NAT. HIST. BULL. SIAM SOC. 27:181-198. 1978.

NOTES

1. Additions of the Snake Fauna of Phuket Island, Peninsular Thailand.

Casual collecting and observation subsequent to a previous study of the snakes of Phuket Island, peninsular Thailand (FRITH, 1974 1977a, 1977b; FRITH & FRITH, 1975) has resulted in the addition of four snake species to the fauna of that island, two of which are new species to Thailand (FRITH & BOSWALL and FRITH & MACIVER, this issue), giving a total of 28 species now known to definitely occur on the island. Some additional specimens and observations of other species were also obtained and are presented. Any further reference herein to the previous work refers to the survey of snakes of Phuket (FRITH, 1977a).

The scientific nomenclature used is that of TAYLOR (1965) for consistancy with my previous work. Vernacular names are those of TWEEDIE (1957) where applicable. Scale counts are not presented in this short note, but those of all specimens obtained and mentioned here are within the known range recorded for the species concerned (TWEEDIE, 1957; TAYLOR, 1965).

Cylindrophis rufus Schlegel. Red-tailed Pipe Snake.

Since publication of the previous work I have obtained four specimens of this snake, which was not previously found on Phuket Island during four years of casual collecting.

The first specimen was found dead on a road 2 km. east of Rawi Beach, southern Phuket Island on 12 February 1977 and measured 382 mm in total length. Two more were collected, one on 9 July and the other on 11 August 1977, both from a spot in Phuket Town suburbs where a deep road-side trench was being dug. They measured 670 and 684 mm in total length respectively. The men in the trench had dug out the snakes, killed them, and tossed them onto the road. The depth at which the snakes were located is not known. The fourth specimen, measuring 336 mm in total length, was taken inside a house situated

very close indeed to the above mentioned road works and it is possible this individual was disturbed by the excavations.

All four snakes were of typical colouration when obtained; being blackish with a bluish-purple iridescence and small brick-red areas, notably on the undertail but also on the nape in the smaller specimen. The specimens show the darkening of white areas with increasing size, as described by TAYLOR (1965:658).

Boiga cyanea (Duméril, Bibron and Duméril). Green Cat Snake.

Most of the 15 to 20 Phuket specimens I examined previously were collected from one particular spot south of Phuket Town and since then I have examined several other adults and collected two very young snakes at this same spot. The locality concerned obviously supports a very dense local population of this species, as few have been seen elsewhere on the island. It is noteworthy, therefore, that this locality is an isolated and relatively high and steep hill covered with secondary forest growth and gardens surrounded by low lying rice fields and mangroves.

Of the two juvenile snakes collected one measures 510 and the other 483 mm in total length. Both were the same attractive colours in life, quite unlike the uniform green adults, as follows: Body length and tail rich russet-reddish, being paler on ventrals but yellowish on the anterior quarter of the body length to pure sulphur yellow just behind the throat. Lower lip, chin, and throat conspicuously pure white. Upper lip conspicuously pure rich sulphur yellow. Top of head and nape rich pea-green with very conspicuous jet-black lines between the larger scales, including between the larger yellow labials. Iris silvery-white with very fine black scribbling lines. As pointed out by TAYLOR & ELBEL (1958) the head of young specimens of this snake becomes smoky black in preservative; and the body colour fades to a brown and all yellow fades to whitish.

Chrysopelea paradisi Boie. Paradise Tree Snake.

Specimen 34 refered to in my previous work was kept in captivity for nine weeks, and laid seven eggs sometime between 8 and 30 September 1974.

Dendraspis hannah (Cantor). King Cobra.

I must here record the presence of the King Cobra on Phuket Island, despite my previous statement to the contrary. My good friend Mr Robbert L. Verhey was sitting on the veranda of his raised beach house in July 1977 when a snake about a metre in total length was pointed out to him as it climbed about some bougainvillea plants behind him in an agile fashion. Both he and his son Anton took very fine, and close up, photographs of the snake as it raised its head the height of its flattened hood (Fig. 1). The photographs, one of which Figure 1 was traced directly from, leave no doubt whatever that the snake was a juvenile King Cobra of identical markings to those on the juvenile specimen illustrated in Plate 32 of Soderburg's paper (1973). The

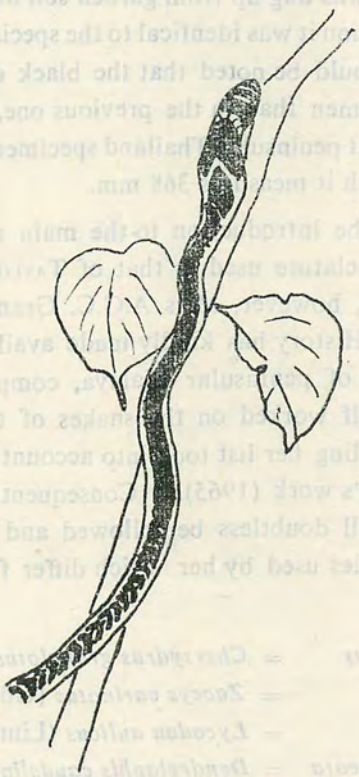

Figure 1. Drawing of a live King Cobra on Phuket Island. Drawn directly from a photograph see text.

lighter areas of the Phuket snake to just behind its hood were pale sulphur yellow, the dorsal light cross-bars yellowish-white, and the dorso-lateral pale line off-white.

It is remarkable that having examined almost every dead, and many live, snakes on the island of Phuket for almost four years I have never seen the King Cobra myself. The photographs of Messrs. Verhey are, however, irrefutable, but it would appear that the King Cobra is very sparse and secretive indeed on Phuket.

Calliophis maculiceps Günther. Small-spotted Coral Snake.

I have an additional specimen of this lovely species, collected on 12 November 1976 in the grounds of the Phuket Marine Biological Centre, Phuket Island. It was dug up from garden soil at a depth of about 10 cm. In live colouration it was identical to the specimen I have previously described, and it should be noted that the black dorsal spots are even smaller in this specimen than in the previous one, despite Soderburg's statement (1973) that peninsular Thailand specimens seem to have larger spots. In total length it measures 368 mm.

As stated in the introduction to the main results of this study (FRITH, 1976) nomenclature used is that of TAYLOR (1965). Since the previous publication, however, Miss A.G.C. Grandison of the British Museum of Natural History has kindly made available to me a draft of a list of the snakes of peninsular Malaya, compiled by her. Miss Grandison has herself worked on the snakes of the Malay Peninsula (1972), and in compiling her list took into account important literature subsequent to Taylor's work (1965). Consequently, her nomenclature is up to date and will doubtless be followed and I therefore give here names of snake species used by her which differ from those of Taylor for reference.

Acrochordus granulatus	= *Chersydrus granulatus* (Schneider)
Ptyas carinatus	= *Zaocys carinatus* (Günther)
Lycodon capucinus	= *Lycodon aulicus* (Linnaeus)
Dendrelaphis caudolineata	= *Dendrelaphis caudolineatus* (Gray)
Dendrelaphis formosa	= *Dendrelaphis formosus* (Boie)
Dendrelaphis cyanochloris	= *Dendrelaphis pictus* (Gmelin)

Dendrelaphis ahaetulla	= *Dendrelaphis striatus* (Cohn)
Natrix flavipunctata	= *Xenochrophis piscator* (Schneider)
Dryophis prasinus	= *Ahaetulla prasina* (Boie)
Dendraspis hannah	= *Ophiophagus hannah* (Cantor)

CORRIGENDUM

In my previous paper the last paragraph concerning the Amphibious Sea Snake *Laticauda colubrina* (FRITH, 1976 : 301) states that this species is the only sea snake that comes ashore, and lays eggs. This paragraph should of course in fact refer to all members of the genus *Laticauda* and not only to *L. colubrina*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks to Mr **Trevor Magdalino,** Mr **Banjong Mianmanus,** Miss **Ratsuda Tantanasiriwong,** Miss **Paulene Vermeer,** Mr **Robbert L. Verhey** and his son Mr **Anton W. Verhey** for very kindly providing me with specimens or photographs of snakes. I am grateful to Mr **Jeffrey V. Waters** for helpful correspondence and encouragement.

REFERENCES

FRITH, C.B. 1974. Second record of the sea snake *Laticauda colubrina* in Thailand waters. *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **25** : 209.

FRITH, C.B. 1977a. A survey of the snakes of Phuket Island and the adjacent mainland areas of peninsular Thailand. *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **26** : 263-316.

FRITH, C.B. 1977b. The sea snake *Hydrophis spiralis* (Shaw); a new species to the fauna of Thailand. *Nat. Hist Bull. Siam Soc.* **26** : 339-341.

FRITH, C.B., and BOSWALL, J. 1978. Cantor's Water Snake, *Cantoria violacea;* a vertebrate new to the fauna of Thailand. *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **27**:187-188

FRITH, C.B., and FRITH, D.W. 1975. A case of snake bite by the Shore Pit Viper, *Trimeresurus purpureomaculatus* (Viperidae). *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **26** : 159-163.

FRITH, C.B., and MACIVER, D. 1978. The Crab-eating Water Snake, *Fordonia leucobalia* (Schleg.); another snake new to Thailand. *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **27** :189-191.

GRANDISON, A.G.C. 1972. The Gunong Benom Expedition 1967, 5. Reptiles and amphibians of Gunong Benom with a description of a new species of *Macrocalamus*. *Bull. Brit. Mus. Nat. Hist.* **23** : 45-101.

SODERBERG, P. 1973. On eleven Asian Elapid snakes with specific reference to their occurrence in Thailand. *Nat. Hist. Bull. Siam Soc.* **24** : 203-317.

TAYLOR, E.H. 1965. The serpents of Thailand and adjacent waters. *Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull.* **45** : 609-1096.

TAYLOR, E.H., and ELBEL, R.E. 1958. Contribution to the herpetology of Thailand. *Univ. Kansas Sci. Bull.* **38** : 1033-1189.

TWEEDIE, M.W.F. 1957. *The snakes of Malaya*. Second Edition. Government Printing Office. Singapore.

Clifford B. Frith

Dept. of Zoology
Monash University
Clayton, Victoria 3168
Australia.