

BOTHROPS FONSECAI (Fonseca's Lancehead). REPRODUCTION. *Bothrops fonsecai* is a medium-sized, terrestrial viperid snake in the *B. alternatus* group. Its distribution is restricted to southeastern Brazil, where it occurs associated with the remnants of Mixed Ombrophilous Forest of the Serras do Mar, Mantiqueira and Órgãos (Campbell and Lamar 1989, The Venomous Reptiles of Latin America, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 425 pp.; Muller 1971, Salamandra 7:9–30). Because it is endemic to high altitude areas, there is little information available in the literature about its life history. Reproductive data for this species are restricted to a female with 14 well-developed embryos in January (Sazima and Manzani 1998, Herpetol. Rev. 29:102–103) and three litters in March, with the birth of 8, 9, and 10 neonates (Duarte 2004, Herpetol. Rev. 35:175–176). However, little is known about the mating period and reproductive cycle of the species. Here we report a mating event of *B. fonsecai* in its natural habitat and comment on its reproductive cycle.

The copulation was observed at the Serra do Papagaio State Park (22.1478°S, 44.73047°W; WGS 84; 1730 m a.s.l.), on 30 March 2013, in the municipality of Baependi, Minas Gerais, Brazil. The snakes were seen during the day, on the roots of a fallen tree, at the edge of Mixed Ombrophilous Forest. Both snakes had their bodies stretched out in opposite directions, with only their tails intertwined (Fig. 1). As they noticed the researcher's approach,

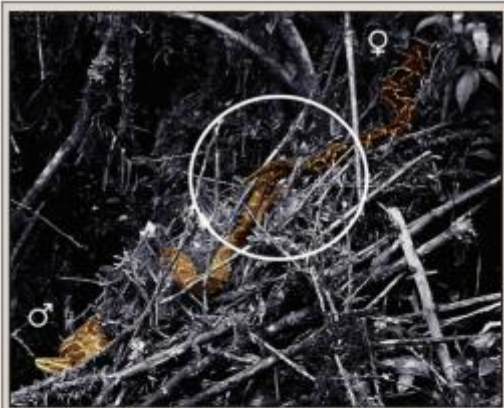


FIG. 1. Male and female *Bothrops fonsecai* mating in Serra do Papagaio State Park, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

one of the snakes started vibrating its tail against the ground, and shortly thereafter, both started to move into the forest in opposite directions. In the same conservation unit (Serra do Papagaio State Park), we recorded two juveniles in February and March 2015, and an adult female (75 cm SVL, 10.5 cm tail length) with follicles in secondary vitellogenesis in November. Thus, females have embryos in January, parturition takes place in March (Sazima and Manzani 1998, *op. cit.*; Duarte 2004, *op. cit.*), and the encounter of juveniles in the wild in February and March (reported here) indicate that recruitment occurs between late summer and early fall. The presence of follicles in secondary vitellogenesis in late spring (December) and mating in early autumn (March and May) indicate that the reproductive cycle of *B. fonsecai* is biennial, as in other species of the genus *Bothrops* (Almeida-Santos and Salomão 2002, In Schutett et al. [eds.], *Biology of the Vipers*, pp. 445–462, Eagle Mountain Publishing, Eagle Mountain, Utah).

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