

Common Malayan racer at Kent Ridge

Subject: Common Malayan racer, *Coelognathus flavolineatus* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae).

Subject identified by: Kelvin K. P. Lim.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Kent Ridge, campus of the National University of Singapore, Science Drive 2, third floor of building S6; 29 July 2008; 0800 hrs.

Habitat: Along corridor of a concrete building, bordered by belukar vegetation on a hill slope.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: A juvenile example of about 40 cm total length was found crawling along the tiled floor of a corridor. Due to the smooth tiles, crinkles appeared throughout the snake's body as the scales on its underside struggled to find irregularities on the substrate to help it move forward.

Remarks: This record shows that the common Malayan racer is present in urban areas. However, it does not live in buildings, and the featured example is believed to have strayed into the corridor by accident. This is a large snake that can grow to 1.8 m total length. It is apparently active by day, and feeds on small vertebrates such as rats which it kills by constriction (Baker & Lim, 2012: 98). Despite these attributes and its tolerance for human habitation, this snake is rarely seen. This is very likely due to its nervous disposition and intense shyness of humans.

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



Photograph by Tan Siong Kiat

Contributor: **Tan Siong Kiat**
Contact address: nhmtsk@nus.edu.sg