KHAN, M. S. (1997): A report on an aberrant specimen of Punjab Krait *Bungarus sindanus razai* KHAN, 1985 (Ophidia: Elapidae) from Azad Kashmir.- Pakistan J. Zool., Lahore; 29 (3): 203-205. KHAN, M. S. (2002): A guide to the snakes of Pakistan. Frankfurt (Edition Chimaira), 265 pp. KRÁL, B. (1969): Notes on the herpetofauna of certain provinces of Afghanistan.- Zoologické Listy, Brno; 18 (1): 55-66. MERTENS, R. (1969): Die Amphibien und Reptilien West-Pakistans.- Stuttgarter Beitr. Naturkunde, Stuttgart; 197: 1-96. MINTON, S. A. JR. (1962): An annotated key to the amphibians and reptiles of Sind and Las Bela.- American Mus. Novit., New York City; 2081: 1-60. MINTON, S. A. JR. (1966): A contribution to the herpetology of West Pakistan.- Bull. American Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City; 134 (2): 31-184. PITMAN, C. R. S. (1913): Kraits in the Dera Ismail Khan District.- J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay; 22: 636. SMITH, M. A. (1943): The Fauna of British India including Ceylon and Burma. Vol. 3: Serpentes. London (Taylor & Francis), 583 pp. WALL, F. (1907): A new krait from Oudh (*Bungarus walli*).- J.Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay; 17: 608-611. WALL, F. (1913): On the common (*Bungarus caeruleus*) and Sind kraits (*Bungarus sindanus*).- J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay; 22: 402-403, Pl. C-D. WALL, F. (1914): The common and Sind krait (*Bungarus caeruleus* and *sindanus*). A correction.- J. Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay; 22: 808. WALL, F. (1919): A 17 scale krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*) from Bangalore.- J.Bombay Nat. Hist. Soc., Bombay; 26: 1046. WARRELL, D. A. & LOOAREESUWAN, S. & WHITE, N. J. & THEAKSTON, R. D. G. & WARRELL, M. J. & KOSAKARN, W. & REID, H. A. (1983): Severe neurotoxic envenoming by the Malayan krait *Bungarus candidus* (LINNAEUS): response to antivenom and anticholinesterase.- British Med. J., London; 286: 678-680.

KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Elapidae: *Bungarus sindanus*; *Bungarus caeruleus*; venomous snakes; geographical distribution; new country record; Khowst, Khost, Paktia, Afghanistan; Pakistan

SUBMITTED: November 24, 2003

AUTHOR: Dipl.-Biol. Ulrich KUCH, Sektion Herpetologie, Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Senckenberganlage 25, D-60325 Frankfurt am Main, Germany < u.kuch@em.uni-frankfurt.de >.

Record of the Malayan Krait, *Bungarus candidus* (LINNAEUS, 1758), from Nias Island, Indonesia

The Malayan krait, *Bungarus candidus* (LINNAEUS, 1758), is a medically important elapid snake species with a wide distribution including mainland southeast Asia, peninsular Malaysia, the Indonesian islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Bawean and Karimunjawa off the north coast of Java (DE ROOIJ 1917; SMITH 1943; DE HAAS 1950; SUPRIATNA 1995; DAVID & VOGEL 1996; ISKANDAR & COLIJN 2001). Specimens of *B. candidus* were also reported from the major sea ports Manado and Ujungpandang in Sulawesi (BOULENGER 1896; DE ROOIJ 1917). It remains however doubtful whether current populations of kraits exist on this island, and it has been suggested that the records from Sulawesi were the result of accidental introductions by humans, or based on incorrectly labeled specimens (ISKANDAR & TJAN 1996).

Here we report on a specimen of *B. candidus* deposited in the Institut für systematische Zoologie, Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (ZMB 50724; coll. RAAP, 1896) from Nias, Province of Sumatera Utara, Indonesia. The snake is an adult female with a snout-vent-length of 675 mm, a tail length of 98 mm, 216 ventrals and 44 subcaudals. It represents the first record of the Malayan Krait for Nias and any of the other islands located along the west coast of Sumatra (from northwest to southeast, these are: Simeulue, the Banyak Archipelago, Nias, the Batu Islands, the Mentawai Islands [Siberut, Sipura, North and South Pagai], and Enggano).

Nias Island lies approximately 105 km (airline) off the west coast of Sumatra. Although trade contact with Sumatra may have had a history of several hundred years, development of the Mentawai Islands by missionaries and local government started mostly with the beginning of the 20th century (DRING et al. 1990). Maps of sea level changes in the Indo-Australian Archipelago (VORIS 2000), on the other hand, indicate land connections between Nias and Sumatra at about the same sea level that would allow for dry passage of the Sunda Strait between Sumatra and Java.

The only other species of krait known from the islands west of Sumatra, the Red-headed Krait (*Bungarus flaviceps* REINHARDT, 1843), was also collected on Nias (VAN LIDTH DE JEUDE 1890; BRONGERSMA 1948). Unlike *B. candidus*, the brilliantly coloured and secretive *B. flaviceps* depends on primary rainforests and is rarely if ever seen in cultured lands or human settlements (KUCH & SCHNEYER 1996). Consequently, its potential for accidental dispersal by humans is probably much lower than that of its more opportunistic congener. We are thus inclined to interpret the fact that both species

were collected on Nias, in times when the human population of this island was rather isolated, as indicative of natural dispersal across the Mentawai Strait from Sumatra during times of Pleistocene low sea levels, and not as the result of human activity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: We thank Rainer GÜNTHER (Institut für systematische Zoologie, Museum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin) for specimen loans and assistance during research visits, and Colin J. MCCARTHY (The Natural History Museum, London) for help with literature.

REFERENCES: BRONGERSMA, L. D. (1948): Notes on *Maticora bivirgata* (BOIE) and on *Bungarus flaviceps* REINH.- Zool. Mededelingen, Leiden; 30(1): 1-29. BOULENGER, G. A. (1896): Catalogue of the snakes in the British Museum (Natural History). Vol. 3. London (Trustees of the British Museum), xiv + 727 pp. DAVID, P. & VOGEL, G. (1996): The snakes of Sumatra. An annotated checklist and key with natural history notes. Frankfurt am Main (Edition Chimaira), 260 pp. DE HAAS, C. P. J. (1950): Checklist of the Snakes of the Indo-Australian Archipelago (Reptiles – Ophidia).- Treubia, Bogor; 20 (3): 511-625. DE ROOIJ, N. (1917): The reptiles of the Indo-Australian Archipelago; II. Ophidia. Leiden (E. J. Brill), 334 pp. DRING, J. C. M. & MCCARTHY, C. J. & WHITTEN, A. J. (1990 [dated 1989]): The terrestrial herpetofauna of the Mentawai Islands, Indonesia.- Indo-Malayan Zoology, Rotterdam; 6: 119-132. ISKANDAR, D. T. & COLIJN, E. (2001): A checklist of Southeast Asian and New Guinean reptiles – Part I. Serpentes. Jakarta (Biodiversity Conservation Project, Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Japan International Cooperation Agency, The Ministry of Forestry, The Gibbon Foundation and Institute of Technology, Bandung), 195 pp. ISKANDAR, D. T. & TJAN, K. N. (1996): The amphibians and reptiles of Sulawesi, with notes on the distribution and chromosomal number of frogs; pp. 39-46. In: KITCHENER, D. J. & SUYANTO, A. (eds.): Proceedings of the first international conference on eastern Indonesian-Australian vertebrate fauna, Manado, Indonesia, November 22-26, 1994. KUCH, U. & SCHNEYER, W. (1996): Erfahrungen mit der Terrarienhaltung von vier Arten nahrungsspezialisierter Giftnattern der Gattung *Bungarus* DAUDIN, 1803. Teil IV: *Bungarus flaviceps* REINHARDT, 1843.- Sauria, Berlin; 18 (2): 3-16. SMITH, M. A. (1943): The Fauna of British India, Ceylon and Burma, including the whole of the Indo-Chinese Sub-Region. Reptilia and Amphibia Vol. III. Serpentes. London (Trustees of the British Museum), xii + 583 pp. SUPRIATNA, J. (1995): Ular berbisa di Indonesia. Jakarta (Penerbit Bhratara), 75 pp. VAN LIDTH DE JEUDE, T. W. (1890): On a collection of reptiles from Nias, and on *Calamaria virgulata*, BOIE.- Notes Leyden Mus., Leiden; 12 (44): 253-256. VORIS, H. K. (2000): Maps of Pleistocene sea levels in Southeast Asia: shorelines, river systems and time durations.- J. Biogeogr., Oxford; 27: 1153-1167.

KEY WORDS: Reptilia: Squamata: Serpentes: Elapidae: *Bungarus candidus*; Malayan Krait; venomous snakes; new island record; Mentawai Strait, Nias, Sumatera Utara, Sumatra, Indonesia

SUBMITTED: December 2, 2003

AUTHORS: Dipl.-Biol. Ulrich KUCH, Sektion Herpetologie, Forschungsinstitut und Naturmuseum Senckenberg, Senckenberganlage 25, D-60325 Frankfurt am Main, Germany < U.Kuch@em.uni-frankfurt.de >; Frank TILLACK, Draesekestr. 8, D-12487 Berlin, Germany < frank-tillack@t-online.de >.

Elaphe dione (PALLAS, 1773), a snake taxon new to the Turkish herpetofauna

The Dione Ratsnake *Elaphe dione* (PALLAS, 1773) is a widespread colubrid which occurs from Korea and south-eastern Russia to extreme south-eastern Europe (SCHULZ 1996; DAREVSKY 1997). In the Western Palearctic region, it is known from European Russia and Kazakhstan (south-eastern part, along the lower Ural and Volga valleys), Caucasian isthmus), Azerbaijan, eastern Georgia, Armenia (near Yerevan) and Ukraine.

Two of us (JG and FN) found three specimens of *E. dione* (fig. 1) on April 28, 1988 in north-eastern Turkey, 2 - 3 km south-west of the village of Yacı (= Yaycı) [39,930° N / 43,957° E] (province of Iğdır, on the north-north-eastern base of the Zor Dağı Mountains). The snakes were found sun basking in the morning, on walls of irrigation canals. The habitat was a sandy steppe with riparian forests of *Salix* and *Populus*.

The closest known record of *E. dione* stems from south of Yerevan, Armenia (SCHULZ 1996; DAREVSKY 1997), about 60 km ESE of our Turkish locality. Our finding adds a taxon to the Turkish herpetofaunal inventory and extends the western distributional limits of the known territory of *E. dione* (asterisk in fig. 2) which is coarsely described by a curved line connecting the following record localities: south of Kuybyshev (lower Volga River, Russia), near Melitopol (Ukraine), 2-3 km south-west of Yacı (Turkey), and the Shahrood area (Iran). This distribution corresponds roughly to the vegetal zone of the "Arabo Caspian steppic formations" as shown in in MARTÍNEZ RICA (1997). It is likely that the Turkish range of *E. dione* includes the whole Arax (=Aras) river valley east of Tuzluca. Further field work will be necessary to verify this hypothesis.