In the Cuban Archipelago, the Cuban Treefrog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*, Hylidae) is widely distributed on the main island and on at least 15 offshore islands, where it is relatively abundant (Estrada 2012; Rivalta González et al. 2014). The Cuban Treefrog is native to Cuba, the Cayman Islands, and at least eight Bahamian islands (Henderson and Powell 2009). It also has been introduced widely to many Caribbean Islands, Costa Rica, and the U.S. states of Florida, Georgia, and Hawaii (Owen et al. 2005; Henderson and Powell 2009; Powell et al. 2011, 2013). However, studies of this species focus largely on introduced rather than native populations (e.g., Meshaka 1996, 2001; Owen 2005; Smith 2005; Vargas Salinas 2006).

In Cuba, the Cuban Treefrog occupies both natural and anthropogenic habitats, in villages, rural, and urban areas, and often functions as a human commensal. It frequently is considered as a pest and can attain high indoor densities (e.g., personal observation of 4–6 individuals in a 2-m² bathroom). Cuban Treefrogs are voracious predators with a documented generalist diet that is highly plastic, consisting primarily of invertebrates, but small vertebrates such as frogs, lizards, and snakes are not uncommon (Meshaka 1996, 2001, 2011; Owen 2005; Glorioso et al. 2012) and cannibalism has been reported (Meshaka 2001; Kaiser et al. 2016; Borroto-Páez and Reyes 2019b).

Seven species of geckos have been introduced to Cuba, four of which are house geckos in the genus *Hemidactylus*. The Tropical House Gecko (*H. mabouia*) is the most abundant and widely distributed species in both urban and rural areas. It also functions as a human commensal (Borroto-Páez et al. 2015); sharing with the Cuban Treefrog walls, lights, and perches; however, few competitive interactions between the two species have been described. Herein we report predation on a Tropical House Gecko by a Cuban Treefrog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*) and a domestic cat (*Felis catus*).

In August 2019, we stayed in a 140-m² fourth-floor apartment in Corralillo (22°58′48″N, 80°36′05″W) in northern Villa Clara Province, Cuba. During our stay, we observed and counted at least five Cuban Treefrogs and eight Tropical House Geckos (three of them juveniles) in the apartment. During the night, an indoor light attracted nocturnal insects, principally lepidopterans. On several occasions, we observed both Cuban Treefrogs and Tropical House Geckos foraging for insects in the living room. Aware of the potential for competitive interactions, we kept cameras handy. At 1900 h on 22 August, we detected a Cuban Treefrog (SVL 52 mm) perched on a curtain support. At 2100 h, a young Tropical House Gecko (SVL 45 mm) emerged from behind a picture frame (Fig. 1A). The gecko approached the frog (Figs. 1B–C), apparently without detecting a possible predator or lacking the experience to avoid the threat. When the gecko touched the frog, it immediately turned and captured and swallowed the gecko. This happened so quickly that we captured this event with only the tip of the gecko’s tail protruding from the frog’s mouth (Fig. 1D). A moment later, ingestion was complete (Fig. 1E).

Previous records of *Osteopilus septentrionalis* preying on *Hemidactylus mabouia* (Meshaka 2004, 2011; Kingsland 2007; Voisin 2016) all occurred in Florida. To the best of our knowledge, no comparable predator-prey events have been reported in the native range of the Cuban Treefrog. However, because the two principals are both human commensals and...
Table 1. A list of predators of Tropical House Geckos (*Hemidactylus mabouia*), updating lists in Nogueira et al. (2013) and Pedroso-Santos et al. (2019). Additions are marked with an asterisk (*).

| Predator | Location | Reference(s) |
|----------|----------|--------------|
| **Arthropoda** (Insecta, Arachnida, Myriapoda) | | |
| Eciton Army Ants (*Eciton burchellii*) (Formicidae) | Brazil | Sazima (2015b)* |
| Unidentified ctenid spider (Ctenidae) | Brazil | Lanschi and Ferreira (2012) |
| Unidentified lycosid spider (Lycosidae) | Brazil | Koski et al. (2013) |
| Hermit Spider (*Nephilengys cruentata*) (Nephilidae) | Brazil | Diniz (2011) |
| Brick-red Pink-toed Spider (*Avicularia variegata*) (Theraphosidae) | Brazil | Queiroz-Almedia et al. (2019)* |
| Amazonian Scorpion (*Tityus metuendus*) (Buthidae) | Brazil | Albuquerque (2012)* |
| Unidentified camel spider (Solifugae) | Africa | Loveridge (1947)* |
| Unidentified myriapod (centipede?) | Brazil | Pessoa (2017)* |
| **Chordata: Vertebrata** (Amphibia) | | |
| Granulated Toad (*Rhinella major*) (Bufonidae) | Brazil | Pedroso-Santos et al. (2019) |
| Venezuelan Snouted Treefrog (*Scinax x-signatus*) (Hylidae) | Brazil | Zachi-Silva and Borges-Nojosa (2017) |
| Cuban Treefrog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*) (Hylidae) | Cuba | This paper* |
| | | Florida | Meshaka et al. (2004)*; Meshaka (2011)*; Kingsland (2007)*; Voirin (2016)* |

(continued)
## Predator Location Reference(s)

### Chordata: Vertebrata (Reptilia)

| Predator | Location | Reference(s) |
|----------|----------|--------------|
| Antigua Bank Tree Anole (*Anolis leachii*) (Dactyloidae) | Barbuda | Trager et al. (2018) |
| Cuban Giant Anole (*Anolis equestris*) (Dactyloidae) | Florida | Nicholson and Richards (1999)*; Thawley et al. (2017)* |
| Puerto Rican Crested Anole (*Anolis cristatellus*) (Dactyloidae) | Tortola (BVI) | Owen and Perry (2005)* |
| Cuban Brown Anole (*Anolis sagrei*) (Dactyloidae) | Florida | Benoit et al. (2019)* |
| North American Green Anole (*Anolis carolinensis*) (Dactyloidae) | Florida | Stroud and Sanger (2020)* |
| Tropical House Gecko (*Hemidactylus mabouia*) (Gekkonidae) | Brazil, Tanzania | Zamprogno and Teixeira (1998); Bonfigio et al. (2006)*; Pombal and Pombal-Jr. (2010); Alburquerque et al. (2013)*; Costa-Campos and Furtado (2013); Lyakurwa (2017) |
| Tokay Gecko (*Gekko gecko*) (Gekkonidae) | Florida | Meshaka et al. (2004)* |
| Camaleãozinho (*Erythlia perditus*) (Leioosauridae) | Brazil | Muscat et al. (2016) |
| Brazilian skink (*Brasilisicus agilis*) (Mabuyidae) | Brazil | Vrcibradic and Rocha (2002) |
| Brazilian whiptail (*Glaucomastix littoralis*) (Teiidae) | Brazil | Rocha et al. (2000), Menezes et al. (2006) |
| Amazon Lava Lizard (*Tropidurus torquatus*) (Tropiduridae) | Brazil | Araújo (1991); Rocha and Vrcibradic (1998); Teixeira and Giovanelli (1999); Galdino and Van Sluys (2004) |
| Neotropical Lava Lizard (*Tropidurus hispidus*) (Tropiduridae) | Brazil | Barbosa Da Silva et al. (2012)*; Souza Pagel et al. (2020)* |
| Nile Monitor (*Varanus niloticus*) (Varanidae) | Africa | Loveridge (1947)* |
| Turks & Caicos Boa (*Chilabothrus chrysogaster chrysogaster*) (Boidae) | Caicos Bank | Reynolds et al. (2017) |
| Linnaeus’s Sipo (*Chironius exoletus*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Rodrigues (2007) |
| Two-headed Sipo (*Chironius bicarinatus*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Vrcibradic and Eisfeld (2016) |
| Boettger’s Sipo (*Chironius flavolineatus*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Marques et al. (2016)* |
| Giant Parrot Snake (*Leptophis ahaetulla*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Albuquerque et al. (2007); Germano and França (2017) |
| Cope’s Parrot Snake (*Leptophis depressirostris*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Thomas (1976) |
| Green Vinesnake (*Oxybelis fulgidus*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Santos-Jr. et al. (2011) |
| Brown Vinesnake (*Oxybelis aeneus*) (Colubridae) | Brazil | Franzini et al. (2018) |
| Emerald Snake (*Hapsidophrys smaragdinus*) (Colubridae) | Gabon | Pauwels et al. (2017)* |
| Variegated Greensnake (*Philothamnus semivariiegatus*) (Colubridae) | Africa | Loveridge (1947)* |
| White-lipped Heraldsnake (*Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia*) (Colubridae) | Africa | Loveridge (1947)* |
| Puerto Rican Racer (*Borikenophis portoricensis*) (Dipsadidae) | Peter Island (BVI) | Grant (1932) |
| Mona Racer (*Borikenophis variegatus*) (Dipsadidae) | Mona Island | M. Leal in Henderson and Sajdak (1996) |
| Amaral’s Groundsnake (*Caeteto boa amarali*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil | Passos et al. (2012) |
| Velvet Swampsnake (*Erythrolamprus typhlus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil | Da Silva et al. (2010) |

(continued)
| Predator                                      | Location   | Reference(s)                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Banded Cat-eyed Snake (*Leptodeira annulata*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Cantor and Pizzatto (2008); Hudson et al. (2019)* |
| Fronted Groundsnake (*Lygophis flavifrenatus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | De Lema et al. (1983); Michaud and Dixon (1989)   |
| Duméril’s False Coralsnake (*Oxyrhopus clathratus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Morato (2005)                                      |
| Guibe’s Flamesnake (*Oxyrhopus guibei*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Gavira et al. (2015)*; Gaiarsa et al. (2013)*     |
| Forest Flamesnake (*Oxyrhopus petalarius*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Nogueiras et al. (2013)                            |
| Amazon False Coralsnake (*Oxyrhopus rhombifer*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Maschio et al. (2004)*; Assis et al. (2020)*      |
| Brazilian False Coralsnake (*Oxyrhopus trigeminus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Alencar et al. (2012)                             |
| Paraguayan Green Racer (*Philodryas nattereri*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | De Mesquita et al. (2011); Godinho et al. (2012)* |
| Lichtenstein’s Green Racer (*Philodryas olfersii*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Thomas (1976)                                     |
| Patagonian Green Racer (*Philodryas patagoniensis*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Barbo et al. (2011)                               |
| Common Green Racer (*Philodryas viridissima*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Jorge and Simoes (2018)*                          |
| Panamanian Spotted Nightsnake (*Siphlophis cervinus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Martin and Oliveira (1998)*                       |
| Guanabara Spotted Nightsnake (*Siphlophis pulcher*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Szaima and Argóló (1994)                         |
| Worontzow’s Spotted Nightsnake (*Siphlophis worontzowi*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Bernarde and Abe (2010)                          |
| Amazon Coastal House Snake (*Thamnodynastes pallidus*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Rocha and Vrcibradic (1998)                      |
| Coastal House Snake (*Thamnodynastes striagata*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | Bernarde et al. (2000)                           |
| Serra Snake (*Tropidodryas serra*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | De Oliveira (2008)                               |
| Jiboinha (*Tropidodryas striaticeps*) (Dipsadidae) | Brazil     | De Oliveira (2008)                               |
| Striped House Snake (*Boaedon lineatus*) (Lampropoiiidae) | Africa     | Loveridge (1947)*                                 |
| East African Shovel-snouted Snake (*Prosmyna ambigua*) (Prosynniidae) | Africa     | Loveridge (1953, 1958)*; Pitman (1974)*          |
| Two-striped Sandsnake (*Psammophis biseriatus*) (Psammophoiiidae) | Kenya      | Cottone and Bauer (2008)*                         |
| Spotted Brown Trope (*Tropidophis pardalis*) (Tropidophiidae) | Cuba       | Armas and Iturreaga (2017)*                      |
| Southern Coralsnake (*Micrurus frontalis*) (Elapidae) | Brazil     | De Lema et al. (1983)                             |
| Alcatrazes Lancehead (*Bothrops alcatraz*) (Viperidae) | Brazil     | Marques et al. (2002)                            |
| Golden Lancehead (*Bothrops insularis*) (Viperidae) | Brazil     | Duarte et al. (1995)                             |
| Jaracara (*Bothrops jararaca*) (Viperidae) | Brazil     | Szaima (1992); Barbo (2008); Barbo et al. (2011) |

**Chordata: Vertebrata (Aves)**

| Predator                                      | Location   | Reference(s)                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Roadside Hawk (*Rupornis magnirostris*) (Accipitridae) | Brazil     | De Macêdo and Freire (2010)                        |
| Smooth-billed Ani (*Crotophaga anis*) (Cuculidae) | Brazil     | Figueiredo-de-Andrade and Silveira (2012)          |
| Guira Cuckoo (*Guira guira*) (Cuculidae) | Brazil     | Aurora (2011)*; Crivellari (2014)*; Fenalti (2014)*; Andrade et al. (2015); Branco (2018)*; Rodrigues et al. (2019)* |
| Straight-billed Woodcreeper (*Dendroplex picus*) (Dendrocolaptidae) | Brazil     | Vieira (2019)*                                    |
| Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) (Falconidae) | Africa     | Loveridge (1947)*                                 |
| Black-billed Scythebill (*Campylorhamphus falcarius*) (Furnariidae) | Brazil     | Vecchi and Harding (2016)*                        |

(continued)
frequently coexist, predation events like that described above must be more frequent than reports would indicate.

When we asked the residents of the other five apartments in the building, all but one described situations similar to what we encountered. Only one ground-floor apartment was free of geckos, almost certainly because a cat (*Felis catus*) lived in that apartment. The resident described several occasions when the cat had hunted and eaten geckos in the apartment. The apparent absence of Tropical House Geckos suggests that a single cat can control a gecko population better than several Cuban Treefrogs.

Reports of predation on Tropical House Geckos usually are based on fortuitous observations of ephemeral nocturnal events. In Table 1, we update the list of predators provided previously by Nogueira et al. (2013) and Pedroso-Santos et al. (2019). We compiled new additions to those lists using internet searches in Google Scholar for keywords including “predation,” “prey,” “gekkonid lizards,” “tropical house gecko,” “Hemidactylus,” “mabouia,” and various combinations with names of previously recorded predators. Because natural history notes in *Herpetological Review* frequently record predation events, we searched for the keyword “mabouia” in all issues. In some instances, predators were listed without citing any evidence; those were omitted. Nevertheless, we added 39 new predators and 66 new events. The most frequent predators were vertebrates (73), mostly species of snakes (41), followed by lizards (13), birds (11), mammals (5), and frogs (3). Only eight records documented invertebrate predation. By far the most records and predator species were from Brazil (57), whereas, for example, only nine species and ten observations occurred on islands in the Greater Caribbean. More reports documented predation by native predators (77 species and 104 reports) than by introduced predators (9 and 17), which suggests that Tropical House Geckos could play an important role as prey to at least some native species. However, whether those predator interactions are beneficial or harmful to native ecosystems will require additional research, especially since little is known about the risks posed by exotic diseases and parasites dispersed by invasive species (e.g., Kraus 2009; Barnett et al. 2018).

Many undocumented reports record predation by Tropical House Geckos on insects, arachnids, and other invertebrates (most frequently nocturnal lepidopterans, cockroaches, crickets, myriapods, isopods, etc.), but most lack documentation of species and only a few provide actual evidence. Except for the six cases of cannibalism in *H. mabouia* (Table 1), only eight reports (6 of them from islands in the Greater Caribbean) document predation on small vertebrates (Table 2).

The role of Tropical House Geckos as prey (81 recorded predators; Table 1) contrasts sharply with their role as predator (8 recorded examples of vertebrate prey; Table 2). However, this apparent imbalance is largely attributable to the many records of unidentified invertebrates consumed by Tropical House Gecko (and not considered herein), despite the reality that invertebrates comprise nearly 99% of all animal diversity (Ponder and Lunney 1999).

These updated lists of Tropical House Geckos as predators and prey may be useful for guiding future studies on the feeding ecology of this widely introduced gecko with native species. Furthermore, although reports are sparse, the abundance and densities of introduced geckos suggest that they likely engage in many other interactions with native species.
Table 2. List of vertebrate prey taken by Tropical House Geckos (*Hemidactylus mabouia*).

| Prey                        | Location | Reference(s) |
|-----------------------------|----------|--------------|
| Unidentified frog (*Eleutherodactylus sp.*) | Puerto Rico | Rivero (1978) |
| White-headed Dwarf Gecko (*Lygodactylus mombasicus*) | Africa | Loveridge (1947) |
| Unidentified gecko (*Sphaerodactylus sp.*) | Puerto Rico | Rivero (1978) |
| Venezuelan Coastal Clawed Gecko (*Gonatodes antillensis*) | Curação | Dornburg et al. (2011), Lamb et al. (2020) |
| Dutch Leaf-toed Gecko (*Phyllodactylus martini*) | Curação | Dornburg et al. (2011), Lamb et al. (2020) |
| Unidentified anole (*Anolis sp.*) | Puerto Rico | Rivero (1978) |
| Unidentified anole hatching (*Anolis sp.*) | Florida | CISEH (2018) |
| Brahminy Blindsnake (*Indotyphlops braminus*) | Curação | Lamb et al. (2020) |

For example, competitive interactions of Tropical House Geckos with native Caribbean lizards have been described by Powell and Henderson (1992), Powell (2003), Stroud (2013), and Borroto-Páez and Reyes (2019a). A better understanding of the various roles filled by these invasive geckos is necessary for the development of management plans for their mitigation and control.

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