BOULENGERINA ANNULATA STORMSI (Storm's Water Cobra). **ATTEMPTED PREDATION**. *Boulengerina annulata* is a stout-bodied piscivorous cobra found in and near the waters of the Congo Basin (Spawls et al. 2002. A Field Guide to the Reptiles of East Africa. Academic Press, London, England. 543 pp.). *Boulengerina a. stormsi* is restricted to Lake Tanganyika.

On the morning of 17 June 2003, we found a recently-killed adult female *B. a. stormsi* (1175 mm SVL; 1440 mm TL) floating a few meters from the Kasaba Lodge jetty (08°35'N, 30°30'E), Kasaba Bay, Lake Tanganyika, Zambia. There were a total of 16 punctures clustered in four main areas of trauma, two of which completely severed the spine. The first trauma area was 37–64 mm posterior of the snout, and featured a 9 mm entry wound at the rear of the head. The spine was severed, the palate punctured, and there was an apparent exit wound through the lower jaw. Another puncture wound was 27 mm posterior to the primary wound at the edge of the ventral scales. The second trauma area was 207–248 mm posterior of the snout, and included a 10 mm diameter puncture that severed the spine and exited the right body wall. Two superficial wounds were 37 and 41 mm behind the primary wound. The third trauma area was 351–378 mm posterior of the snout and included a 5 mm puncture on the right dorsum (anterior) and a superficial wound on the lower left side (posterior). The fourth trauma area was 511 mm posterior of the snout and consisted of an 11 mm axial gash on the left dorsal surface that exited the body wall on the lower right side.

These injuries are inconsistent with the most obvious threats to *B. a. stormsi* in Kasaba Bay: contact with an outboard engine, inadvertent entanglement in a fisherman's gill net, deliberate human persecution, or attack by Nile Crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*), Clawless Otter (*Aonyx capensis*), or Hippo (*Hippopotamus amphibius*). We believe the wounds are the result of attempted predation by a bird-of-prey. The arrangement of the punctures in four groups along the anterior half of the body, the specific damage to the head, and the complete penetration of the spine and body in several places are consistent with attack by a raptor. The African Fish Eagle (*Haliaeetus vocifer*) was the only large raptor observed during our visit; we saw five individuals along the shoreline opposite the lodge. Fish Eagles usually take live and dead fish from the water surface, but have also taken juvenile Nile Crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*) and Serrated Terrapins (*Pelusios sinuatus*; Broadley 1974. Honeyguide 78:11–19). They have also been observed capturing a swimming Green Snake (*Philothamnus* sp.; Sweeney 1971. Snakes of Nyasaland. A. Asher & Co., Amsterdam. 200 pp.) and stealing an unidentified snake from a Martial Eagle (*Polemaetus bellicosus*; van Vuuren 1984. African Wildlife 38:30). Snouted Cobras (*Naja annulifera*) and Mozambique Spitting Cobras (*Naja mossambica*) have been consumed by various other African raptors (Broadley 1959. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool. 120:1–100; Lendrum 1979. Ostrich 50:203–214; Steyn 1973. Ostrich 44:1–22; Steyn 1980. Ostrich 51:54–55; Sweeney 1961, *op. cit.*). Water cobras are routinely exposed to aerial predators when surfacing to breath. It is possible that the apparent pre-ecdysis condition of the cobra, indicated by opaque eyes, may have made it less alert and more vulnerable to aerial predation. Though the damage inflicted in this case was clearly sufficient to kill the cobra, there was no evidence of feeding on the corpse. The specimen was preserved in ethanol and left with Kalambo Lodge, Zambia.

We thank Toby Veall, Tabatha Bruce, Don Broadley, and Harry Greene for assistance and thank YAP Films and Animal Planet for funding "O'Shea's Big Adventure Series 4: Water Cobra."

Submitted by **MARK O'SHEA**, School of Applied Sciences, University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SB, England (e-mail: oshea@snakemos.demon.co.uk); and **PETER B. McINTYRE**, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Corson Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853-2701, USA (e-mail: pbm3@cornell.edu)