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SNAKE-EATING CORN SNAKE?

J.M.W. Mavromichalis,
Beukenlaan 85, 5741 DX Laarbeek.
The Netherlands
Phone +31 -492-465966.

One of my amelanistic corn snakes, *Elaphe guttata* offspring of 1998 stubbornly refused to eat new-born mice. That is the reason why she hardly grew, even after six months. I tried all my tricks on her. By coincidence I found out that she did eat pieces of new-born mice and new-born Skaapsteker, *Psammodromus*.

The snake stayed alive but after six months she was still 20 centimetres long. Other snakes from the same clutch were all well over 40 centimetres! Because this stubborn snake looked comfortable I decided to let her choose herself how much she wanted to eat of the offered pieces of new-born mice.

I showed this animal to a friend snake-keeper who immediately wanted her for his collection. This friend had four juvenile house snakes, *Lamprophis*

fuliginosus, with him in a plastic breadbin. He put the corn snake in the same breadbin and went home. When he arrived home after about one hour he was amazed to find out that there were only four snakes left in his breadbin. The reason became clear in seconds; the stubborn corn snake managed to eat one of the other snakes within one hour although the prey was about the same size. Whatever my friend tried, she refused to throw up. He decided to place her in a warm spot after taking a photograph.

After five days the corn snake regurgitated the snake, half digested. Immediately afterwards, a newborn mouse was accepted, which was digested. Since this incident the corn snake accepts whole new-born mice. After all this the corn snake became a decent eater. My friend decided to keep her apart from others. I never heard of snake-eating by *Elaphe* species. That's the reason I reported this case in *Litteratura Serpentina*.

Translated by Gijs van Aken,
Corrections by Chris Mattison.



Elaphe guttata missing black after eating a juvenile *Lamprophis*.

