

## The First Record of *Ptyas korros* (Colubridae) from Bangladesh

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**Abstract.**- This is the first report of *Ptyas korros* from Bangladesh. The specimens reported here were collected from the Chittagong University campus between the years of 1985 and 1996. They match previously described specimens of *Ptyas korros* except in the number of loreal scales. *Ptyas korros* is known to occur in the Assam region of India and so its presence in adjacent regions of Bangladesh is expected, but unconfirmed until now.

**Key words.**- Serpentes, Colubridae, *Ptyas korros*, Bangladesh, distribution, biogeography

The number of species of snakes occurring in Bangladesh is still debatable because of the lack of confirmation of some species. However, lists have been compiled based on a number of field studies conducted in different parts of the country. Sarker (1975) recorded 20 species, Montaquim (1979) reported 18 species, Montaquim et al. (1980) recorded 28 species and Rashid (1982) recorded 22 species from Bangladesh. Whereas Khan (1982) estimated the snakes species of the country as 78 and he later reported 79 species in 1987 and 81 species in 1992 (of which the occurrence of two are doubtful). Sarker and Sarker (1988) reported 88 species, although some are uncertain. This report established the presence of one species, *Ptyas korros* (Schlegel, 1837).

During the identification of the snake species preserved in the Departmental Museum of Zoology, Chittagong University (CU), four specimens (three

collected from CU Campus [CUC] between 1985 and 1996, and one not known but possibly from CUC) of *P. korros* were found (Fig. 1). Until now, nobody has reported the occurrence of *P. korros* in Bangladesh, although Husain (1977) predicted it. Its known range extends from Assam (India) through Myanmar (Burma) to Indo-China, Thailand, throughout the Tenasserim to the Malay Peninsula, Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Borneo), Southern China including Hainan, Taiwan and Hong Kong (cf. Günther, 1864; Smith, 1943; Zhao & Adler 1993). The occurrence of *P. korros* in the CUC, Chittagong, extends its distribution to Bangladesh. It might also occur in nearby parts of the country such as Jamalpur, Greater Sylhet, Chittagong, Chittagong Hill Tracts (Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban Districts).

The specimens from the CUC are olive brown above and yellowish white below. The scales on the posterior part of the dorsal side of the body are edged with a dark brown pattern (looking black) producing a regular network pattern. The outer margins of the ventrals and caudals are also sometimes edged with dark brown (less dark than the dorsal color). The coloration of the CUC specimens resembles the *P. korros* specimens described by Smith (1943). Smith (1943) diagnoses *P. korros* from *Ptyas muscosus* by the number of dorsal scale rows (15 in *P. korros* vs. 16 or 17 in *P. muscosus*) and the number of ventral scales (160-187 in *P. korros* vs. 190-213 in *P. muscosus*). The CUC specimens have 15 dorsal scale rows and 177-188 ventral scales. They differ from *P. korros* specimens described by Günther (1864) in the number of loreal scales. Günther reported two loreals, but three of the four CUC specimens have only one loreal.



Figure 1. Specimen of *Ptyas korros* from Chittagong University Campus.

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