

After each removal of the eggs the birds disappeared for a day or two, and then repaired the nest with fresh materials for another two or three days. When laying commenced, one egg was laid daily. The laying and taking of the first four or five clutches went very smoothly. After that the old birds got rather worried and tried to play a trick on me, in which I must admit they were successful the first time. They pretended to build a new nest in another corner of the same roof under which the old one was situated. This they did quite openly, whilst at the same time they secretly repaired the old nest and laid five new eggs there. I found this out too late and the eggs then taken were too much incubated.

Next time they again tried the same trick, but I was now on my guard, and had much pleasure in watching their efforts to mislead me. They looked very pleased when I saw them working on the false nest; but if I happened to be near by when one of them brought a straw intended for the real nest, they quietly dropped it and started an innocent whistling from where they sat. The male actually went on with the false nest after the female had commenced brooding.

After I had taken the 9th clutch on the 28th August, the birds disappeared suddenly. I presume they went to another place for a better trick and found it, for about five weeks later, when one day I went home for tiffin and crossed one of the lawns in the compound, two old Mynas came down in front of me and introduced to me five—for the time of the year—very young offspring. I felt sure I had my old friends before me, as it seemed to me that they were proud and smiling. If the presumption about this last brood is correct, this female laid 45 eggs in the season, but of 40 eggs I am certain.

The specific name of the Common Myna is *tristis*, which is, it seems to me, rather inappropriate, as there is nothing sad or depressing about this bird either in dress or character.

C. J. AAGAARD.

Bangkok, 29th November 1923.

### No. III. Occurrence of the Rat Snake (*Zaocys carinatus*) in North Siam

I recently secured a specimen of this rare snake in the Me Pow forest, 20 miles east of Muang Ngow. Previously it has not been recorded north of Nakon Sritamarat. The snake which at first sight I took to be a Hamadryad measured 9ft 2in in length, and in life cer-

tainly bore a very remarkable resemblance to that snake, and the unanimous opinion of all the natives who saw it was that it was a "ngu how hom". Boulenger in his Fauna of the Malay Peninsula says that this snake, like the Common Indian Rat Snake (*Zamenis mucosus*) is sometimes mistaken for the Hamadryad.

H. W. JOYNSON.

Lampang, April 1924.

#### No. IV. Cobras and King Cobras.

The following record of an unusually large Hamadryad (*Naja hannah*) may be of interest to your readers. It was shot recently by my Dyak collector while on a visit to Nakon Sritamarat, Peninsular Siam. At the time the event happened it was unfortunately getting dark and having lost his way in the jungle my man had not time to skin the snake, so contented himself with measuring it by means of his gun and bringing back the head. According to this computation the creature was 18' 4" in length, which as far as I am aware is much larger than any specimen previously recorded.\* My man is quite used to taking measurements and I have no reason to doubt his statement. The measurements of the head are as follows:—from the tip of the snout to the end of the occipital shields 98 mm., greatest breadth of head 72 mm., greatest breadth across the parietals 47 mm.

The King Cobra has the reputation of attacking people whenever it meets them, but that is not my experience. When living at Bangnara, Patani, some years ago, I encountered them on several occasions, but I never found them vindictive unless I barred the way to their hole, which was generally in an old ant-hill. One of my tappers, however, was attacked while at work. He told me the snake went for him, raising its head about five feet from the ground and striking at his face. He succeeded in killing it with a long stick and it measured 12' 6" in length.

The Common Cobra was very numerous at Bangnara and I often used to amuse myself when I met them, by hitting them up with a stick, when they would rise and move towards me practically upon the tail, at least three-quarters of the body being raised from the ground. It was by no means a dangerous game as they were only able to move slowly when in that position.

I have been told that Cobras generally live in pairs and that if one of them is killed the other will come and take revenge upon the slayer. When living in Singgora I was having a nap after tiffin one day, when my boy came up and told me there was a cobra in the

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\* The largest specimen that we can remember was recorded in the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society, vol. ii p. 245, and measured 16' 4" in length; but it is seldom that specimens over 15' are met with. [Eds.]