

to couple in December, January, February and March. Young ones have been born in May and the largest litter recorded in my notes was 63."

In his book "Snakes of the World", which to-day can be had at the Trinidad Public Library, Dr. R. L. Ditmars, Curator of Mammals and Reptiles at the New York Zoological Park, and a recognised world authority on the Ophidia, says in no uncertain terms that "The Boinae are viviparous". That is to say, all the members of the Boa sub-family (Constrictors and the Tree-boas formerly of the genus *Corallus*) bring forth their young alive.

It is interesting to note that Boulenger and Lydekker (both world famed authorities) had stated that there was one instance only on record in which both eggs and young were produced simultaneously. Unfortunately, the record does not state whether these eggs ever hatched.

It is perfectly clear then that there is much authoritative pronouncement on viviparity in the boas, as against the statement that they lay eggs.

From the facts outlined above this case would appear to be an abnormal and premature birth. All the facts point towards an abnormality of birth. It is abnormal that only five snakes emerged from these 18 eggs. It is abnormal that the young snakes should have remain attached to their eggs for so long a time, the last two until the 8th and 10th days after birth. In nature young born under normal circumstances are never so handicapped; it would be detrimental to the survival of the species. I have seen the birth of young snakes of a member of the boa sub-family, *Boa enydris*, formerly *Corallus cookii*. When the young emerged they were free of any such attachment and after a short while they were normal and lively.

I should attribute this abnormal birth of young macajuels to some physiological adverse conditions which may be due mainly to the unhealthy and overheated condition of the animal's cage, and possibly also to excessive handling throughout the period of gestation.

SHORT NOTES AND ISOLATED OBSERVATIONS

New Locality Records for the Paradox Frog

In 1933, Parker⁽¹⁾ suggested that early records of *Pseudis paradoxa* in Trinidad may have resulted from confusion with *Rana palmipes*. A year later he reported that Visey-Fitzgerald had collected some from a pond in Mayaro but had found them nowhere else⁽²⁾. In April of that year Ulrich collected a series of tadpoles and adults, and in the following August, Greenhall, too, collected tadpoles and adults, both collections coming from a pond in the Ulrich estate in Mayaro—probably the same pond from which Vesey-Fitzgerald's specimens had been taken. Mayaro, therefore, is the only locality from which this frog has been recorded in Trinidad.

Three new localities can now be reported. On 26th September, 1955, a large tadpole was brought to the Emperor Valley Zoo from the Plum Mitán rice fields near Biche, and recently I collected two adults from canals in the Icacos Swamp near Cedros. I also heard at least three individuals singing in the Apex Oilfields dam at Fyzabad in June 1956.

It therefore appears that this frog is more widely distributed in Trinidad than previous records indicated.

J. S. KENNY.

REFERENCES

- (1) Parker, H. W. Tropical Agriculture 10: 8, 1933.
 (2) Parker, H. W. Tropical Agriculture 11: 123, 1934.

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Notes on Insect Pests

Two infestations occurred on fodder crops at Central Experimental Station, which may be the first of their kind recorded in Trinidad:

- (a) Kudzu (*Pueraria phaseoloides*) defoliated by the leaf-webbing moth *Lamprosema indica* F.
 (b) Pangola Grass (*Digitaria decumbens*) attacked by the leaf hopper *Kolla mollicella* Fowl.

It has been shown recently that the role of *Rhyncophorus palmarum* is unimportant in the spread of the nematode, *Aphelenchoides cocophilus*, which causes red ring disease of coconuts, as the main path of infection is through the roots from the soil.

G. STELL.

The King Vulture in Trinidad

The subject of this note is the King Vulture, *Sarcoramphus papa*. The only previous, first-hand record of this bird was by E. C. Taylor in 1864, who saw several feeding together on a dead python. Dr. A. Leotaud writing two years later in 1866 stated that the bird was common enough in certain parts of the island that he had not yet visited but that he personally had not had the privilege of seeing or examining one. Mr. Smooker heard of one in 1913 as occurring in the south of Trinidad but had never seen one, and Mr. R. Johnson told me that once in the company of the late Prof. Urich at Mayaro he saw what was unmistakably this bird.

A specimen was shot from the Quare Dam road in high forested country on April 18, 1942, by someone who may have mistaken it for a chicken hawk. A Mr. Froix of the Central Water Scheme passed the hunter with the wounded bird and persuaded him to hand it over. It was brought to the Imperial College the same afternoon and died within an hour. Those of us who saw it alive were indeed thrilled with the gorgeous colouring of its soft, head parts and its handsome plumage. The bird was preserved, but the coloured skin of its bare head faded soon after death and the colours had to be painted on to the mounted specimen which is now in the collection at the Royal Victoria Institute Museum. The colours are in no way exaggerated and if anything a little on the dull side, good as they are.

E. M. CHENERY.

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The Density of the Population of Breeding Kiskadees in Port-of-Spain

Although widely distributed throughout Trinidad, the kiskadee, *Pitangus sulphuratus trinitatis* (Hellmayr), is predominantly a bird of the towns and villages. During the 1954 breeding season, an attempt was made to estimate the density of the breeding population in a small area of Port-of-Spain. The area selected was that bounded by Prada St., Tragarete Rd., Elizabeth