

## Spotted keelback at Venus Drive

**Subject:** Spotted keelback, *Xenochrophis maculatus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Natricidae).

**Subject identified by:** Marcus A. H. Chua.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Venus Drive trail adjacent to MacRitchie forest, 5 October 2013; 1150 hrs.

**Habitat:** Secondary forest. Among leaf litter by an ephemeral forest pool, about 3 m off the trail.

**Observers:** Contributor and others.

**Observation:** A young individual of about 40 cm total length, was seen at a pool frequented by at least five species of forest-dependent odonates. A four-ridged toad (*Ingerophrynus quadriporcatus*) was also seen in the pool on the same day. The snake was captured briefly for identification and later released.

**Remarks:** *Xenochrophis maculatus* is known from Peninsular Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo, Bangka, Belitung, Natuna and Riau archipelagos. This semi-aquatic species is reported to frequent open forests in the lowlands, near streams and ditches. Its diet is said to include frogs and toads (Das, 2012: 128). The species is listed as locally 'vulnerable' in the Singapore Red Data Book (Lim, 2008: 265).

### 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., 2008. Checklists of threatened species - fishes, amphibians and 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. 263- 266.



Photograph by Marcus Ng

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