

Blue bronzeback at MacRitchie forest

Subject: Blue bronzeback, *Dendrelaphis cyanochloris* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, forest at the northern shore of MacRitchie Reservoir; 18 June 2013; 2201 hrs.

Habitat: Mature secondary forest.

Observers: Contributor, with Ryuta Teo and others.

Observation: A snake of about 90 cm total length was first seen coiled on a thin leafless branch about 3 m off the ground. After a few minutes, it slowly unraveled its coils to reveal the oblique rows of blue skin on the sides of its anterior body.

Remarks: The blue bronzeback is one of six species of *Dendrelaphis* recorded from Singapore. It appears to be locally uncommon, and is distinguished from the similar looking elegant bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis formosus*) by the blue skin between the scales on the neck and the absence of three black lines on the posterior part of the body (Baker & Lim, 2012). When alarmed, this species is known to inflate the anterior part of its body, revealing the metallic blue coloration on each side (Grismer, 2011).

References:

Baker, N. & K. K. P. Lim, 2012. *Wild Animals of Singapore. A Photographic Guide to Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians and Freshwater Fishes*. Reprinted with corrections and updates. Draco Publishing and Distribution Pte. Ltd. and Nature Society (Singapore). 99 pp.

Grismer, L. L., 2011. *Amphibians and Reptiles of the Seribuat Achipelago (Peninsula Malaysia) – A Field Guide*. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main. 239 pp.



Photograph by Noel Thomas

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