

Herpetological Review 35:272 (2004) – Natural History Notes

AGKISTRODON PISCIVORUS PISCIVORUS (Eastern Cottonmouth). **DIET.** The Cottonmouth (*Agkistrodon piscivorus*) is an opportunistic predator that feeds on invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and small mammals (Gloyd and Conant 1990. Snakes of the *Agkistrodon* Complex. SSAR, Oxford, Ohio. 614 pp.; Mitchell 1994. The Reptiles of Virginia. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington. 368 pp.). Lepidopteran larvae, cicadas, grasshoppers, and damselflies, have been reported as insect prey (Gloyd and Conant 1990, *op. cit.*; Ernst et al. 2003. Snakes of the United States and Canada. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 668 pp.). Here we describe the first reported incidence of *A. piscivorus* consuming a moth cocoon. On 31 July 2003, in Gum Swamp, Beech Island, South Carolina, USA, an *A. piscivorus* (533 mm SVL) was collected by one of us (XG). It was left in a snake bag overnight, and during that time regurgitated a Southern Leopard Frog (*Rana sphenoccephala*) and an intact lepidopteran cocoon that was identified by one of us (DLW) as a Luna Moth (*Actias luna*, Saturniidae). The cocoon was possibly ingested secondarily, via the frog. However, because movement is important in releasing feeding behavior in anurans (Borchers et al. 1978. J. Comp. Physiol. 152:241-249; Freed 1988. Herpetologica 44:18-24), the frog likely did not feed on a non-motile cocoon. Interestingly, Smith (1997. Herp. Review 28:153) reported an instance of *Agkistrodon contortrix* regurgitating a luna moth cocoon seven days after being caught, suggesting that the cocoon was not digestible. The moth was deposited in the Savannah River Ecology Laboratory Museum.

Submitted by **XAVIER GLAUDAS**, University of Georgia's Savannah River Ecology Laboratory, Drawer E, Aiken, South Carolina 29802, USA (e-mail: xavier@srel.edu), and **DAVID L. WAGNER**, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, U-Box 43, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut 06269-3043, USA (e-mail: dwagner@uconnvm.uconn.edu).