

Project Update: June 2015

The snake species diversity and distribution pattern was examined in an eastern Himalayan region. We surveyed snakes along the elevation gradient (1200–3500 m) of the Mochu river valley in Jigme Dorji National Park, Eastern Himalaya, Bhutan, from 30th June 2014 to 15th May 2015 using time constrained visual encounter survey. A total of 14 species of snakes were observed during the study, and the species diversity peaked at 1200-1500 m with no species beyond 3000 m. Most reptiles were narrowly distributed, especially those found in low elevation indicating the importance of lowland forests in the conservation of reptiles in Eastern Himalayas.

The public awareness campaign with park residents and educational institutions within park had been conducted successfully. A presentation was also made at college of Natural Resources to disseminate project finding and conservation message to wider communities.

Table: List of snakes found during the study period.

Sl. No	Species Name	Family	Remarks
1	<i>Ovophis monticola</i>	Viperidae	Venomous
2	<i>Amphiesma platyceps</i>	Colubridae	Non-Venomous
3	<i>Ptyas nigromarginata</i>	Colubridae	Non-Venomous
4	<i>Trachischium</i> spp.	Colubridae	Non-Venomous
5	<i>Protobothrops himalayanus</i>	Viperidae	Venomous
6	<i>Bungarus niger</i>	Elapidae	Highly venomous
7	<i>Boiga multifaciata</i>	Colubridae	Mildly venomous
8	<i>Lycodon</i> spp.	Colubridae	Non-venomous
9	<i>Rhabdophis himalayanus</i>	Colubridae	Mildly venomous
10	<i>Orthriophis cantoris</i>	Colubridae	Non-venomous
11	<i>Dendrelaphis tristis</i>	Colubridae	Non-venomous
12	<i>Bungarus bungariodes</i>	Elapidae	Highly venomous
13	<i>Naja Kaouthia</i>	Elapidae	Highly venomous
14	<i>Orthriophis taenurus</i>	Colubridae	Non-venomous



Left: Bungarus bungariodes (road kill). Middle: Orthriophis taenurus. Right: Survey team at northern part of the Park