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Notes on the species of Ophidia and Lacertilia obtained in Sime Road Internment Camp, Singapore, between 1st May and 25th August 1945

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Notes on the species of Ophidia and Lacertilia obtained in Sime Road Internment Camp, Singapore, between 1st May and 25th. August 1945.

OPHIDIA:

Typhlops braminus:
929 1.6.45 ♀ Dug up on Bukit Timah Golf Course: Gut empty.

Xenopeltis unicolor:
925 7.5.45 ♂ Taken in South Lower Garden: gut empty.
930 1.6.45 ♂ Dug up on Bukit Timah Golf Course: gut empty.
943 16.8.45 ♂ Taken in North Garden: gut empty.

Lycodon aulicus:
920 4.5.45 ♀ Taken in letter file in Chuo Area Office: gut empty.
941 13.8.45 imm. Taken under box in Hut 58.

Calamaria - sp - :
937 16.7.45 ♀ Found dead in Orchard: gut empty.
This specimen was examined by G. H. Sworder who came to the conclusion that it was of the genus Calamaria, but could not identify it specifically. He was prepared to state however that it was neither C.gimletti nor C.leucocephala.
The general colour of the upper side was a blackish brown; the posterior portion of the head was white while at intervals down the back there were transverse white bars approximately 6-7 mm. wide. These bars were 25 - 30 mms. apart on the anterior portion of the snake, becoming somewhat closer towards the tail, the last two or three being only 15 mms. apart. The belly was whitish with faint indications of blackish bands across it.

Holarchus purpurascens:
924 14.5.45 imm. ♀ Taken in Orchard; gut empty.
925 15.5.45 imm. ♀ Gut empty.
This is a new species for the Camp. Specimens previously recorded under this species should now be provisionally regarded as H.signatus, in accordance with my letter of 20th. May 1945.
The general colour of the upper side of the present specimens is an irregular mixture of light browns and brick reds. The back is transversely marked with darker, blackish edged, purplish brown, sub-lozenged shaped markings. The ventrals are a light vermilion, with their outer edges spotted with either white, or the same purplish brown as the lozenges on the back.

Holarchus octolineatus:
939 4.8.45 ♀ Taken in South Garden Area: gut empty.

Ahaetulla formosa:
921 4.5.45 ♀ Taken in North Garden Area.
927 25.5.45 ♂ Taken on hillside outside the perimeter fence, opposite the Hospital: gut empty. The Anal Shield in this specimen is definitely single whereas in other specimens it has been double. It has been noticed that with at least some of the species of tree snakes this Anal Shield is variable.

Dendrelaphis caudolin-eatus:
942 15.8.45 imm. ♂ Taken South Garden Area.

Psammodynastes pictus:
926 25.5.45 ♂ Taken on Bukit Timah Golf Course. Gut empty.

Boiga cynodon:
932 26.6.45 ♀ Killed by woodcutters in McRitchie Forest Reserve. Stomach empty, but hind gut full of faeces and bird feathers. Ovary enlarged.
935 14.7.45 ♀ Taken near Hut 27: gut empty.
This is a new species for the Camp. The scales on the upper surface (i.e. the costals) are a dull reddish brown, but the underlying skin is a brilliant yellow. Across the back are irregular dark transverse bands, in which the costals are darker and the underlying skin is blackish. The ventrals are the same dull reddish brown, flecked with yellow. In shape the costals are oblique, while the dorsals are enlarged and hexagonal.

Chrysopelea peleas:
922 5.5.45 ♀ Stomach empty.

Passerita prasina:
928 26.5.45 ♀ imm. Taken by Adam Park fatigue: gut empty. This immature specimen was of the buff coloured variety. The upper surface is a uniform buff colour: the ventrals are darker, but have a tawny edge where they meet the c ostals. These tawny edges form a continuous line.

Maticora bivirgata:
938 3.8.45 ♀ Taken by woodcutters on Sungei Pendas Estate, Scudai, Johore. Stomach empty. This species has not previously been taken, and this specimen does not strictly merit inclusion in the Camp list. It is a very beautiful snake. The head and tail tip are a coral red all round. On the back the dorsals and costals are a bluish black, while the two rows of costals next to the ventrals on each side are a vivid cobalt blue. The ventrals are a brilliant coral or sealing wax red, with their extremities tipped with blue-black, forming a line between the red and the cobalt blue.

Maticora intestinalis:
13.7.45 934 ♀ Killed on main roadway of camp; badly damaged and somewhat shrivelled: no measurements taken.

Naja naja:
931 3.6.45 ♀ Killed on Hospital Hillside Garden: gut empty.
940 6.8.45 ♂ Taken in South Garden Area. Stomach empty.

Passerita prasina: (omitted above)
936 16.7.45 ♂ Killed by woodcutters in McRitchie Forest Reserve. Stomach empty.

LACERTILIA:

Draco volans:
933 28.6.45 imm. Hatched from egg by Dr. Gibson-Hill.

On 13.6.45 Dr. B. D. Molesworth observed a female Draco volans ovipositing, and describes it, in epistola, as follows: "At 2 p.m. I saw one of these, a female, digging very industriously at the foot of a rubber tree. She had excavated a hole about 1½" in diam. at the surface, and about 1" deep. She worked in the manner of a cat, using only her fore-feet, first one, then the other, for a spell, but not alternately. She worked about 30 seconds at a spell, then came out for a good look round, not returning until apparently satisfied that all was clear. This took her till about 2.30 when half her body was out of sight in the hole. Following a rest, she got over the hole, in the manner of a defaecating cat, tail out stiff behind, forelegs straight and back legs flexed. In about 1½ minutes and with no obvious effort, the first egg was laid, followed at about 2 minute intervals by four others, the last after a longer period. She then turned immediately to the hole and, using her snout, tucked the eggs in, licking them, and pushing them to a close fit. Then she scratched in some loose earth from her excavation heap until the eggs were just covered, again using her forelegs just like a cat. As soon as the eggs were covered, she put her head into the hole and, using her snout as a 'pneumatic drill' tamped the earth down tight. The blows were very rapid and exhausted her a great deal. She could only work for about 15 seconds at a time, and then rested, panting - very different from her rests while digging. Altogether she tamped down seven layers before the hole was full. As her pile of loose earth got used up, it got further from the hole and in order to reach this she would reach out to it, and then rest on her chin and one paw, and scratch back with the other; then change over to the chin and other paw. She was pretty exhausted when she had finished and let me pick her up. Any ant that fell into the hole while she was filling in was eaten at once, though ants nearby were left. The whole process took about 1¼ hours. She chose a shady spot with hard sand, although soft earth and sunshine were within six inches. The hole was 4" from the base of the tree." Dr. C.A. Gibson-Hill, in epistola, describes the hatching of eggs of this species: "Tuesday, June 26th. A damp, overcast after noon, with a little wind; some rain about 3 p.m.. About 4 p.m. I was shown three eggs of Draco volans which had just been unearthed from the base of a clump of lalang close to the pig-farm hut. The eggs were found at a depth of 2/3 inches, in a light soil. They were ovoid in shape, symmetrical, 15x9 mms., with the shell of a leathery texture, white in colour with an unglazed surface. Two of the eggs had a slit about 14 mm. long across one end; and one had the head of a young lizard projecting through it. While the eggs were being examined the lizard thrust its way through the slit, with about four wriggles, and emerged completely. At the same time the other

lizard clarged its slit, by ramming at it with its head, and emerged. The third egg showed a small slit, vertical as the egg lay, about half an hour later. From this point to the complete emergence of the third lizard was about 35 minutes."

One of these newly hatched lizards was brought over to me on the evening of 27th. June and was kept alive overnight. Next morning it was killed and measured - the H.& B. was 28.4 mms; and the tail 40.0 mms., making a total length of 68.4 mms.. The maximum width across the fully extended patagia was 19.1 mms. The general colour was a pale grey, with spots of a darker colour on the back, while the limbs and tail were barred with greyish brown. The gular appendage was not developed, but showed up as a slight distention of the skin, brilliant chrome yellow in colour.

Sime Road Internment Camp,
SINGAPORE.
26th. August 1945.

Alexander Ross

Hut 52.
26th. August 1945.

Herewith the Reptilia Report covering the period from 1st May to 25TH. August inclusive. This will be the last re-port. The measurements were :

Typhlops braminus:
929 1.6.45 ♀ 176.2 - 3.8 ϴ 180.0 = 20 - ? - ?S - ?

Xenopeltis unicolor:
923 7.5.45 ♂ 571.0 - 83.0 - 654.0 = 15 - 181 - D - (1s. + 2 9p.)
930 1.6.45 ♂ 548.5 - 75.0 - 623.5 = 15 - 182 - D - (1s. + 31p.)
943 16.8.45 ♂ 465.0 - 58.0 - 523.0 = 15 - 177 - D - (1s. + 28p.)

Lycodon aulicus:
920 4.5.45 ♀ 443.0 - 90.0 - 533.0 = 17 - 200 - D - 64p.
941 13.8.45 imm. 158.ϴ - 33.0 - 191.0 = 17 - 200 - D - 64p.

Calamaria -sp-:
937 16.7.45 ♀ 261.0 - 29.0 - 290.0 = 17 - 219 - D - 46p.

Holarchus purpurascens:
924 14.5.45 ♀ 228.0 - 40.0 - 268.0 = 21 - 187 - S-53p.
925 15.5.45 ♀ 236.0 - 49.0 - 285.0 = 19 - 177 - S - 59p.

Holarchus octolineatus:
939 4.8.45 ♀ 309.0 - 82.0 - 391.0 = 17 - 165 - S - 64p.

Ahaetulla formosa:
921 4.5.45 ♀ 634.0 - 294.0 - 928.ϴ = 15 - 171 - D - 122p.
927 2555.45 ♂ 587.0 - 290.0 - 877.0 = 15 - 167 - S - 125p.

Dendrelaphis caudolineatus:
942 15.8.45 ♂ 251.0 86.0 - 337.0 = 13 - 175 - D - 106p.

Psammodynastes pictus:
926 25.5.45 ♂ 315.0 - 226.0 - 541.0 = 17 - 148 - D - 106p.

Boiga cynodon:
932 26.6.45 ♀ 1941.0 - 537.0 - 2478.0 = XXXX 23 - 288 - D 152p.
935 14.7.45 ♀ 1497.0 - 436.0 - 1933.0 = 23 - 286 - S - 152p.

Chrysopelea peleas:
922 5.5.45 ♀ 880.0 - 295.0 - 1175.0 = 17 - 225 - D - 128p.

Passerita prasina:
928 26.5.45 ♀ 363.0 - 210.0 - 573.0 = 15 - 201 - S - 191p.
936 16.7.45 ♂ 860.0 - 453.0 - 1313.0 = 15 - 354 - D - 192p.

Maticora bivirgata:
938 3.8.45 ♀ 802.0 - 97.0 - 899.0 = 13 - 251 - S - 42p.

Maticora intestinalis:
934 13.7.45 ♀ Nomeasurements taken.

Naja naja.
931 3.6.45 ♀ 1090.0 - 184.0 - 1274.0 = 19 - 189 - S - 51p.
940 6.8.45 ♂ 304.0 - 41+ - 345+ = 19 - 180 - S - 40+
Tip of tail missing.

Draco volans:
933 28.6.45 Imm.

H.& B.	28.4
Tail	40.0
Total	68.4

Maximum width across the fully extended patagia, 19.1

Alexander Kaup.

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