

Big-eye green whip snake at Venus Drive

Subject: Big-eye green whip snake, *Ahaetulla mycterizans* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Venus Drive trail adjacent to MacRitchie forest; 20 November 2009; 1040 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest. On branches of a small tree, on a slope between the path and a small flowing stream.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: The snake, of between 60 and 70 cm total length, was seen curled around the branches of a small tree about 1.5 m off the ground, and close to a small stream in mature secondary forest/old plantation at night. It assumed a threat posture while being photographed but did not strike or flee.

Remarks: *Ahaetulla mycterizans* is known from Peninsular Malaysia, Thailand, Sumatra and Java (Das, 2012: 18). In Singapore, it is considered ‘critically endangered’, being restricted to mature forest (Lim et al., 2008: 161), as compared to the Oriental whip snake (*Ahaetulla prasina*), which can be found in disturbed habitats such as forest edges, parks and overgrown gardens. Identification is based on the noticeably larger eye (compared to that of *Ahaetulla prasina*) with the orbit forming a distinct ridge or ‘brow’ on the upper contour of the head.

References:

Das, I., 2012. *A Naturalist's Guide to the Snakes of South-east Asia*. John Beaufoy Publishing Limited, Oxford, England. 160 pp.

Lim, K. K. P., N. Baker, R. Teo & T. M. Leong, 2008. Reptiles. In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho (eds.). *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore. Second edition*. Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 160-176.



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