

Third record of the Gimlett's reed snake in Singapore

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Subject: Gimlett's reed snake, *Calamaria gimletti* (Reptilia: Squamata: Calamariidae).

Subject identified by: Law Ing Sind.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Old Upper Thomson Road; 5 September 2018; 1300 hrs.

Habitat: Edge of mature secondary forest, leaf litter in a concrete drain at the side of a metalled road.

Observers: Law Ing Sind, Ayaka Kanaike and Dayna Cheah.

Observation: One individual of about 26 cm total length was found in a pile of leaves in the drain. It was removed from the drain for photography (Fig. 1 & 2), and then released into the forest.



Fig. 1. Dorsal view of the Gimlett's reed snake at Old Upper Thomson Road. Photograph by Ayaka Kanaike



Fig. 2. Dorso-lateral view of the head and parts of the body. Photograph by Law Ing Sind

Remarks: The subject represents the third known record of *Calamaria gimletti* in Singapore. The first was collected on Pulau Pawai in 1933, but the record was not published until 2004 (Leong, 2004). The species was rediscovered in 2017 when an example was found in leaf litter in a drain at Rifle Range Link (Serin et al., 2017) in the southern part of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve.

The featured snake was found in a similar environment but at the eastern edge of the same forest reserve, which suggests that this species may be present throughout the Central Catchment Nature Reserve. As this snake inhabits leaf litter, it is not likely to be seen in the open, and was thus overlooked. It must be pointed out that both recent individuals of *Calamaria gimletti* in Singapore were found in drains with steep sides. They would have difficulty crawling out, and are likely to be flushed away and possibly drowned during heavy rains.

References:

- Leong T. M., 2004. Geographic distribution: *Calamaria lowi gimletti*. *Herpetological Review*. 35 (3): 290.
Serin S., I. S. Law & N. Thomas, 2017. Rediscovery of Gimlett's reed snake in Singapore. *Singapore Biodiversity Records*. 2017: 89-90.