

SHORT COMMUNICATION

THE OCCURRENCE OF ENHYDRIS ALTERNANS AT JAVA

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Abstract: *Enhydris alternans* was definitively recorded for the first time from the northern part of West Java. This species appears to be the prey of *Cylindrophis rufus*, which mimics the colour pattern of its prey very closely.

Haas (1950) cast some doubt to the occurrence of *Enhydris alternans* at Java. Although this species was described from Java, there are no confirmative record ever published since it was described. This species, on the other hand is better known from various places in Sumatra, Bangka, Belitung and Borneo based on a small number of specimens in many European leading museums (Brongersma 1933; Ko 1970). The only records from Java are the holotype of *Brachyorrhos alternans* Reuss, 1834 at Senckenberg museum (SMF 19465) and the holotype of *Homalopsis decussata* Schlegel, 1837 from Leiden (RMNH 1157) (Ko op. cit.) These records needs confirmation, because both specimens have no definitive localities. Despite of intensive collection especially at West Java since the beginning of this century, no other specimens have ever been reported. For this reason, I looked for this species in the Museum Zoologicum Bogoriense collection and found one female specimen from Sukabumi, West Java without exact date and collector (MZB Oph. 583). This specimen must have been in the collection for more than 20 years based on the catalog entry,

however a single specimen without exact label on it could not stand as proof that this species really comes from this island. We came then to a preliminary conclusion that *Enhydris alternans* does not exist at Java. We were thus very surprised when an amateur collector brought a specimen to be identified from Kali (=river) Cakung, in the suburb of Jakarta in 1977, representing authentical record that this species does really occur at Java. As this species is not well represented, we collect four more specimens from the same area several months afterwards. One month later, we obtained another specimen from Subang, West Java. These specimens are placed in a serpentarium for observation. The serpentarium measured about two metres square. Various species were placed in it, *Ophiophagus hannah*, *Sinonatrix trianguligera*, *Ptyas korros*, *Rhabdophis chrysargus*, *Enhydris plumbea* and *Cylindrophis rufus*. To our surprise two of four *Enhydris alternans* were devoured within one month by the oriental pipe snake *Cylindrophis rufus*, but not by *Ophiophagus hannah*. For this reason, we preserved the last specimen. Striking resemblance between the

Table 1. Basic measurement and scutellation characters of *Enhydris alternans*.

MZB. Oph. no.	sex	locality	ventral scales	sub caudal	supra labial (corr. eye)	infra labial (largest)	gular + incomp. ventral	date
583	F	Sukabumi	137	26	8/8 (4)	9/9 (5/5)	6+2	—
1741	M	K. Cakung	133	28	8/8 (4)	9/9 (5/5)	6+3	01. 1978
1744	M	K. Cakung	134+	36	8/8 (4)	9/9 (5/4)	6+2	07. 1977
1745	F	Subang	131	25	7/7 (3)	8/8 (5/5)	6+2	02. 1978
1746	M	K. Cakung	137	32	7/8 (4)	9/9 (5/4)	5+3	01. 1978

Table 2. Abnormalities in the ventrals or subcaudals.

MZB. Oph.	Exact position of the ventral (V) or Subcaudals (SC) which show the abnormality
583	V : $118 + \frac{1^*}{1} + 18 = 137$
1744	V : $133 + \frac{2}{1} = 134 +$ SC : $\frac{2}{2} + 2 + 32 = 36$
1746	V : $13 + \frac{1}{0} + 8 + \frac{1}{2} + 2 + \frac{2}{1} + 9 + \frac{1}{2} + 2 + \frac{1}{0} + 4 + \frac{0}{1} + 38 + \frac{1}{0} + 10 + \frac{1}{2} + 14 + \frac{2}{1} + 1 + \frac{1}{2} + 3 + \frac{1}{0} + 2 + \frac{1}{2} + 18 = 124 + \frac{13}{13} = 137$

* Numbers above the line designates the right side of the snake, counted from the head to the tail and lower one of the left side subsequently.

predator and the prey was too obvious and we are quite sure that this is a beautiful case of aggressive mimicry. Snakes as the prey of *Cylindrophis* was already well documented by Wall (1921). Both species occur and were collected from the same river. As shown in Table 1, most of the scutellation features are normal. However we recorded several characters not found before. MZB Oph. 1741 has no nasal cleft, three specimens have abnormal ventral or /and subcaudal scutes — represented by halfsize ventrals either on the left or/and the right side as well as non divided subcaudal scutes. NZB Oph. 1744 has 26 half-size ventrals, a condition never encountered before (Table 2).

References

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要 約

Enhydris alternans のジャワにおける生息
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Enhydris alternans がジャワ西部の北の部分に生息することが確認された。また *Cylindrophis rufus* がこれを捕食しているが、これらはよく似た色彩をしている。

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