

## Biannually Deciduous Reptilian Organs Used as Foodstuffs by Indigenous Villagers

Anthony Laurel<sup>1</sup>, James Birch<sup>1</sup>, May Birch<sup>1</sup>, and Steven Stone<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Littleroot Town Research Laboratory, Saga Prefecture, Japan

<sup>2</sup>Devon Corporation, Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan

### Abstract:

Endemic animals contribute to dietary diversity in many cultures. The Rokotsuna Uso people of the Hoenn island chain of Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan are one example, eating what is referred to as the fruit of Tropius (*Fructusaurus alatus* Birch 2002). Notably, Tropius is not a plant but a reptile, and its “fruit” is actually a highly specialized, biannually deciduous external organ. The yellow crescent-shaped “fruit” always grows in clusters of three, ventral to the axis. They reach full size after four months of growth, after which they can be gently pulled off of the animal without causing injury, and new fruit begin to grow two months after the fruit are picked. The evolutionary function of Tropius fruit has seen considerable debate, but we offer a novel hypothesis. The most likely function of the fruit is to increase its survival rate when living with omnivores, like humans, that could potentially hunt Tropius. When humans first arrive in a new habitat, the populations of large fauna typically decrease or are extirpated due to hunting. As *F. alatus* are three times the mass of the next largest species found in its habitat, it would be at great risk of extinction if not for its fruit. Strikingly, this risk is present even though Tropius are not known to exist outside of a prominent media franchise. The fruit are prized as a local delicacy, and are especially enjoyed by children for their pleasant, sweet flavor, further supporting this hypothesis.

### Biography:

Professor Laurel is a researcher at the Littleroot Town Research Laboratory, where he studies natural history, speciation, and ecology with James Birch. Prior to this, he was a visiting researcher at the Oreburgh Mining Museum and a postdoctoral researcher at the Devon Cor-

poration. He has a BA and MA in biology from Nacrene College, and a PhD in biology from Slateport University, where he completed his doctoral thesis, “An Overview of the Monstrasinu Fossil Record.” He has previously presented research at the Oreburgh Mining Museum, the Nacrene Museum, the Pewter Museum of Science, and the Oceanic Museum. He currently lives off of Route 119 in Miyazaki Prefecture, Japan, with his pet Monstrasinu.

### Publication of speakers:

1. Rowan W (2012) An expansion of *Fructusaurus alatus* range into the Sinnoh Region. *Monstrasinu Bioecology*. 31:9-27.
2. Laurel A, Birch J (2020) Tropius fruit has no known medicinal properties. *Journal of Route Analysis*. 9:22-25.
3. Laurel A, Birch J, Birch M, Stone S (2020) We Don't Exist: Pseudonyms, Fictional Characters, and Pretend Institutions in This Abstract. *Journal of Route Analysis*. 6:1-13.
4. Bulbapedia, the Pokemon Encyclopedia. [https://bulbapedia.bulbagarden.net/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://bulbapedia.bulbagarden.net/wiki/Main_Page)
5. Shelomi M, Richards A, Li I, Okido Y (2012) A Phylogeny and Evolutionary History of the Pokemon. *Annals of Improbable Research*. 18:4.

### Webinar on Food and Nutrition

**Citation:** Anthony Wojciehowicz Laure; Biannually Deciduous Reptilian Organs Used as Foodstuffs by Indigenous Villagers; Food and Nutrition 2020 | July 22, 2020 | London, UK.