

**Zoology.** — On the subspecies of *Python curtus* Schlegel occurring in Sumatra. By L. D. BRONGERSMA. (Communicated by Prof. H. BOSCHMA.)

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STULL (1935, p. 393) distinguishes between two subspecies of *Python curtus* Schl., one of these is recorded from Malaya, the other from Sumatra and Borneo. In a subsequent paper this author (STULL, 1938, p. 297) recognizes three subspecies, viz., *Python curtus curtus* Schl. from Sumatra, *Python curtus brongersmai* Stull from Malaya, and *Python curtus breitensteini* Steind. from Borneo. Of these only the first two will be discussed in this paper.

*Python curtus brongersmai* Stull is characterized by a high ventral count (168—174), by having two supraoculars on each side, and by two upper labials entering the orbit (STULL, 1938, p. 297). *Python curtus curtus* Schl. has a low ventral count (152—156), a single supraocular on each side, and the upper labials separated from the orbit by subocular scales. In a footnote STULL (1938, p. 297, note 2) mentions a specimen, which this author considers as being problematical; although from Sumatra, it agrees with *Python curtus brongersmai* (ventrals 171, two labials entering the orbit) rather than with *Python curtus curtus*.

A revisional study of the specimens of *Python curtus* in the collections of the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, and of the Zoologisch Museum, Amsterdam, showed that both *Python curtus curtus* and *Python curtus brongersmai* occur in Sumatra.

#### *Python curtus curtus* Schl.

*Python curtus* SCHLEGEL, Dierentuin, 1872, Kruijpende Dieren, p. 54, fig. (Sumatra); O'SHAUGHNESSY, Zool. Record for 1877, 1878, Rept., p. 10; HUBRECHT, Notes Leyden Mus., vol. 1, pt. 4, 1879, p. 244; BOULENGER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1889, p. 432 (part.); BOULENGER, Fauna Brit. Ind., Rept. Batr., 1890, pp. 245, 246 (part.); BOULENGER, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., vol. 1, 1893, p. 89 (part.); FLOWER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1896, p. 877 (part.); FLOWER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1899, p. 656 (part.); BOULENGER, Rept. Batr., Vertebr. Fauna Mal. Pen., 1912, p. 109 (part.); DE ROOIJ, Rept. Indo-Austr. Arch., vol. 2, 1917, pp. 20, 28 (part.); ROBINSON and KLOSS, Journ. Fed. Mal. St. Mus., vol. 8, pt. 2, 1920, p. 301 (part.); WERNER, Arch. Naturg., vol. 87, Abt. A, pt. 7, 1921, p. 240 (part.); FLOWER, List Vertebr. Anim. Gardens Zool. Soc. Lond. 1828—1927, vol. 3, 1929, p. 159 (part.).

*Python curtus breitensteini*, STULL, Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 40, no. 8, 1935, p. 393 (part.).

*Python curtus curtus*, STULL, Occ. Papers Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 8, 1938, p. 297. Schlegel's *Python*, LOVERIDGE, Reptiles Pacific World, edition Infantry Journal, 1945, p. 116, and edition Macmillan Company, 1945, p. 122.

Specimen examined:

1 ♂, juv., Sumatra, leg. S. MÜLLER, Mus. Leiden, Herp. reg. no. 3782.

This specimen is the type of the species. It is labelled "Sumatra" without a further indication as to the locality. However, it is known that MÜLLER in the years 1833—1835 collected in the western part of the island of Sumatra, in the surroundings of Padang and in the Padang Highlands (VETH, 1879, pp. 75, 77). HUBRECHT (1879, p. 245) mentions that this snake was procured "from that part of Sumatra which lies between Padang and Indrapura". I have not been able to trace the source from which HUBRECHT derived this evidence.

The scale counts of this specimen are given in table I. It further presents the following characters. Anal single; 2 preoculars and 2 postoculars. Two narrow subocular scales on each side, separating the upper labials from the orbit. The rostral and the anterior two labials are deeply pitted. Lower labials 17, the 2nd to 5th, and the 8th to 13th pitted. Loreals: on each side one large shield, 10 smaller shields and some granules. Total length 517 mm, tail 43 mm (i.e., 8 % of the total length).

TABLE I. *Python curtus curtus* Schl.

Specimen	Scale rows			Ventrals	Subcaudals	Upper labials	Supra-oculars	
	Neck	Mid-body	In front of vent				r	l
Type	50	57	32	157	$2\frac{1}{2} + 1 + 23\frac{2}{23} + 2 + 2\frac{1}{2} + 1$	11	1	1
Mt. Kabor <sup>1)</sup>	47	57	31	156	total: 31	11	1	1
KABA WETAN <sup>1)</sup>	47	59	35	152	total: 31	11/10	1	1

<sup>1)</sup> Dr. O. S. DAVIS, in litteris.

To this subspecies belong two specimens examined by STULL (1938, p. 297). This author (Dr. O. S. DAVIS, in litteris) kindly supplied me with some data concerning these specimens. One is a female from the vicinity of Mt. Kabor. This locality I presume to be the "Kabor" mentioned by ANONYMUS (1869, p. 3) as an area north east of Fort de Kock in the Padang Highlands. The other specimen is a male from Kaba Wetan, an estate (ANONYMUS, 1939, p. 167) near Kelobak (or Klobak) in the sub-district of Kepahiang (or Kepajang) in the Benkulen Residency. The scale counts of these two specimens have been incorporated in table I. In both specimens the upper labials are separated from the orbit.

#### *Python curtus brongersmai* Stull

*Python curtus*, BLANFORD, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1881, pp. 216, 222 (Singapore); SECRETARY, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1889, p. 393 (Malacca); BOULENGER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1889, p. 432 (part.), pl. 44; BOULENGER, Fauna Brit. India, Rept. Batr., 1890, pp. 245, 246 (part.); BOULENGER, Cat. Sn. Brit. Mus., vol. 1, 1893, p. 89 (part.); FLOWER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1896, p. 877 (part.); S[CLATER], List Vertebr. Anim. Gardens Zool. Soc. Lond., 9th ed., 1896, p. 607; FLOWER, Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond., 1899,

pp. 604, 656 (part.); RIDLEY, Journ. Straits Br. Roy. As. Soc., 1899, pp. 197, 207; WERNER, Zool. Jahrb., Syst., vol. 13, 1900, p. 489 (Surbo Dolok, Sumatra), p. 500 (part.); SCHENKEL, Verh. Natf. Ges. Basel, vol. 13, pt. 1, 1901, p. 154; BOULENGER, Rept. Batr., Vertebr. Fauna Mal. Pen., 1912, pp. 107, 109 (part.); DE ROOIJ, Rept. Indo-Austr. Arch., vol. 2, 1917, pp. 20, 28 (part.), figs. 8, 15 (Medan, Sumatra); BOULENGER, Journ. Fed. Mal. St. Mus., vol. 8, pt. 2, 1920, p. 289 (Siolak Daras, Korinchi Valley, Sumatra); ROBINSON and KLOSS, Journ. Fed. Mal. St. Mus., vol. 8, pt. 2, 1920, p. 301 (part.); WERNER, Arch. Naturg., vol. 87, Abt. A, pt. 7, 1921, p. 240 (part.); SWORDER, Singapore Naturalist, no. 2, 1923, p. 59; V., Tropische Natuur, vol. 13, 1924, p. 109 (part.) (Banka); VAN OORT, Verslag 's Rijks Mus. Nat. Hist. 1924—1925, 1925, p. 23; WERNER, Sitz. Ber. Ak. Wiss. Wien, Mathem. Naturw. Kl., Abt. I, vol. 134, 1925, p. 45 (Medan, Sumatra); WERNER, Miscell. Zool. Sumatr., no. 19, 1927, p. 1 (Medan, Sumatra); FLOWER, List Vertebr. Anim. Gardens Zool. Soc. London 1828—1927, vol. 3, 1929, p. 159 (part.); VAN OORT, Verslag 's Rijks Mus. Nat. Hist. 1928—1929, 1929, p. 36 (Medan, Sumatra); VAN DER MEER MOHR, Tropische Natuur, vol. 19, 1930, p. 156 (part.), fig. 2 (egg); SMITH, Bull. Raffl. Mus., no. 3, 1930, p. 39; DITMARS, Bull. New York Zool. Soc., vol. 38, pt. 5, 1935, p. 165, fig. (Sumatra); NOBLE, Copeia, 1935, no. 1, p. 1 (brooding habit); VAN DER MEER MOHR, Tropische Natuur, vol. 25, 1936, p. 23; KOPSTEIN, Bull. Raffles Mus., no. 14, 1938, p. 131; WESTERMANN, Treubia, vol. 18, 1942, p. 163 (Banka).

*Aspidoboa curta*, SAUVAGE, Bull. Soc. Philom. Paris, ser. 7, vol. 8, 1884, p. 143 (Sumatra).

*Python curtus curtus*, STULL, Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 40, no. 8, 1935, p. 393 (nec SCHLEGEL); STULL, Occ. Papers Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 8, 1938, p. 297, note 2 (problematical specimen from Sumatra).

*Python curtus brongersmai* STULL, Occ. Papers Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 8, 1938, p. 297 (Singapore, Kuala Lumpur), p. 298 (Malacca, Kuala Lumpur).

#### Specimens examined:

- 1 ex., Medan, Deli, Sumatra, from Zoological Gardens, Rotterdam, Mus. Leiden, Herp. reg. no. 5427.  
 1 ex., Sumatra, from Zoological Gardens, Rotterdam, Mus. Leiden, Herp., reg. no. 8457.  
 1 ex., Medan, Deli, Sumatra, leg. Dr. L. P. LE COSQUINO DE BUSSY, 21. IX. 1908, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen a of table II).  
 2 ex., Deli, leg. Dr. L. P. LE COSQUINO DE BUSSY, 1920, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimens b, c).  
 1 ex., probably Deli, leg. Dr. L. P. LE COSQUINO DE BUSSY, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen d).  
 1 ex., Deli, leg. Dr. KUIPER, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen e).  
 1 ex., Deli, leg. E. H. KONING, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen f).  
 1 ex., Deli, leg. W. P. V. DE ZWART, 1919, from Zoological Gardens, Amsterdam, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen g).  
 2 ex., N. E. Sumatra, leg. Jhr. F. C. VAN HEURN, 1920, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimens h, i).  
 1 ex., estate Tinjoang, Sungei Bedjangkar, Assahan, N. E. Sumatra, leg. VAN ERP, from Zoological Gardens, Amsterdam, 2. IX. 1937, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen j).  
 1 ex., Kuala Simpang, S.E. Atchin, Sumatra, Zool. Mus. Amst. (specimen k).  
 1 ex., Port Dickson, Negri Sembilan, Malaya, 17. I. 1946, presented by the Sublieutenants of the Royal Netherlands Navy, Mus. Leiden, Herp. reg. no. 8316.

The scale counts for the individual specimens are given in table II. The characters of this series of Sumatran specimens may be summarized in the

following notes. The series has been compared to a specimen from Port Dickson, Malaya; this specimen will be described more extensively in another paper.

Scales in 46—53 rows on neck, in 55—59 rows at mid-body, and in 32—35 rows in front of vent. Ventrals 167—175, average 171 (12 specimens); anal single; subcaudals 25—36, some of them single. Supraoculars 1 or 2, rarely 3; there are two supraoculars on each side in 7 specimens; one on each side in 3 specimens; two supraoculars on one side and one shield on the other side occur in 2 specimens. Specimen *b* has three supraoculars on the right side, of which the middle one is very narrow; on the left side this specimen has only one supraocular, which has two short incisures in its medial border, thus also pointing to a division into three shields. All specimens have 2 preoculars and 2 postoculars. Upper labials 11 or 12; the rostral and the anterior two labials deeply pitted. No suboculars, the 5th and 6th labial (6 specimens) or the 6th and 7th labial (5 specimens) entering the orbit. In specimen *f* the 5th upper labial of the right side is narrowly separated from the orbit by the 6th labial, the latter alone entering the orbit; on the left side both the 5th and 6th labials enter the orbit. In specimen *g* the 7th upper labial alone enters the orbit on the left side, narrowly separating the 6th labial from the orbit; on the right side the 6th and 7th upper labials enter the orbit. Lower labials 16—20, generally 19 (6 specimens) or 20 (5 specimens), 16 and 18 occurring only in one specimen each. Of these generally the 2nd to 5th (8 specimens) and the 13th to 17th (7 specimens) are pitted. In some specimens the 2nd to

TABLE II. *Python curtus brongersmai* Stull

Specimen	Scale rows			Ventrals	Subcaudals	Upper labials	Supraoculars	
	Neck	Mid-body	In front of vent				r	l
No. 5427	52	56	32	169	$1/1 + 2 + 25/26 + \dots$	12 (6, 7)	2	2
No. 8457	50	55	33	171	$4/4 + 4 + 20/20 + 1$	11 (6, 7)	2	2
a	47	58	35	173	$5/5 + 5 + 20/20 + 6$	12 (6, 7)	2	2
b	51	57	35	171	$4/5 + 1 + 1/1 + 17/18 + 1$	11 (5, 6)	3	1
c	—	55	—	± 174	$27/27 + 3$	11 (5, 6)	1	1
d	—	—	—	171	$1/1 + 1 + 20/20 + 4$	12 (6, 7)	2	2
e	46	57	33	$173 + 2/2$	$7 + 19/19 + 1$	11 (5, 6)	1	2
f	52	56	32	167	$2/2 + 4 + 24/24 + 1$	11 (r. 6; l. 5, 6)	1	1
g	51	58	32	169	$28/28 + 1$	12 (r. 6, 7; l. 7)	2	1
h	49	57	32	167	$22/21 + 2 + 3/4 + 1$	11 (5, 6)	2	2
i	52	57	32	171	$4/4 + 2 + 22/22 + 1$	11 (5, 6)	2	2
j	49	57	33	173	$1/1 + 1 + 1/1 + 2 + 23/23 + 1$	11 (5, 6)	2	2
k	53	59	34	175	$29/29 + 1$	12 (6, 7)	1	1
WERNER, 1900	—	—	—	171	$31/30 + 1$	r. 10 (4, 5) l. 12 (5, 6)	—	—
WERNER, 1925	—	—	—	174	$32/31 + 1$	9 (4, 5)	—	—
SIOLAK DARAS '1)	—	57	—	171	total: 29	two entering orbit	1	1

1) Dr. O. S. DAVIS, in litteris.

4th, 2nd to 6th or 7th, as well as the 11th, 12th or 13th to 16th or the 12th to 15th are pitted. Loreals very variable. Generally there are one or two large shields, with some smaller shields and some granules; the smaller shields and granules varying from 5 to 9 or even 13 in all.

The largest Sumatran specimen examined (*k*) has a total length of 1640 mm, tail 120 mm (i.e., 7.3 % of the total length).

The notes given above show that the number of supraoculars varies from 1 to 3 in *Python curtus brongersmai*; therefore, this number cannot be used to separate this subspecies from *Python curtus curtus*. The only well marked differences between these two species consist of the number of ventrals and of the presence or absence of subocular scales. Therefore, the problematical specimen mentioned by STULL (1938, p. 297, note 2) must be referred to *Python curtus brongersmai*; it is the specimen from Siolak Daras (or Siolak Deras) in Korinchi Valley, first recorded by BOULENGER (1920, p. 289).

A search of literature brought to light several instances in which specimens referable to *Python curtus brongersmai* Stull had been recorded from Sumatra, viz., the records by SAUVAGE (1884, p. 143), WERNER (1900, p. 489; 1925, p. 45; 1927, p. 1), DE ROOIJ (1927, p. 28, figs. 8, 15). From the island of Banka, this species was recorded for the first time by V. (1924, p. 109), while recently WESTERMANN (1942, p. 613) mentioned two specimens from this island.

It is as yet impossible to indicate sharply defined areas in Sumatra for each of these two subspecies. *Python curtus curtus* Schl. has been recorded from the Residency West Coast of Sumatra (Padang Highlands and coastal area (type?)), as well as from the Benkulen Residency (Kaba Wetan). *Python curtus brongersmai* Stull is known from North East Sumatra (Sultanate of Deli and surrounding territory; S.E. Atchin) as well as from Korinchi Valley in the Residency West Coast of Sumatra. Future collecting will have to show whether the areas inhabited by these subspecies are sharply delimited, or whether some overlapping occurs.

The native name in Malaya is Ular sawah darah (cf. BOULENGER, 1912, p. 109); in the island of Banka it is known as Ular bakas. Both V. (1924) and WESTERMANN (1942, p. 613) give notes on the belief of the Malay and Chinese in Banka, that this snake may cause leprosy.

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