

Common Snakes of India

A Guide Map

1 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: around 14". Hoodless. Head and neck are black with yellow spots. Easily identified by two black rings over tail. Nocturnal. Found in coastal forests under leaves and sands. These snakes are rare. Species: Coral snakes - 3. Distribution: WB, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka & Tamil Nadu



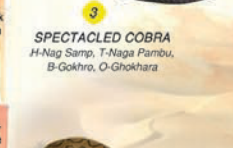
SLENDER CORAL SNAKE

2 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: 39" to 51". Hooded. Easily identified by a distinct white monocle (O) on the hood. Nocturnal. Found mostly in watery, moist lands and human habitats, resulting in many snakebites. Distribution: WB, UP, Haryana, Orissa, Sikkim & Assam to Arunachal Pradesh.



SPECTACLED COBRA
H-Nag Samp, T-Naga Pambu, B-Gokhro, O-Ghokhara

3 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: 39" to 87". Hooded. (U) shaped sign present on back of hood absent in some snakes. Active in both day and night. Found in rocky-lands. These snakes are the quite frequent. Species: Cobras - 4. Distribution: Throughout India.



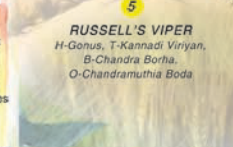
MONOCLED COBRA
H-Nag Samp, T-Nalla Pambu, B-Keote, O-Tampa

4 Venomous: Haematotoxin.
Length: 12" to 20". Hoodless. Head is triangular. Easily identified by distinct lance mark over the head. White spots and wavy stripes on the middle of the back extend on both sides - from head to tail. Nocturnal. Found in sandy and rocky areas. Bites of this snake are numerous. Species: Vipers - 3. Distribution: Throughout India except WB & North-East.



SAW SCALED VIPER
H-Phoorsa, T-Surati Pambu, O-Dhuli Naga

5 Venomous: Haematotoxin.
Length: 39" to 71". Hoodless. Head is flat, triangular. Robust body. Can be easily identified by three rows of circular spots from head to tail. Nocturnal. Found in small scrub jungles and termite mounds. Most fatal snakebites are by this snake. Distribution: Throughout India.



RUSSELL'S VIPER
H-Gonus, T-Kannadi Viriyan, B-Chandra Borha, O-Chandramuthia Boda

6 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: 59" to 89". Hoodless. Body triangular in cross-section. Alternate black and yellow bands present throughout the body. Nocturnal. Found in termite mounds and rodent holes that are close to the water. Though venomous, they usually do not bite. Species: Kraits - 4. Distribution: WB, MP, UP, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh & Andhra Pradesh



COMMON KRAIT
H-Maneer, T-Kattu Viriyan, B-Kalaj, O-Chitti

7 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: 39" to 69". Hoodless. Head comparatively small, tiny blackish or grey. White dots below the head. White paired bands all the way to the tail. Nocturnal. Most venomous snake in Asia. Usually present in rat holes, brick-stacks etc. Most of the bites occurred in bed late at night. No pain in the early stages. Distribution: Throughout India



8 Venomous: Neurotoxin.
Length: 118" to 187". Hooded. White or yellowish cross-band all over the body. Largest hooded snake in the world. Found in deep forests and tea gardens. Bites are rare because they do not live near human habitats. Distribution: WB, UP, Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Andaman Islands, Bihar & Orissa



KING COBRA
H-Naga Raja, T-Raja Nagam, B-Sankhachoor, O-Ahira

9 Venomous: Haematotoxin.
Length: 16" to 45". Hoodless. Green coloured. Triangular head. Front of the neck is blunt. Though it is venomous, the amount of venom is not lethal to humans. Both nocturnal and diurnal. Found in trees and in deep forests. Species: Pit Vipers - 15. Distribution: WB, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu & Maharashtra



BAMBOO PIT VIPER
H-Hara Gonus, T-Kuzhi Viriyan, B-Gechho Borha, O-Katakati Naga

10 Non-venomous.
Length: 39" to 67". Slender, long tail, black spot present below the eyes. Diurnal. Tree dwellers. Distribution: Throughout India



COMMON CAT SNAKE
T-Poonai Pambu, B-Kauri Samp, O-Dalua Naga

11 Non-venomous.
Length: 26" to 39". Slender, tail is long. (Y) shaped mark over the head. Nocturnal. Found in trees. Distribution: Throughout India



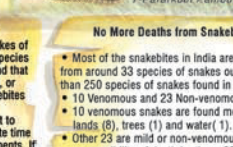
BRONZE BACK TREE SNAKE
H-Lal Dhaman, T-Komberi Mukhan, B-Baetachria

12 Non-venomous.
Length: 39" to 69". Beauty of so many colours are not present in any other snake. Diurnal. Tree dwellers. Distribution: WB, Bihar, Orissa, Forested hills of the South-West (South of the Goa gap) Forests of North-East India.



COMMON VINE SNAKE
H-Hara Samp, T-Pachai Pambu, B-Laudoga, O-Laudanka

13 Non-venomous. Length: 39" to 69". Most colourful and beautiful snake. Diurnal. Tree dwellers. They can even fly from one tree to another by flattening their bodies. Distribution: WB, Bihar, Orissa, forested hills of the South-West (South of the Goa gap) Forests of North-East India.



ORNATE FLYING SNAKE
T-Parankum Pambu, B-Kai Nagin

From Romulus Whitaker
Useful facts about the common snakes of India clearly show that only a few species are responsible for serious bites, and that by using a flashlight / torch at night, or mosquito nets while sleeping, snakebites can be reduced greatly. Snakebite victims should go straight to hospitals for treatment and not waste time with Ojhas and other dubious treatments. If this is done, victims would quickly see snakebite deaths among farmers and field labourers disappear. I believe this map would be very useful to educate people about common snakes and snakebites throughout India.

No More Deaths from Snakebites

- Most of the snakebites in India are reported from around 33 species of snakes out of more than 250 species of snakes found in India.
- 10 Venomous and 23 Non-venomous Snakes
- 10 venomous snakes are found mostly in lands (8), trees (1) and water (1).
- Other 23 are mild or non-venomous; there is no possibility of death by these 23 species.
- The 5 most venomous snakes are: 1. Monocled Cobra 2. Spectacled Cobra 3. Common Krait 4. Russell's Viper 5. Saw-Scaled viper
- Most people die from the bites of these five snakes.

Identify Snakebite Marks

- Bite marks from venomous snakes**
 - Usually two fang marks, sometimes only one mark. Blood oozes from the bite marks.
 - Associated with swelling and pain, which increase over time.
- Bite marks from non-venomous snakes**
 - Multiple scratch marks.
 - Fresh blood flows from the bite marks. Starts with a little pain and then it decreases over time.

Snakebites! What to do?

- Make the victim sit quietly, and keep him/her away from the unwanted crowds and irrelevant remarks.
- Take the fear out by encouraging the patient.
- Gently wash the bitten part with soap and water.
- Without allowing the patient to exert himself, move the patient without delay to the nearest hospital, where the life-saving AVS (Anti-Venom Serum) is available.
- If AVS is given in time, it may save a life from even the most venomous snakebite.

About this Publication

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Our previous publications include Snake Map of South 24 Parganas, Snake Map of Bengal and numerous books on Snakes.
* B: Bengali H: Hindi O: Oriya T: Tamil

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