

## Biodiversity Record: Jasper cat snake at Upper Seletar

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**Subjects:** Jasper cat snake, *Boiga jaspidea* (Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Colubridae).

**Subjects identified by:** Law Ing Sind, Tan Robbin, Sim Ray Sen Isaac and Toh Wei Yang.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Upper Seletar; 8 August 2020 at around 2000 hrs and 20 May 2021 at around 2150 hrs.

**Habitat:** Parkland. Grass verge at the edge of freshwater swamp forest.

**Observers:** Toh Wei Yang and Kripa Dubey (8 August 2020), Sim Ray Sen Isaac and Tan Robbin (20 May 2021).

### Observations:

- 1) On 8 August 2020, an individual of approximately 150 cm total length was observed moving about in the canopy across different trees around 8 m off the ground (Fig. 1). The snake was observed for 30 minutes before it slithered further away and out of the observers' sight.
- 2) On 20 May 2021, one example of approximately 130 cm total length was first observed slithering across a low shrub 50 cm off the ground. The snake initially seemed wary and assumed defensive position. It descended to the ground where the attached pictures were obtained in situ (Figs. 2–4). During this time, the snake straightened its body multiple times and flicked its tongue in rapid movements (Fig. 3). It slithered away after about five minutes.

**Remarks:** In Singapore, the jasper cat snake is rarely seen and restricted in distribution, and thus regarded as a 'critically endangered' species in the country. It is known to be nocturnal, and believed to inhabit only the Central Catchment Nature Reserve and Pulau Tekong (Lim et al., 2008; Baker & Lim, 2012).

Seven years before, in 2014, a roadkill female jasper cat snake of 120 cm was found in the same general area (Thomas, 2014) as the two featured examples.

### Literature cited:

Baker N & Lim KKP (2012) *Wild Animals of Singapore. A Photographic Guide to Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians and Freshwater Fishes*. Updated Edition. Draco Publishing and Distribution Pte Ltd & Nature Society (Singapore), Singapore, 180 pp.

Lim KKP, Baker N, Teo R & Leong TM (2008) Reptiles. In: Davison GWH, Ng PKL & Ho HC (eds.) *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore*. Second Edition. Nature Society (Singapore), Singapore, pp. 160–176.

Thomas N (2014) Jasper cat snake roadkill at Upper Seletar. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*, 2014: 68–69.



Fig. 1. In situ, ventral view of the jasper cat snake on 8 August 2020. (Photograph by: Toh Wei Yang).



Fig. 2. Dorsal view of the head and neck of the jasper cat snake on 20 May 2021. (Photograph by: Sim Ray Sen Isaac).



Fig. 3. Dorso-lateral view of the head, neck and extended tongue of the jasper cat snake. (Photograph by: Sim Ray Sen Isaac).



Fig. 4. Latero-frontal view of the head. (Photograph by: Sim Ray Sen Isaac).