

## Snakes of Saint John's Island

**Subjects:** Reticulated python, *Malayopython reticulatus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Pythonidae); Fig. 1.  
 Brahminy blind snake, *Ramphotyphlops braminus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Typhlopidae).  
 Gold-ringed cat snake, *Boiga dendrophila* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae); Fig. 2.  
 Paradise gliding snake, *Chrysopelea paradisi* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae); Fig. 3.  
 Painted bronzeback, *Dendrelaphis pictus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae); Fig. 4.  
 House wolf snake, *Lycodon capucinus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae); Fig. 5.  
 Yellow-lipped sea krait, *Laticauda colubrina* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Elapidae); Fig. 6.

**Subjects identified by:** Contributor.

**Location, date and time:** Saint John's Island (in the Singapore Straits); between 2003 and 2013; from 1000 to 1320 hrs.

**Habitats:** Parkland, coastal forest, sandy beach, granite bunds along the seashore.

**Observers:** Contributor and others.

**Observations:** Seven species, each with one record, are herein featured.

1) A juvenile reticulated python of about 35 cm total length (Fig. 1) was observed in the toilet of Tropical Marine Science Institute (TMSI) on 10 September 2012 at around 1030 hrs.

2) One brahminy blind snake of about 8 cm total length (not illustrated) was found under a piece of wood on a grass lawn by the beach on 23 May 2013 by Lua Hui Kheng and preserved at the Zoological Reference Collection of the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum, National University of Singapore, under the catalogue number ZRC 2.7015.

3) A juvenile gold-ringed cat snake of about 40 cm total length (Fig. 2) was discovered along the foot path on 12 October 2011 at around 1000 hrs.

4) An adult paradise gliding snake of about 45 cm total length (Fig. 3) was seen on a tree on 22 September 2003 at about 1320 hrs.

5) One painted bronzeback of around 20 cm total length (Fig. 4) was observed among the grass on 13 April 2012 just before 1000 hrs.

6) A house wolf snake of about 20 cm total length (Fig. 5) was seen along the corridor of TMSI on 24 September 2007 at around 1200 hrs.

7) A yellow-lipped sea krait of around 70 m total length (Fig. 6) was seen on the side of a granite bund on 24 June 2005 at around 1030 hrs.

**Remarks:** This seems to be the first compilation of the diversity of terrestrial and amphibious snakes on Saint John's Island. It consists of species that occur on coral fringed sea-shores (yellow-lipped sea krait), coastal forests (gold-ringed cat snake) and around human habitation (reticulated python, brahminy blind snake, paradise gliding snake, painted bronzeback and house wolf snake). The snake fauna is similar to that of Semakau Landfill (Chua, 2011: 281-282), but without the banded file snake *Acrochordus granulatus*, the dog-faced water snake *Cerberus schneiderii*, [as *Cerberus rynchops*] and the shore pit-viper *Cryptelytrops purpureomaculatus*. The brahminy blind snake, paradise gliding snake and painted bronzeback were not recorded from Semakau.

**Reference:** Chua, M. A. H., 2011. The herpetofauna and mammals of Semakau landfill: a Project Semakau checklist. *Nature in Singapore*. 4: 277-287.



Fig. 1. Reticulated python juvenile on 10 September 2012.



Fig. 2. Gold-ringed cat snake on 12 October 2011.

Photographs by Chim Chee Kong



Fig. 3. Paradise gliding snake on 22 September 2003. Photograph by Chim Chee Kong



Fig. 4. Painted bronzeback on 13 April 2012. Photograph by Chim Chee Kong



Fig. 5. House wolf snake on 24 September 2007. Photograph by Lim Swee Cheng



Fig. 6. Yellow-lipped sea krait on 24 June 2005. Photograph by Chim Chee Kong

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