

First record of a brown widow spider *Latrodectus geometricus* Koch, 1841 (Araneae, Theridiidae) feeding scorpion (Scorpiones, Bothriuridae) in a Brazilian Atlantic forest

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(With 1 figure)

Scorpions are generalist predators, capturing a great variety of arthropods including even small vertebrates (Polis, 1990), however, they are also subject to predation, especially by vertebrates such as amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals (Polis et al., 1981; McCormick and Polis, 1990). Regarding the invertebrates, there are reports of predation by coleopterans, chilopods, solpugids, others scorpions and spiders (Cloudsley-Thompson, 1960; Williams, 1966; Cloudsley-Thompson, 1977; Punzo, 1998; McCormick and Polis, 1990; Melic, 2000). There is no record for this phenomenon in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest. To increase knowledge about the natural history these arachnids, this paper reports the first case of scorpion predation by spider for this biome. The observation was reported during field work in Reserva Particular de Patrimônio Natural Nossa Senhora do Oiteiro de Maracáipe (08°31'48"S, 35°01'05"O), Ipojuca, Southern coast of Pernambuco state, Brazil. The reserve area totals 76.2 ha, of these, 29.7 ha occupied by Atlantic forest (22.7%) classified by restinga and 46.5 ha occupied by mangroves. On 15-I-2013 at about 9:00 pm, following the nocturnal collection of a scorpion sample (active search), the second author (Costa, A.) noted on a scorpion (*Bothriurus* sp.) caught in the web of *Latrodectus geometricus* Koch, 1841 on a small bush approximately 30 cm above the ground (Figure 1). The scorpion found himself paralyzed, with the spider feeding its fluids. Probably the scorpion was captured while walking through the litter as this type of spider prey capture touching sues capture vertical wires

down and quickly injecting its paralyzing venom. Both, the spider and the scorpion were deposited in Arachnological Collection of Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, Brazil. The present case of predation may be considered as occasional. *Latrodectus geometricus* is not a regular predator of scorpions, but a generalist hunter that feeds on large diversity of prey like others *Latrodectus* species (Melic, 2000).

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Figure 1. The brown widow spider *Latrodectus geometricus* feeding a scorpion *Bothriurus* sp.