

First record of King Cobra *Ophiophagus hannah* on Bongao Island, Tawi-Tawi Province, Philippines

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Observer: Mikael T. Haradji.
Photograph by: Mikael T. Haradji.
Subject identified by: Emerson Y. Sy.

Location: Bongao Island, Barangay Pasiagan, Bongao Municipality, Tawi-Tawi Province, Philippines.
Elevation: 9 metres ASL.
Habitat: Backyard of a residential area adjacent to agricultural area.
Date and time: 16 January 2021, 13:17 hrs.

Identity of subject:
King Cobra, *Ophiophagus hannah* (Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Elapidae).

Description of record:
A large snake (Fig. 1), approximately 290 cm in total length, was observed dead on road (DOR); its head exhibited signs of trauma including damage to the lower jaw. The specimen was not collected by the observer.



Fig. 1.

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Remarks:

The snake was identified as *Ophiophagus hannah* based on (i) its large size, (ii) a large pair of occipital scales, and (iii) dorsum colour is grey olive-green with faint inverted chevron markings (Taylor, 1920).

The King Cobra has a widespread distribution in the Philippines and was reported previously on Tandubas Island, Tawi-Tawi Province (Sy & Buddi, 2022). Bongao Island is situated west of Tawi-Tawi Island in the Sulu Archipelago. This note provides the first record of King Cobra on Bongao Island and the second record for the province.

References:

Sy, E.Y. and Buddi, M.D. (2022). First record of King Cobra *Ophiophagus hannah* in Tawi-Tawi Province, Philippines. Southeast Asia Vertebrate Records 2022: 3-4.

Taylor, E. H. (1922). The snakes of the Philippine Islands. Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources and Bureau of Science, Manila. 312 pp. + 37 plates.