

PRELIMINARY DIAGNOSES OF FOUR NEW SEA SNAKES.

BY MALCOLM A. SMITH, M.R.C.S., F.Z.S.

Hydrophis lamberti.

Posterior maxillary teeth, 10. Head moderate, body moderately elongate. Eye longer than its distance from the mouth, rostral broader than deep, frontal shorter than its distance from the rostral; one prae- and two postoculars; two superposed anterior temporals followed by ordinary scales; 8 supralabials, third and fourth touching the eye. No distinct posterior chin-shields.

35 scales round the neck, 45 round the body, anteriorly imbricate, posteriorly hexagonal and more or less juxtaposed, with a central tubercle or short keel. Ventrals distinct throughout, 281-302.

Yellowish grey above, yellowish white below, with 33 to 38 dark dorsal rhombs. Head yellowish olive.

Total length, 860; tail 80 mm.

Habitat, Gulf of Siam. Type locality, mouth of the Meklong River.

Closely allied to *H. ornatus* Gray, from which it differs chiefly in the smaller number of scales round the body.

Hydrophis rostralis.

Posterior maxillary teeth, 5. Head small, body long and slender anteriorly, snout long. Rostral as broad as deep, the portion visible above equal to three-quarters or the whole length of the internasal suture. Frontal shorter than its distance from the rostral, one prae- and one postocular; one large anterior temporal, succeeded by another as large. 6 supralabials, third and fourth touching the eye. Chin-shields subequal, the posterior pair in contact.

20 to 23 scales round the neck, 35 to 41 round the thickest part of the body, anteriorly elongate and imbricate, posteriorly hexagonal and more or less juxtaposed, the keels most strongly marked posteriorly, and usually broken up into several tubercles. Ventrals feebly enlarged, single anteriorly, completely divided by a median furrow posteriorly, 272 to 302.

Pale bluish grey above, yellowish or whitish below, the young with indistinct dark dorsal bars or complete bands. Head grey, yellowing with age.

Total length, 1025; tail 95 mm.

Habitat. Coast of Perak. Type locality, Kuala Larut. Allied to *H. gracilis* (Shaw) and *H. cantoris* Gunther.

Hydrophis consobrinus.

Posterior maxillary teeth, 5. Head very small, body very long and slender anteriorly. Eye slightly greater than its distance from the mouth; rostral broader than deep, frontal equal to or less than its distance to the rostral. One prae- and one or two postoculars. One large anterior temporal, followed by another not so large. 6 or 7 supralabials, third and fourth touching the eye. Chin-shields subequal, the posterior pair in contact or partly separated by a scale.

25 to 31 scales round the neck, 36 to 45 round the thickest part of the body, anteriorly elongate and imbricate, posteriorly hexagonal and subimbricate or more or less juxtaposed, with a central tubercle or short keel. Ventrals distinct throughout, 328 to 401.

Grey above, yellowish white below, with 60 to 80 dark grey bands or annuli. Head greyish olive, with a curved yellow mark along the sides of the head and across the snout.

Total length, 1035; tail 115 mm.

Habitat. Gulf of Siam and Coast of Perak. Type from the mouth of the Bangpakong river, Siam.

Allied to *H. fasciatus* (Schneider) from which it differs in the lower average number of scales round the body, in the lower average number of ventrals, in the size of the frontal, in the small scales behind the parietal shields, and in colouration.

Hydrophis siamensis.

Posterior maxillary teeth, 8 or 9. Head moderate, body moderately elongate; eye equal to or a little larger than its distance from the mouth; rostral distinctly broader than deep; frontal as long as or shorter than its distance from the rostral; one prae- and one (rarely two) postoculars; usually a single anterior temporal; 7 or 8 supralabials, third and fourth (rarely fifth) touching the eye. Chin-shields subequal, the posterior pair in contact or partly separated by a scale.

29 to 35 scales round the neck, 35 to 42 round the thickest part of the body, imbricate anteriorly, hexagonal and subimbricate posteriorly, with a central tubercle or short keel. Ventrals distinct throughout, 271 to 343.

Greyish or greenish-grey above, greenish or yellowish white below, with 55 to 68 dark grey annuli. Head greyish or blackish with yellow markings along the side of the head and across the snout.

Total length, 1000 ; tail 125 mm.

Habitat. Gulf of Siam. Type locality, mouth of the Chantabun river.

Nearest perhaps to *H. cyanocinctus* Daudin, but differing in the much smaller size, smaller frontal shield, larger eye, single anterior temporal, and in colouration.