EPICRATES INORNATUS (Puerto Rican Boa). CANNIBALISM. Cannibalism is rare not only in snakes, but in reptiles in general (Polis and Myers 1985. J. Herpetol. 19:99–107; Pough et al. 2001. Herpetology. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 612 pp.). Here, we document cannibalism in Epicrates inornatus, a medium-sized boa that frequents forest floors, trees, and vines at the entrance of caves. Its diet includes invertebrates, frogs, lizards, birds, bats, and introduced small mammals (mainly black rats; Wiley 2003. Carib. J. Sci.39:189-194). Epicrates inornatus is widely distributed in Puerto Rico and is especially abundant in the northern karst region (Rivero 1998. The Amphibians and Reptiles of Puerto Rico, 2nd ed. Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, San Juan. 510 pp.). On 11 August 2004 at 0715 h, we found a sub-adult E. inornatus (ca. 100-150 cm TL) constricting and preying upon a conspecific juvenile (ca. 50 cm TL) in a karst valley in Sabana Seca (18°27'N, 66°12'W), northern coastal Puerto Rico. The juvenile was being swallowed headfirst and was ca. 1/4 consumed when first observed. We watched and photographed the boas for ca. 15 minutes before leaving and during this time the snake being consumed did not move and was presumed dead. Thus, it is unclear whether this observation of cannibalism is a result of conspecific predation or scavenging.

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