

SUMMARY

Weight increased exponentially at a level of approximately one gram per day, length increase was incremental at a mean rate of 2.94mm per day. The first feather tracts were visible on day 2 (the alar tract being the first to develop). The first feather sheaths to emerge from the skin were also on the alar tract on day 3. The eyes began to open on day 5 but were not fully open until day 7. The first feathers to break their sheaths were on the ventral and dorsal tracts (flanks) on day 8.

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LEPTOTYPHLOPS SP ATTACKED BY OWLS.

Paul Smith

Burrowing Owls *Athene cunicularia* are known to include snakes and other reptiles in their diet (Konig et al 1999). On 15 November 2005 at Laguna Blanca, Departamento San Pedro, Central Paraguay (23°48'S, 56°43'W) a recently dead specimen of *Leptotyphlops* (tentatively identified as *L.albifrons*) was found close to the nesting burrow of a colony of burrowing owls. The individual showed fresh puncture marks to its sides and damage to its head consistent with an attack from the predatory owls. The specimen was small (TL = 200mm) and posed no threat to the owls who were feeding recently fledged young, but may have been killed as a precautionary measure by the adult owls. The damage inflicted to the head meant that identification to species level was not possible, but the coloration, morphometrics and scale pattern of the individual were consistent with *L.albifrons* (Ceil JM 1986). However caution must be exercised in the identification of this extremely difficult group and taking into account the damage to the head of the specimen it seems best to consider it unidentified. Paraguayan law prevented collection of the specimen and it was later consumed by a scavenging Four-toed Whiptail Lizard *Teius teyou*.

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