



A Beauty Snake, *Elaphe taeniura* (Cope 1861) (Squamata: Serpentes: Colubridae), from the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Arunachal Pradesh, India

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Of 16 currently recognized species in the genus *Elaphe*, three (*E. cantoris*, *E. hodgsoni*, *E. taeniura*) are known to occur in India (Sharma 2002; Uetz et al. 2021), where they are distributed mainly in the western and eastern Himalayan regions. Two of those species (*E. cantoris*, *E. taeniura*) have been recorded in the eastern Himalayan state of Arunachal Pradesh (Sharma 2003; Borang et al. 2005; Uetz et al. 2021), where the Beauty Snake (*E. taeniura*) occurs mainly in the foothills. This species has been reported from Namdapha National Park in Changlang District (Bhatt 2004; Sanyal and Gayen 2006), Dihang-Dibang Biosphere Reserve in Upper Dibang Valley District (Borang 2003), Lohit District (Choudhury 1978), Upper Siang District (Sanyal and Gayen 2006), and both Lower and Upper Subansiri Districts (Bhatt 2004). Herein,

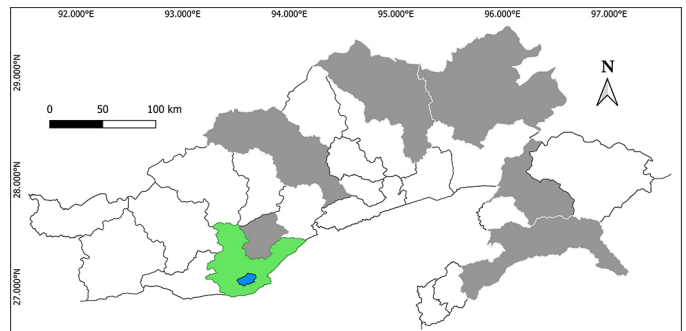


Fig. 1. Map of Arunachal Pradesh, India, showing districts in which the Beauty Snake (*Elaphe taeniura*) has been recorded previously marked in gray. Papumpare District, site of the new record, is indicated in green and the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary in blue.



Fig. 2. Road-killed Beauty Snake (*Elaphe taeniura*) from the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Papumpare District, Arunachal Pradesh, India. Photographs by Kirty Prosad Nath.

we report the first record of *E. taeniura* from Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Papumpare District (Fig. 1).

Local residents found a road-killed male Beauty Snake (SVL 1,056 mm, TL 268 mm) (Fig. 2) on the PWD Road, Senki Valley, Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Papumpare District, Arunachal Pradesh (27.077°N, 93.597°E; elev. 232 m), and donated it to the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Arunachal Pradesh Regional Centre (APRC), Itanagar (APRC/R-168). The specimen was identified as *Elaphe taeniura* based on the morphological features listed in Sharma (2003, 2007) and Sanyal and Gayen (2006). The identity of the species was confirmed by Dr. B.B. Bhatt. This report documents the occurrence of the species in the seventh district and third protected area in Arunachal Pradesh, and represents the southern- and westernmost record of the species in the state.

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