

Ophiophagous behaviour of Palawan Yellow-striped Snake *Sibynophis bivittatus* on Palawan Island, Philippines

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Photograph by: Raymond V. Gonzales.
Subject identified by: Emerson Y. Sy.

Location: Mount Mantalingajan, Municipality of Brooke's Point, Palawan Island, Philippines.
Elevation: 1200 metres
Habitat: Primary, montane forest.
Date and time: 01 February 2016, 15:00 hrs.

Identity of subjects:

- (i) Two-lined Coral Snake, *Calliophis bilineata* (Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes).
- (ii) Palawan Yellow-striped Snake, *Sibynophis bivittatus* (Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes).

Description of record:

A Palawan Yellow-striped Snake was observed along a small foot trail, biting a Two-lined Coral Snake by the neck (Fig. 1). As the predator was disturbed by the observers, it dragged the struggling prey into an area with dense leaf litter, intertwining vines, and saplings. The prey initially attempted to resist by anchoring its tail on vines/saplings, but the bigger and stronger predator prevailed. Subsequently, the prey was motionless. The event was observed for more than two minutes before both snakes were obscured by leaf litter and plants.



Fig. 1.

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Remarks: The elapid snake was identified as *Calliophis bilineata* based on (i) head not distinct from neck, (ii) a pair of white dorsolateral stripes, (iii) ventral scales with alternating black bars, two- or three-scales wide, (iv) narrow white line on the sides, between ventral and body scales and (v) underside of tail is vivid reddish-orange in color (Taylor, 1922). The colubrid snake was identified as *Sibynophis bivittatus* based on (i) white colour on frontals and supraoculars, (ii) dorsal colour is dark brown, (iii) a pair of yellow (white in preserved specimens) dorsolateral lines beginning behind parietal scales and ending at tail tip (Taylor, 1922). Both snakes are endemic to Palawan faunal region (Taylor, 1922; Leviton, 1963).

Among Philippine snakes, King Cobra *Ophiophagus hannah*, Double-barred Coral Snake *Hemibungarus gemianulis*, Alcalá's Triangle-spotted Snake *Cyclocorus lineatus alcalai* and Common Mock Viper *Psammodynastes pulverulentus* are known to exhibit ophiophagous behaviour (Taylor, 1922; Langenberger, 2004; Gaulke, 2011). Although the actual consumption of the snake was not observed, this note may be the first record of ophiophagous behaviour of *Sibynophis bivittatus*.

Editor's note: This document is a corrigendum of one first published on 29 January 2018, with the original page numbering maintained.

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