

Predation on a Neotropical frog of the *Leptodactylus* gr. *melanonotus* (Anura: Leptodactylidae) by *Chloroceryle americana* (Aves: Coraciiformes)

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The 17 leptodactylid species of the *Leptodactylus melanonotus* group are mainly distributed throughout South America but also occur in North and Central America (Heyer, 1970; Sá et al., 2014). So far, only *Leptodactylus pustulatus* (Peters, 1870) and *L. podicipinus* (Cope, 1862) have been recorded in Goiás State, Brazil (Sá et al., 2014). However, a species commonly associated to *Leptodactylus leptodactyloides* (Anderson, 1945) vocalises near water bodies in localities of Goiás State (Nomura et al., 2012; Gambale et al., 2014), although its taxonomic status remains uncertain. The species in the *L. melanonotus* species group have the most specialised type of reproductive behaviour and larval development when compared to other *Leptodactylus* groups, since they lay foam nests inside mud chambers in which 1000 to 2000 tadpoles hatch (Heyer, 1969). In addition, parental care is common in this group, mainly by females (Martins, 2001; Hoffman, 2006; Santos and Amorim, 2006; Sá et al., 2007; Sá et al., 2014).

The kingfisher, *Chloroceryle americana* (Gmelin, 1788) (Aves: Coraciiformes), inhabits lakes with diverse aquatic vegetation, rivers and mangroves, and is widely distributed from Texas and Mexico to

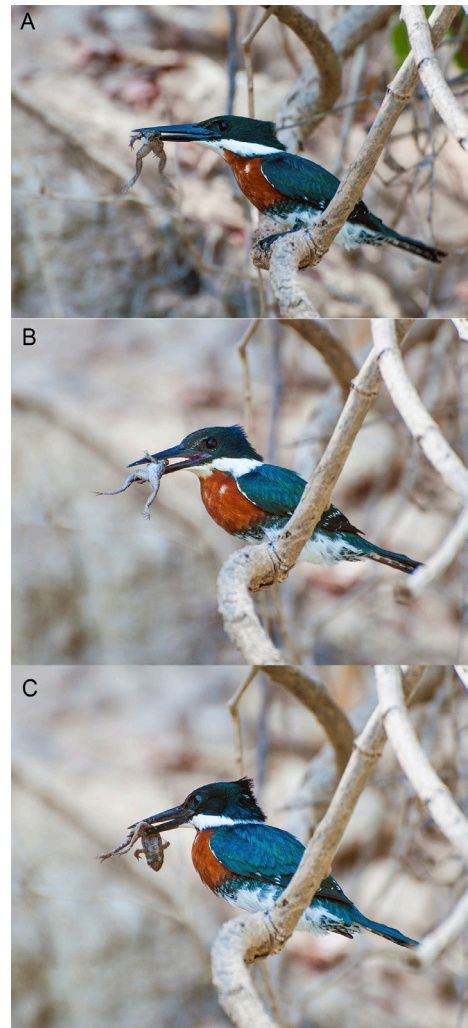


Figure 1. Sequence of the predation event in which an individual of *Leptodactylus* gr. *melanonotus* was captured by *Chloroceryle americana*, municipality of Mundo Novo, Brazil. A) *C. americana* with its prey. Note the vocal sac inflated; B and C) *C. americana* with its prey after capturing it on the riverbank. Photos: L.A.M.L. Baptista.

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Argentina, including the whole Brazilian territory (Sick, 1997). It feeds commonly on fish, aquatic insects, and crustaceans (Willard, 1985; Sick, 1997). However, this species is known to prey upon the lizard *Placossoma glabella* (Luz *et al.*, 2008) and on hylid larvae (Santos, 2009).

On 06 August 2017 at 16:20h we observed a predation event by *C. americana* on an individual belonging to the *Leptodactylus* gr. *melanonotus* in the municipality of Mundo Novo (GPS coordinates 13.6203°S, 50.2349°W), Goiás State, Brazil, at the bank of the Crixás-Açu river. A male of *Chloroceryle americana* captured the individual from the ground and took it to the top of a tree. The bird hit the frog against a branch multiple times, while the frog emitted agonistic calls (Fig. 1). Posteriorly the bird took off with its prey still alive in its beak.

Amphibians are important components of the diet of various organisms (Duellman and Trueb, 1994; Wells, 2007). Snakes (Bernarde *et al.*, 2008; Teles *et al.*, 2018) and invertebrates (Villa *et al.*, 1982; Toledo, 2003), including spiders (Bernarde *et al.*, 2000), have also been reported to prey on them. Even though there are many records of amphibians being preyed upon by birds (e. g., Poulin *et al.*, 2001; Morais *et al.*, 2003; Caldas *et al.*, 2017), this is the first record of a predation event on a species of the *Leptodactylus* gr. *melanonotus* by *Chloroceryle americana*.

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