

Speckle-headed whip snake at Bukit Timah Nature Reserve

Subject: Speckle-headed whip snake, *Ahaetulla fasciolata* (Reptilia: Serpentes: Colubridae).

Subject identified by: Contributor.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, near visitor centre; 3 July 2013; around 1110 hrs.

Habitat: Primary tropical rainforest.

Observer: Contributor.

Observation: An example of about 80 cm total length (Figs. 1-3) was observed draped over a branch of a small tree about 1.5 m off the ground, on the side of a footpath. There was an intermittent drizzle at the time of observation.

Remarks: The present record of this snake is noteworthy because it is regarded as a ‘critically endangered’ species in Singapore, recently known only from the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve (Lim et al., 2008: 161; Teo & Rajathurai, 1997: 378). An earlier record is a photograph by Ulrich Manthey of an apparently young example from Bukit Timah Nature Reserve, possibly in the early 1990s (Manthey & Grossmann, 1997: 310, abb. 219).

References:

- Lim, K. K. P., N. Baker, R. Teo & T. M. Leong, 2008. 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. 160-176.
- Manthey, U. & W. Grossmann, 1997. *Amphibien & Reptilien Südostasiens*. Natur und Tier - Verlag, Germany. 512 pp.
- Teo, R. C. H. & S. Rajathurai, 1997. Mammals, reptiles and amphibians in the nature reserves of Singapore - diversity, abundance and distribution. *The Gardens' Bulletin, Singapore*. 49 (2): 353-425.



Fig. 1. Dorso-lateral view of head and neck.



Fig. 2. Dorsal view of head and neck.

Photographs by Lena S. Y. Chow



Fig. 3. Fronto-dorsal view of the anterior part of the snake. Photograph by Lena S. Y. Chow

Contributor: Lena S. Y. **Chow**

Contact address: lena_sy_chow@yahoo.com