REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

First Insular Record of the Ashy Kukri Snake, *Oligodon cinereus* Günther 1864, from Hon Son Island, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam

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The genus *Oligodon* Fitzinger 1826 currently comprises 88 recognized species from throughout southern and southeastern Asia (Nguyen et al. 2022; Uetz et al. 2024). The Ashy Kukri Snake (*Oligodon cinereus*) is distributed from northern and eastern India, Bhutan, Myanmar, and southern China through Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia to Thailand and Malaysia (Yushchenko et al. 2023; Uetz et al. 2024).

Since the original description by Günther (1864), several names that have been allocated to this species, some as subspecies, largely correspond to distinct color morphotypes found across the range and are now considered junior synonyms (Smith 1943; David et al. 2011; Yushchenko et al. 2023). However, most records of *O. cinereus* are from mainland Indochina, with no known insular records.

We herein report the first insular population of *Oligodon cinereus* based on one captured female (Fig. 1) collected on 18 June 2023 on the central road bisecting Hon Son Island, Lai Son Commune, Kien Hai District, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam (9.81284, 104.64422; elev. 102 m asl) (Fig. 2). The specimen was fixed in 90% ethanol for 24 hours, preserved in 70% ethanol for permanent storage, and deposited in the Institute of Tropical Biology Collection of Zoology, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (ITBCZ 11006). Morphometric characters corresponded largely with those of mainland specimens (Table 1), with only the number of subcaudals exceeding by one the number recorded elsewhere for females, which resulted in a slightly higher number of subcaudal to total body scales. Identification was confirmed by Nikolai L. Orlov, Zoological Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, and Justin L. Lee, University of Michigan, USA.

Our insular specimen resembles the color morphotype previously known as *O. cattienensis* (Vassilieva et al. 2013;

Figure 1. An Ashy Kukri Snake (*Oligodon cinereus*) from Hon Son Island, Lai Son Commune, Kien Hai District, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam. Photographs by Ngon Quang Lam (left) and Thinh Gia Tran (right).

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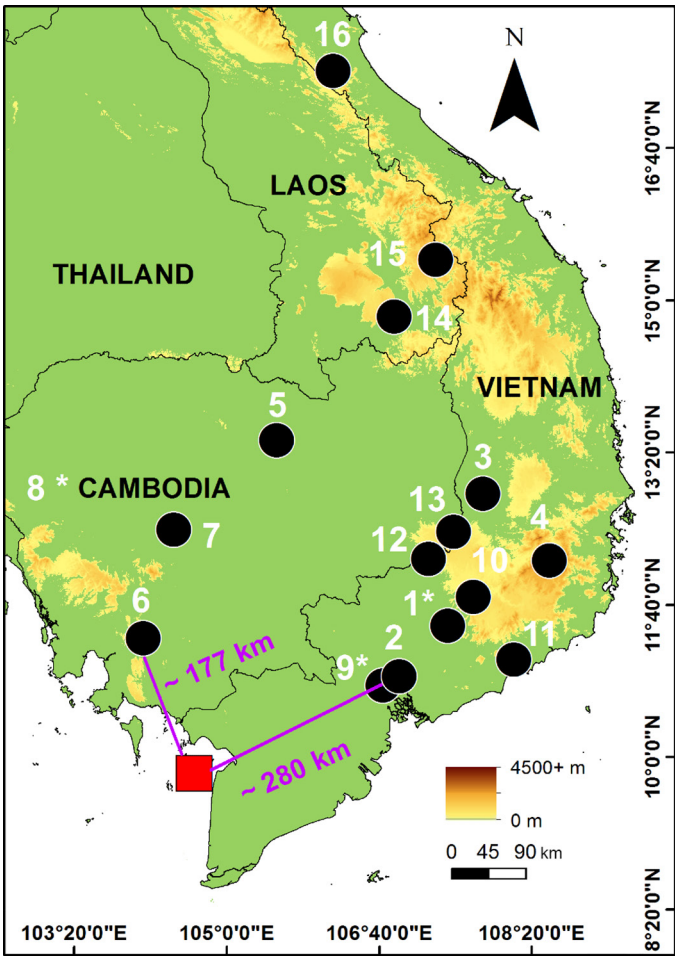

Figure 2. The distribution of the Ashy Kukri Snake (*Oligodon cinereus*), including the new record from Hon Son Island, Lai Son Commune, Kien Hai District, Kien Giang Province, Vietnam (red square) and previous records of *O. cinereus* (black dots). Asterisks next to numbers indicate type localities. Known localities include: 1 = Cat Tien National Park, Dong Nai Province, Vietnam (type locality of formerly recognized *Oligodon cattienensis*); 2 = Bien Hoa, Dong Nai Province, Vietnam; 3 = Yok Don National Park, Dak Lak Province, Vietnam; 4 = Bidoup – Nui Ba National Park, Lam Dong Province, Vietnam; 5 = Spong Village, Stung Treng Province, Cambodia; 6 = Kampong Speu Province, Kirirom National Park, Cambodia; 7 = Kampong Chhnang Province, Trapaeng Chang; 8 = Cambodia (no further details, type locality of *Oligodon cinereus*); 9 = Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (former type locality of *Simotes violaceus pallidocinctus* [= *O. cinereus pallidocinctus*]); 10 = Loc Bao Forest, Lam Dong Province, Vietnam; 11 = Ma Lam Phan Thiet, Binh Thuan Province, Vietnam; 12 = Bu Gia Map National Park, Binh Phuoc Province, Vietnam; 13 = Pichrada District, Mondolkiri Province, Cambodia; 14 =Attapu, Attapu Province, Laos; 15 = Dak Cheung, Sekong Province, Laos; 16 = Phong Nha – Ke Bang National Park, Quang Binh Province, Vietnam.

Yushchenko et al. 2023) in having butterfly-shaped blotches but it has a higher tail/total length ratio (12.9 vs. 10.7–12.1 in females), a greater number of subcaudals (38 vs. 31–33 in females), and paler dorsal markings than specimens of that color phenotype.

This new record from Hon Son Island extends the distribution of *O. cinereus* approximately 280 km southeast of the closest record of the *O. cattienensis* form in Bien Hoa, Dong Nai Province, Vietnam, and approximately 177 km northwest of the closest record of topotypic *O. cinereus cinereus* in Kampong Speu Province, Kirirom National Park, Cambodia (Fig. 2).

Table 1. Morphometric measurements of the Hon Son Island specimen and the type series of *Oligodon cinereus* from the mainland (Vassilieva et al. 2013; Yushchenko et al. 2023). Abbreviations: TaiLR = tail length/total length ratio; SL= supralabials; SL-E = number of supralabials touching orbit; IL = infralabials; At = anterior temporal scales; Pt = posterior temporal scales; VS = ventral scales; DS = dorsal scale rows; CP = cloacal plate; SC = subcaudals; TOTAL = total body scales (the sum of ventral, subcaudal scales, and the cloacal plate); SCR = subcaudal ratio (the ratio between the number of subcaudal scales and the number of total body scales).

	Hon Son	Mainland	
	Female	Female	Male
TailLR	12.9	9.4–13.9	9.4–13.9
SL	8	7–9	7–9
SL-E	4+5	4+5 or 5+5	4+5 or 5+5
IL	8	7–9	7–9
At	1	1–2	1–2
Pt	2	2	2–3
VS	169	164–176	164–179
DS	17–17–15	17–17–15	17–17–15
CP	entire	entire	entire
SC	38	28–37	27–41
TOTAL	208	197–211	196–214
SCR	18.3	13.7–18.1	13.8–19.3

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