

Current Status of Marine Snakes from Jaffna Peninsula, Sri Lanka with Description of Hitherto Unrecorded *Hydrophis fasciatus fasciatus* (Schneider, 1799) [2008]

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Abstract

As only a few study reported on sea snakes of Sri Lanka, a study was undertaken from June 2003 to November 2004 in the coast of Jaffna Peninsula which lies in the Northern part of Sri Lanka. Out of the 121 specimens examined, 9 species under 5 genera in two families were documented in the coastal waters of both Valvettiturai to Point Pedro and the Jaffna lagoon waters. This includes *Hydrophis fasciatus fasciatus* which is no longer known in Sri Lanka increased the number of *Hydrophis* species to 8, thus the total number of sea snakes inhabiting the coastal waters of Sri Lanka become 14 in *Hydrophiidae*. Of the sea snakes collected, *Lapemis curtus* (33.88%) and *Praescutata viperina* (23.97%) were the commonly recorded species. Least recorded species were *H. lapemoides*, *H. fasciatus fasciatus*, *Kerilia jerdonii jerdonii* and *Acrochordus granulatus* (0.83, 0.83, 2.47 and 2.47%, respectively).