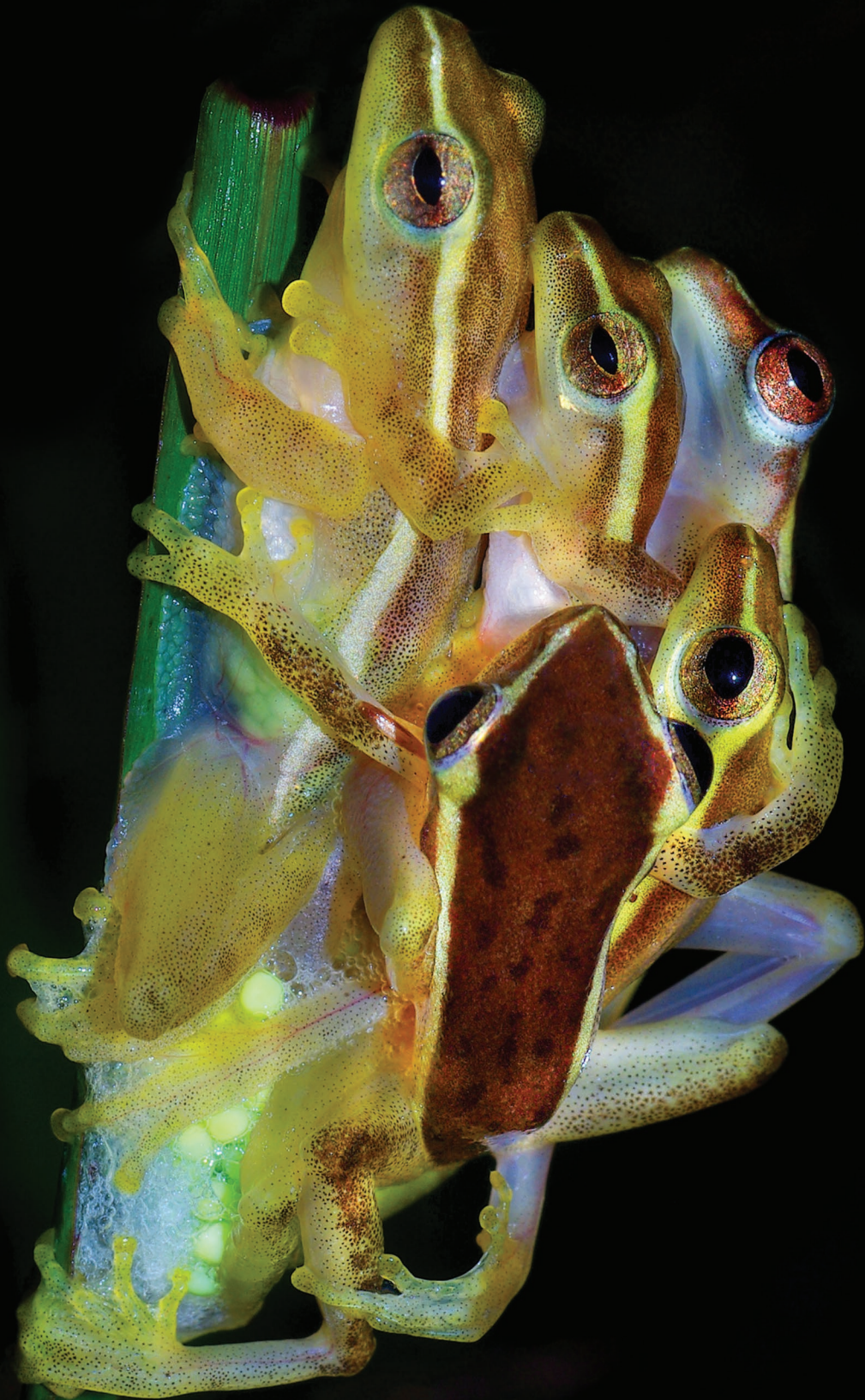
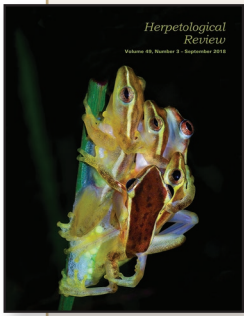


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ABOUT OUR COVER: *Feihyla hansenae*

Feihyla hansenae (Hansen's Asian Treefrog) is an arboreal-breeding member of the Rhacophoridae, a speciose family of Old World frogs (ca. 421 species; AmphibiaWeb 2018. <<https://amphibiaweb.org>> University of California, Berkeley. Accessed 3 Aug 2018). It can be found in ponds or seasonal pools during the rainy season in northern, east central, and southeastern Thailand (Yodthong et al. 2014. *Asian Herpetological Research* 5:179–196), although its range likely extends into neighboring countries of Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. The species was described (as *Philautus hansenae*) in 1927 by Doris M. Cochran (1898–1968), who for many years was in charge of the herpetological collection at the United States National Museum. Recent molecular surveys of samples from across the range revealed the existence of two deeply differentiated lineages (Yodthong et al. 2014, *op. cit.*), hinting that more than one species might be contained within what is presently considered *F. hansenae* (Aowphol et al. 2013. *Zootaxa* 3702:101–123). Unique among congeners, *F. hansenae* exhibits parental care. Females stay with their offspring throughout the egg stage, hydrating the eggs when needed and warding off potential predators (Poo and Bickford 2013. *Ethology* 119:671–679; Poo et al. 2016. *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* 118:901–910).

Our cover image was recorded by **Sinlan Poo**, a behavioral ecologist who obtained her Ph.D. from National University of Singapore. Originally from Taiwan, she has worked on research projects in the Neotropics (Panama and Ecuador), East and Southeast Asia (Taiwan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Singapore), and the United States. Her dissertation work on the reproductive ecology of *Feihyla hansenae* is the first experimental study quantifying the costs and benefits of parental care in a Southeast Asian amphibian. Currently she is a postdoctoral fellow at the Memphis Zoo in Tennessee, USA, where her research is focused on assisted reproduction and conservation of endangered frogs and toads in North and Central America. She encountered the group of four male *F. hansenae* attempting to mate with one female at the Sakaerat Environmental Research Station, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand, during September 2015. The photo was taken using a Pentax K10D with a Tamron 90mm f/2.8 SP AF Di macro lens, stopped down to f/13, at an ISO 100 and shutter speed at 1/125 sec. The camera's built-in flash provided illumination. Additional details about this encounter are reported elsewhere in this issue (Poo and Low, pp. 516–517).



PHOTO BY CINDY POO

SSAR BUSINESS

Roger Conant Grants-in-Herpetology 2018 Award Winners

Successful Grant Applicants: An award in the amount of \$500 was made to each of the following individuals.

Conservation:

- **Matthew Atkinson** (University of Central Florida): “The impacts of the emergent protistan pathogen *Perkinsea* on Florida’s amphibian communities.” Advisor: Anna Savage
- **Joseph Kennedy** (The University of Mississippi): “The role of reproductive interference and endocrine stress in the decline of green treefrogs following Cuban treefrog invasions.” Advisor: Christopher Leary.

Education:

- **Kristen Hecht** (Florida Natural History Museum): “Public engagement of herpetologists: attitudes and scope.” Advisor: Max Nickerson.

Field Research in Herpetology

- **Ying Chen** (Queen’s University): “Understanding the genetic basis of advertisement call attributes in spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*).” Advisor: Stephen Lougheed
- **Olivia Feagles** (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee): “Testosterone: the power behind multimodal signaling in gray treefrogs (*Hyla versicolor*)?” Advisor: Gerlinde Höbel

International Research in Herpetology

- **Laura Brauholtz** (Newcastle University, UK): “Roads through rainforests: measuring and mitigating biodiversity impacts in Brunei.” Advisor: Marion Pfeifer
- **Milan van der Velden** (Free University of Brussels): “Comparative osteology of the tepui-associated toad *Oreophrynella* with insights on the origin and function of opposable fingers and toes in the genus.” Advisor: Philippe Kok

Laboratory Research in Herpetology

- **Matthew Dickson** (California State University-Northridge): “Evolution on your porch: testing the mechanisms underlying rapid adaptive change among introduced house gecko populations in response to climatic variation.” Advisor: Robert Espinoza
- **Aaron Griffing** (Marquette University): “Differential regenerative ability in New Caledonian geckos (*Correlophus*): an untapped evolutionary model to study tail regeneration.” Advisor: Tony Gamble

Travel

- **Kinsey Brock** (University of California-Merced): “Causes and consequences of color polymorphism.” Advisor: Danielle Edwards
- **Jessica Reimche** (University of Nevada-Reno): “Molecular evolution of an adaptive trait: the genetic mechanisms of TTX resistance in the Sierra garter snake (*Thamnophis couchii*).” Advisor: Chris Feldman

KEVIN R. MESSENGER, Alabama A&M University, 4900 Meridian St. N, Normal, Alabama 35811, USA (e-mail: kevinrmessenger@gmail.com); **MAARTEN SEBASTIAAN FRANKS SPIJKER**, 2291 Chisholm Court, Holt, Michigan 48842, USA (e-mail: maartensfs@hotmail.com).

ELACHISTOCLEIS CESARII (Oval Frog). DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR. Frogs present several strategies to avoid predation (Duellman and Trueb 1994. *Biology of Amphibians*. The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 670 pp.). One of these defensive strategies, known as “body-tilting” consists of inflating and tilting the body toward the predator displaying its glands, cutaneous secretions, or aposematic coloration (Toledo et al. 2011. *Ethol. Ecol. Evol.* 23:1–25). For the genus *Elachistocleis*, this behavior was previously observed in *E. erythrogaster* (Kwet and Solé 2002. *Herpetol. Rev.* 33:45) and *E. ovalis* (Kokubum and Menin 2002. *Herpetol. Rev.* 33:198). We report here for the first time body tilting defensive behavior performed by *E. cesarii*, a species native to Brazil (Caramaschi 2010. *Bol. Mus. Nac. Rio de Janeiro.* 527:1–30). Around 2200 h in August 2014, in the municipality of Guapó, Goiás, Brazil (16.87596°S, 49.45314°W, WGS 84; 1021m elev.), an individual of *E. cesarii* was found vocalizing in a swampy environment associated with a Cerrado phytophysognomy known as “Vereda.” After manipulation the frog inflated and elevated its body exposing its inguinal and femoral characteristic coloration (Fig. 1). The individual remained inflated and elevated for approximately two minutes. We also observed that the individual shifted its position as we moved, and thus oriented the display in our direction.

We thank Priscila Cabral for translating the present work.

MAURIVAN V. RIBEIRO, Pós-graduação em Biodiversidade Animal, Instituto de Ciências Biológicas, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Campus II, Av. Esperança, s/n Campus Samambaia, 74690-900, Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil; Laboratório de Herpetologia e Comportamento Animal, Instituto de Ciências Biológicas, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Campus Samambaia; **ADAMO BARROS**, Graduação em Ciências Biológicas, Instituto de Ciên-



FIG. 1. Defensive behavior of *Elachistocleis cesarii* recorded in the municipality of Guapó, Goiás State, Brazil.

cias Biológicas, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Campus II, Av. Esperança, s/n Campus Samambaia, 74690-900, Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil; **JOSÉ S. P. DE OLIVEIRA**, DBO Engenharia, R. 25, 190 - Jardim Goiás, 74805-280, Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil; **NATAN M. MACIEL**, Departamento de Ecologia, Instituto de Ciências Biológicas, Universidade Federal de Goiás, Campus II, Av. Esperança, s/n Campus Samambaia, 74690-900, Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil (e-mail: nmaciell@gmail.com).

FEIHYLA HANSENAE (Hansen's Bush Frog). MULTIMALE AMPLEXUS. *Feihyla hansenae* (Rhacophoridae) is a nocturnal treefrog that breeds in temporary ponds in Thailand and parts of Cambodia during the rainy season (Taylor 1962. *Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull.* 43:526–529; Aowphol et al. 2013. *Zootaxa* 3702:101–123). Males attract females by calling from emergent vegetation or vegetation at the edge of the pond. After forming an amplexic pair, females will move around the vicinity and select the final location for oviposition (S. Poo, pers. obs.). Eggs are deposited in hemispherical gelatinous masses attached to vegetation overhanging the pond. Once the last egg is laid, males leave, while females remain, finish constructing the egg mass, and provide parental care by maintaining egg hydration (Poo and Bickford 2013. *Ethology* 119:671–679) and deterring egg predators (Poo et al. 2016. *Biol. J. Linn. Soc.* 118:901–910) until the eggs hatch and fall into the pond below. Here we report the first record of multiple males forming an amplexic group with a single female in this species.

On 18 September 2015 between 2100 and 2200 h, we observed four *F. hansenae* males attempting to mate with one *F. hansenae* female (Fig. 1) at a seasonal pond at the Sakaerat Environmental Research Station in northeastern Thailand (14.5090°N, 101.9537°E; WGS 84). When first observed, the female was in the process of laying eggs and constructing the gelatinous egg mass, with eggs visible both in the female's abdomen and on the grass blade beneath the female's vent. Of the four males, one male (Male 1) was in the normal, axillary amplexic position with the female, holding on to the female's dorsum (Fig. 1). The second male (Male 2) was positioned to the right dorsolateral side of Male 1 (Fig. 1). The third male (Male 3) was positioned dorsal inferiorly to Male 1 (Fig. 1). Finally, the fourth male (Male 4) was positioned laterally to the left of Male 1 and had all four limbs extended to wrap around the female, Male 1, and Male 3 (Fig. 1). Vents of all males were positioned in close proximity to the vent of the female, and the female continued to lay eggs and construct the egg mass by kicking up gel and foam with her hindlimbs. Males made slight movements with their limbs and body without changing their relative position to each other within the amplexic group. Seven minutes after observation started, Male 4 left the group by moving to the opposite side of the grass blade (relative to the female) for one minute, then jumping away (all observations rounded to the nearest minute). Similarly, one minute later, Male 3 moved to the opposite side of the grass blade, paused for one minute, and then jumped away. After Male 3 left, Male 2 repositioned itself to the dorsal side of Male 1, forming amplexus with Male 1. Male 1 and Male 2 maintained their positions until the last egg was laid. Eight minutes later, both Male 1 and Male 2 exited amplexus and moved to the opposite side of the grass. Male 1 paused for two minutes before jumping away, while Male 2 stayed for another minute before jumping away. The female remained at the oviposition site and continued to construct the egg mass with its hindlimbs.

We observed another multimale amplexic group nearby (~3 m away) at the same time, with two males attempting to mate with one female. One male was in the normal, axillary amplexic position with the female and was using its hindlimbs to kick or

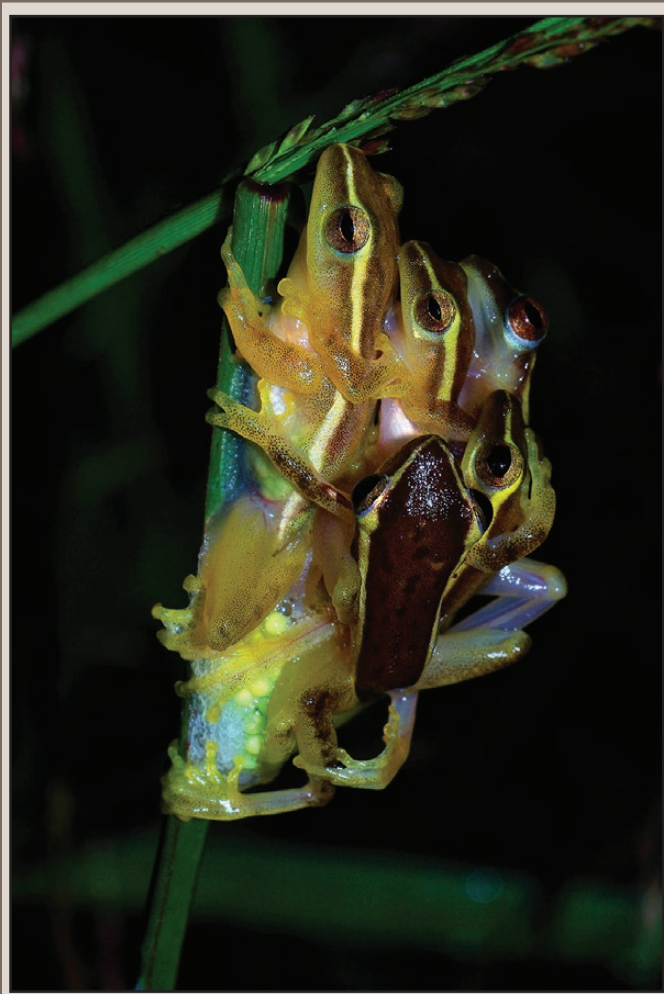


FIG. 1. Female *Feihyla hansenae* laying eggs while in amplexus with four males.

push the second male away. The second male was positioned laterally to the amplexic pair with one arm on the female and another on the side of the grass blade. The vents of both males were positioned in close proximity to the female vent, and the female was in the process of laying its eggs. No further observations were made for this amplexic group.

Our observations of multimale amplexus occurred in a year where the onset of rainfall and accumulation of pond water was delayed in comparison to past years. At the time our observations were made (mid-September), water depth in the pond was less than 0.5 m compared to the average of 2.5 m in 2010–2013 (range = 1–5 m). The delay in heavy rain may have increased pressures on males to secure mates before the end of the breeding season. In comparison, multimale amplexus was not observed in over 200 night surveys performed in July–Oct from 2010 to 2013. To our knowledge, this is the first report of multimale amplexus in an arboreal-breeding species with a gelatinous egg clutch. Polyandrous behavior has been observed in the congeneric foam-nesting species *C. xerampelina* and *C. rufescens* (Coe 1974. *J. Zool.* 172:13–34; Jennions et al. 1992. *Anim. Behav.* 44:1091–1100), and in two other foam-nesting genera, *Polypedates*, and *Rhacophorus*, within the Rhacophoridae (Jennions and Passmore 1993. *Biol. J. Linn. Soc.* 50:211–220). In comparison, multimale amplexus appears to be more common in African rhacophorids compared to their Asian counterparts.

SINLAN POO, Memphis Zoo, 2000 Prentiss Place, Memphis, Tennessee 38112, USA; and Sakaerat Environmental Research Station, Wang Nam Khieo District, Nakhon Ratchasima 30370, Thailand (e-mail: sheilapoo@gmail.com); **MARY-RUTH LOW**, Wildlife Reserves Singapore, 80 Mandai Lake Road, 729826, Singapore.

LITHOBATES CATESBEIANUS (American Bullfrog). DIET. *Lithobates catesbeianus* is highly aquatic and occurs across North America in many types of mesic habitats (Bury and Whelan 1984. USFWS Resource Publication 155:1–26; Dodd 2013. *Frogs of the United States and Canada*, Volume 2. The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 982 pp.). Numerous studies have examined the diet of *L. catesbeianus*, which includes many invertebrate and vertebrate species. Herpetofauna in the diet includes salamanders, lizards, frogs, and a few snakes. At least seven species of snakes are known in the diet of *L. catesbeianus*: *Crotalus atrox*, *Lampropeltis getula*, *Rena dulcis*, *Micrurus fulvius*, *Nerodia* sp., *Thamnophis eques*, and *T. sauritus*; Dodd 2013, *op. cit.*). Prey size often is proportional to body size (Bruneau and Magnin 1980. *Can. J. Zool.* 58:175–183), so adult bullfrogs consume a larger variety of prey items of greater sizes.

Here, we report the first record of *L. catesbeianus* consuming a *Pituophis catenifer sayi* (Bullsnake). An adult *L. catesbeianus* (ca. 16.5 cm SVL) was captured in late August or early September 2015 on Hackberry Lake, Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Cherry County, Nebraska (42.56153°N, 100.67891°W; WGS 84). A dietary study of *L. catesbeianus* from the refuge did not document snakes in the diet (Lingenfelter et al. 2014. *J. N. Am. Herpetol.* 2014:81–86). *Pituophis catenifer sayi* is distributed largely west of the Mississippi River from southern Alberta and Saskatchewan into Mexico and west of the Rocky Mountains (Ernst and Ernst 2003. *Snakes of the United States and Canada*. Smithsonian Books, Washington, D.C. 668 pp.). The total length of the predated *P. c. sayi* was ca. 40 cm, a size corresponding to a hatchling. Known predators of this snake species include mid-sized mammals and predatory birds, but previously, no species of frog has been documented to predate *P. catenifer* (Ernst and Ernst 2003, *op. cit.*).

NICOLE M. PAULEY, Department of Biology, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kearney, Nebraska 68849, USA (e-mail: pauleynm2@loppers.unk.edu); **MELVIN P. NENNEMAN**, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Valentine National Wildlife Refuge 39679 Pony Lake Road, Valentine, Nebraska 69201, USA (e-mail: melvin_nenneman@fws.gov); **KEITH GELUSO**, Department of Biology, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Kearney, Nebraska 68849, USA (e-mail: gelusok1@unk.edu).

LITHOBATES SYLVATICUS (Wood Frog). PREDATION. *Lithobates sylvaticus* has the most extensive native range of any North American anuran and is common throughout this range (Martoff and Humphries 1959. *Am. Midl. Nat.* 61:350–389). Typical avian predators of adult *L. sylvaticus* include wading birds, raptors, and ducks (Dodd Jr. 2013. *Frogs of the United States and Canada* Vol. 2. John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland. 982 pp.). In June 2014 we witnessed an adult *Sterna paradisaea* (Arctic Tern) circling overhead and diving into a shallow, ephemeral wetland in the tundra and emerging with a single *L. sylvaticus* individual in its beak before flying away. This event occurred in Churchill, Manitoba, Canada, just a few kilometers inland from Hudson Bay (58.72919°N, 93.76882°W; WGS 84). This is the first record of *S. paradisaea*, a seabird, reported as predator of *L. sylvaticus*.

STEPHANIE BISHIR (e-mail: scbishir1s@semo.edu) and **ALEXIS KING**, Southeast Missouri State University, One University Plaza, MS 6200 Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701, USA.