

Mid-term Project Report

*Rediscovering and Assessing the Conservation Status of *Lycodon paucifasciatus* Rendahl in Smith, 1943 in Vietnam (Squamata: Colubridae)*

Outcome 1: Assessing the Current Status of the Natural Population of *Lycodon paucifasciatus*

Based on our field surveys and records obtained from citizen science platforms such as Facebook and iNaturalist, we have updated the known distribution of this rare species in Vietnam. For the first time, *Lycodon paucifasciatus* has been documented from Kon Tum, Thua Thien-Hue, Gia Lai, and Binh Dinh provinces.

The species is strongly associated with evergreen and lightly disturbed secondary forests at elevations ranging from 800–1200 m above sea level. Our observations confirm that *L. paucifasciatus* is a nocturnal species, with peak activity recorded between 16:00 and 22:00.

Outcome 2: Assessing Impact Factors and Identifying Threats

The species remains rare across all confirmed localities. Our observations suggest that habitat loss and degradation are the primary threats to *L. paucifasciatus*. Additionally, due to its superficial resemblance to highly venomous *Bungarus* species (kraits), the species is often killed by local residents out of fear or misidentification. Although a few social media posts show interest in acquiring this species, no clear evidence of commercial trade has been documented, likely due to its rarity and cryptic behavior. We are currently collecting additional occurrence data to model the current distribution of the species and to develop predictive maps of its potential distribution over the next 5, 10, and 15 years.

Outcome 3: Developing Recommendations for Long-Term Conservation

- Preliminary findings from this project have contributed to recent taxonomic assessments of *Lycodon* and related snake taxa, resulting in several peer-reviewed publications (see Appendix).
- During fieldwork, we conducted training sessions and awareness-raising activities for local forest rangers and communities regarding the identification and conservation importance of *L. paucifasciatus* and other snake species.
- Project results have been actively disseminated via the Facebook group "Snake Identification and First Aid for Snakebites in Vietnam" (over 128,000 members), with the aim of enhancing public awareness of this and other *Lycodon* species.

Next steps: Continued field surveys during the species' active season, additional outreach and education events, and the integration of taxonomic, ecological, and distributional data for publication and to support a formal reassessment of the species' IUCN conservation status in the near future.

Appendix: Peer-reviewed Publications Contributing to the Project

1. **Nguyen, T.V. & Vogel, G.** (2025) On the taxonomy of *Sibynophis grahami* (Boulenger, 1904) with remarks on morphology, distribution, natural history, and conservation status. *Zootaxa*, 5618(4): 525–551. <https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5618.4>
2. **Nguyen, T.V.**, Le, J.L., Jiang, K., Ding, L., May Thu Chit, Poyarkov, N.A. & Vogel, G. (2025) A new species of *Lycodon* from China and Myanmar, and new data on *L. gongshan*. *Zootaxa*, 5621(1): 1–51. <https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5621.1.1>
3. **Nguyen, T.V. & Vogel, G.** (2024) A new species of *Lycodon* from northern Truong Son Mountains, Central Vietnam. *Zootaxa*, 5570(3): 484–510. <https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5570.3.3>
4. Grassby-Lewis, R.J., Brakels, P., Maury, N., Sitthivong, S., Frohlich, D., Pawangkhanant, P., Idiatullina, S.S., **Nguyen, T.V.**, & Poyarkov, N.A. (2025) A new endemic karst-associated *Protobothrops* species from Laos. *Herpetozoa*, 38: 43–60. <https://doi.org/10.3897/herpetozoa.38.e146004>
5. Pawangkhanant, P., Idiatullina, S.S., **Nguyen, T.V.**, Ruangsawan, T., Matsukoji, T., David, P., Suwannapoom, C., & Poyarkov, N.A. (2025) A new cryptic species of the *Trimeresurus kanburiensis* complex from central Thailand. *Zootaxa*, 5621(5): 514–546. <https://doi.org/10.11646/zootaxa.5621.5.2>

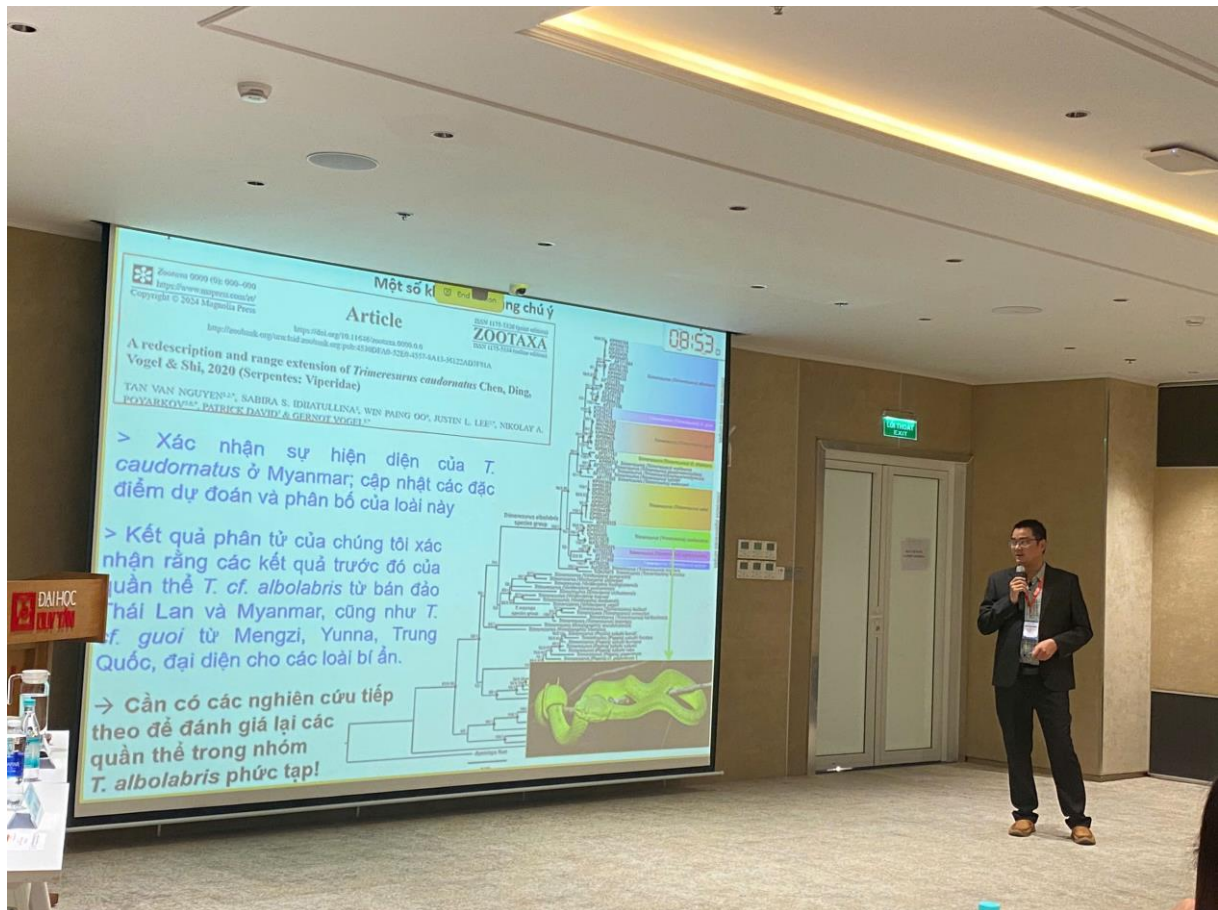


Fig. 1. Presentation at Duy Tan University related to the project.



Fig. 2. Field survey at Kon Ka Kinh National Park, Gia Lai, Vietnam.



Fig. 3. Field survey at Bach Ma National Park, Thua Thien-Hue, Vietnam.



Fig. 4. Awareness-raising activities for forest rangers and local residents at Kon Ka Kinh National Park, Gia Lai, Vietnam.



Fig. 5. Quick identification guide for *Lycodon paucifasciatus* shared on the Facebook group "Snake Identification and First Aid for Snakebites in Vietnam" (over 128,000 members).