

Notes on the species of Ophidia and Lacertilia obtained at Sime Road Internment Camp, Singapore, during September 1944

Alexander Cross

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by Alexander Cross.

~~No species additional to those mentioned in previous reports
have been taken during the month under review. No.~~

Addenda to Previous Reports.

Xenopeltis unicolor:

- 471 15.9.44 ♀ measured and then released alive.
478 23.9.44 ♀ Contained the remains of a skink (Lygosoma
bowringii). Two parasitic worms were
obtained from the outside of the posterior
portion of the intestine of this snake.

Lycodon aulicus:

- 459 5.9.44 ♂
470 15.9.44 ♀ Contained 8 eggs, measuring ~~22.0 x 11.5~~
22.0 - 22.5 x 11.5 mm..
472 15.9.44 ♀ Contained 3 immature eggs (2 anterior and
1 posterior to ovary) measuring 26.0 - 28.0
x 9.0 mm..
484 26.9.44 ♀ H. & B., 397.0 mm.; Tail, 86.0 mm.;
Total, 483.0 mm.; Costals, 17; Ventrals 195;
Anal divided; Subcaudals, 66 pairs.

Pseudorhabdium longiceps:

- 474 16.9.44 ♀ Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill states, in epistola,
"This specimen was taken in loose soil at a
depth of 8" near Hut 40. On dissection, the
anterior portion of the intestine was found
to contain the head and anterior 7 mms. of
an earthworm, about 2.25 mms. in diameter;
attached to this, running down the snake's
intestine, was a stringy thread, about 55 mm
long, of partially digested animal tissue,
and a quantity of fine soil debris, suggesting
the former existence of a complete worm of
about 60 mms.. The posterior portion of the
gut contained a further quantity of similar
fine soil.

I am, by the way, strongly of the opinion
that the two fragments of snakes taken from
somewhat similar habitats on 8:9:44 & 9:9:44
were also of this species. If this is so it
would suggest (a) that this snake burrows (all
three specimens were obtained during chunkil-
ing) and (b) that the diet includes earthworm."

Ahaetulla picta:

- 462 11.9.44 ♀ Taken in Women's Camp.

Naja naja:

- 464 13.9.44 ♂ Taken on slope beyond Pig Farm.
481 25.9.44 ♀ Taken in sweet potato bed near Hut 125. This
specimen was killed by Dr. B. D. Molesworth
who severed the cervical vertebrae. While
he was bending over the snake Dr. Molesworth
had his hand about two feet from the snake.
The cobra turned its head and ejected a spray
of venom at Dr. Molesworth's hand. This

specimen contained a newly caught toad (Bufo melanostictus).

The subcaudals in this species are very variable. Two specimens were taken at Changi, and these, together with the two taken at Sime Road this month had subcaudals as follows. The percentage length of tail to head and body is also given.

58	3.2.43	♂	Tail	17.6%	of H. & B.	Subcaudals,	54 pairs.
61	9.2.43	♀	"	17.8%	"	"	53 "
464	13.9.44	♂	"	16.9%	"	#	3 singles + 50 pairs.
481	25.9.44	♀	"	16.8%	"	"	48 pairs.

From this it would appear that the percentage length of the tail to the head and body lies within narrow limits but that the subcaudals are variable.

LACERTILIA.

Hemidactylus frenatus:

482 25.9.44 ♀ H. & B., 52.7 mm: Tail, 40.2 mm.: Total, 92.9 mm.: Snout to Ear, 14.0 mm: Axilla to Groin, 30.0 mm: Fore Leg, 15.0 mm: Longest digit on Fore Foot, 2.9 mm: Hind Leg, 22.2 mm: Longest digit on Hind Foot, 5.1 mm.

483 26.9.44 ♂ H. & B., 52.1 mm: Tail, 52.7 mm: Total, 104.8 mm: Snout to Ear, 14.0 mm: Axilla to Groin, 29.9 mm: Fore Leg, 13.2 mm: Longest digit on Fore Foot, 4.1 mm: Hind Leg, 22.0 mm: Longest digit on Hind Foot, 5.2 mm.

The stomach contents were examined by Capt. Pendlebury and found to contain termites and the remains of common crickets of the family Gryllidae.

Mabuia multifasciata:

486 30.9.44 ♂ H. & B.: 85.8 mm: Tail, 163.5 mm: Total, 249.3 mm: Snout to Ear, 18.1 mm: Axilla to Groin, 47.2 mm.: Fore Leg, 28.2 mm: Longest digit on Fore Foot, 8.0 mm: Hind Leg, 40.1 mm: Longest digit on Hind Foot, 16.3 mm.

Lygosoma bowringii:

On 4.9.44 Dr. Gibson-Hill found two lizard eggs, which measured 12.0 x 7.0 mm., among grass roots. They were on the point of hatching, and at 7 p.m. that evening one of the young lizards had started to emerge and had the head, as far as the ear, out of the shell. By 9 p.m. it was clear of the shell as far back as the shoulder. At this time the other lizard had about 1 mm of the snout showing. By dawn next morning both lizards had completely emerged. They were of this species and measured 41.0 mm. in total length. Thus, it appears that the emergence of these lizards is a gradual process which lasts for some hours.
Specimens No. 457/458.

Sime Road Internment Camp,
SINGAPORE.
2nd. October 1944.

M. Alexander

Age

Height

Sentence

Weight

Date	Weight	Reason for interviewing M.O.	Fit for				M. O.'s Remarks
			lbs Husk	Corporal Punishment	Solitary Confinement	Diet	
<i>Phaetulla pida</i> : No 489							
October 3:		The postlarvian portion of a ♀, from a specimen killed on the ground near Hut 40A. Tail 230 mm long: Costals 15, Anal D; subcaudals III. This specimen contained 6 eggs, well developed; they ranged from 29-33 mm in length, and 9.5-10 mm in diameter. The hind gut was empty.					

Hut 118, 9th, November 1944.

Dear Carl,

Herewith the October report on the Reptilia. The details of the specimens taken by me are: *Lycodon aalicus*; 492 7/10 ♀ 385-73-458-17-197-D-52p.; 512 21/10 ♀ 313.5-66-379.5-17-201-D-64; 514 23/10 ♀ 442-102.5-544.5-17-192-D-67p.; 523 31/10 ♂ 334-76-410-17-190-D-66p.; *A. picta*; 509 19/10 imm. 178-80-258-15-178-D-120p. *M. intestinalis*; 505 15/10 ♀ 441-26.5-467.5-13-255-S-21p.; *N. naja*; 520 30/10 ♂ 1168-214-1382-19-181-S-28-51p..

rank away such.

in noting this.

I have read over your check list of the birds seen in the camp, and will give it more detailed study later. As a result of my preliminary perusal of it I have to comment (a) the more I think of it the more convinced I am that I have seen *Munia oryzivora* (Java Sparrow) in the camp. I saw them about June/July. (b) I note that you give the oriole breeding in the camp as *Oriolus chinensis indicus* (Indian Black-Naped Oriole). Should not this be *Oriolus chinensis maculatus* (Malaysian Black-Naped Oriole) (vide Birds Mal. Pen., iv, 1939, p.358.)?

probably, thank you for the note. I had no volume IV to hand, & was unaware of, or had forgotten, the existence of *O. c. maculatus*.
Dr. C. A. Wilson-Hill,
Hut 40.

Yours,

Alexander Wetmore