**NAJA MOSSAMBICA** (Peters, 1854)

**Mozambique Spitting Cobra**

**DIET**
We here present a documented case of ophiophagy in this species. A *Naja mossambica* (MNHN 1981.1166), from “Southern Africa, Ladysmith, 3,500 ft. alt., Natal Midlands, Klip River, Farm Dawns Pride”, collected by H.D. Shaw-Copeland on January, 3, 1981, was found having nearly completely ingested a Herald Snake *Crotophopeltis hotamboeia* (Laurenti, 1768) (MNHN 1999.7629). The Cobra is a female, measuring 466+103 mm, and has 190 ventrals, 58 (3 single + 55 divided) subcaudals, and 23 midbody scale rows. The Herald Snake, which was ingested head first, is a female measuring 412+59 mm, and has 152 ventrals, 41 divided subcaudals, and 19 midbody scale rows; its own stomach contains unidentifiable frog remains, nematodes, and 6 partly digested termite workers (*Microcerotermes* sp.). There is no doubt that the termites were ingested by the frog itself. Anuran Amphibians constitute the main part of the diet of the Herald Snake (see notably Rasmussen, 1985: Steenstrupia 11(4): 113-129), but this snake is also known to eat other snakes (Stucki-Stirn, 1979: Snake Report 721. Herpeto-Verlag, Teuffenthal: vii + 1-650). *N. mossambica* willingly frequents termitepores (Jacobsen, loc. cit.; Spawls & Branch, loc. cit.). The Mozambique Spitting Cobra has a very eclectic diet, and the compilation of the diet records of the species shows that it feeds on warm-blooded as well as on cold-blooded vertebrates and even insects. The predation case presented above is interesting in that it places *Naja mossambica* in a complex food chain.

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