1999/000039-8/IBAMA-Brazil) situated in a fragment of semi-deciduous submontane forest (29.52824°S, 51.07063°W, 658 m elev.), in northeastern Ro Grande do Sul, Brazil. The regional climate is humid, with rain throughout the year and the warmest month averages higher than 22°C (Köppen climate category Cfa; Moreno 1961. Clima do Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre, Secretaria da Agricultura - Div. Terras e Colonização). The nesting occurred in an outdoor semi-aquatic enclosure of 7.5 m<sup>2</sup>, in a damp coarse sand substrate in partial shade. The nest was 30 cm from the edge of the water; the nest chamber was 23 cm deep and 14 cm wide. Eighteen eggs hatched and the hatchlings were weighed and measured one month post-hatching. They had an average mass of 13 g, an average carapace length of 32 mm, and average carapace width of 30 mm. After three years, only one individual remains alive, and at this writing has a mass of 1.57 kg, 165 mm carapace length, and 160 mm carapace width. One individual was preserved in the scientific reference collection of the Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos—UNISINOS/RS No. CHLEVT:223/2015.

The parents of these hatchlings were confiscated by the Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis-IBAMA during enforcement activities directed against wildlife trafficking in Brazil. *Chelydra serpentina* is often exploited for the food and pet trade (Van Dijk 2012. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2012: e.T163424A18547887; accessed on 28 September 2015). The species might be expected to adapt to environments in many parts of Brazil, and could potentially be invasive in aquatic communities, with possible negative consequences for native turtle faunas, biota, and aquatic ecosystems.

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