

A new species of reed snake, *Calamaria* (Squamata: Colubridae), from the Central Truong Son (Annamite mountain range), Vietnam

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Abstract

A new species of *Calamaria* is described from the Truong Son (Annamite mountain range) of Quang Binh province in central Vietnam. The new species is characterized by its dark, iridescent body with four yellowish to beige zigzag shaped bands, light dorsal markings on base and tip of tail, light venter, modified maxillary teeth, large size (455 mm total length), tail tapering gradually to a point, reduction to five dorsal scale rows on tail, 198 ventral scales, 21 divided subcaudals, four supralabials (second and third entering orbit), five infralabials, mental not touching anterior chin shields, three gular scales in midline between posterior chin shields and first ventral, rostral being wider than high, paraparietal being surrounded by six shields and scales, and by the absence of a preocular scale. The new taxon is known only from a single adult female specimen that was collected in a primary limestone forest cave. It is the fifth species of *Calamaria* recorded from Vietnam.

Key words: Truong Son (Annamite mountain range), Vietnam, Quang Binh province, Reptilia, Colubridae, *Calamaria thanhi* sp. n., morphology, taxonomy, natural history

Introduction

In their monograph of the genus *Calamaria*, Inger & Marx (1965) recognized 50 species of these highly specialized burrowing, forest-dwelling snakes. As one of the most successful east Asian genera of colubrids, *Calamaria* representatives are distributed from eastern China and the Ryu Kyu Islands in the north, southward through Vietnam, Thailand and Malay Peninsula to Myanmar in the northwest, and south to Seram, Sulawesi and the Philippines. According to Inger & Marx (1965), the principal centre of evolution and