

## THE REPTILES OF SOUTH ASIA: CHECKLIST AND DISTRIBUTIONAL SUMMARY

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(with one text-figure)

**ABSTRACT:** A checklist of species and subspecies of reptiles recorded from south Asia is presented. In all, 632 species have been recorded, in 185 genera and 25 families. Endemicity is high, 305 species being restricted to a single physiographic zone and an additional 98 species to more than one zone within the region but not extraliminally. The total endemicity of 403 (63.7%) is high for a chiefly continental landmass.

**KEY WORDS:** Reptiles, checklist, distribution, endemicity, south Asia.

### INTRODUCTION

South Asia (composed of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka), also referred to as the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, the Indian subcontinent and the Indian region, is home to one of tropical Asia's areas of greatest herpetological diversities. The half-century-old monographs of Smith (1931; 1935; 1943) continue to be the authoritative sources for identification of the region's reptiles. Many species have been described since. The present list has been largely compiled from the literature, from material personally examined in various museums in America, Asia and Europe, as well as printouts of the holdings of several North American collections, where important material, such as range extensions, have been recently examined by colleagues. The cut-off date for literature search and museum work was the end of August, 1994.

The following works have been followed for nomenclatural use: Crocodylians and turtles: King and Burke (1989) and Das (1991). Lizards: Kluge (1991) for gekkonids, Moody (1980) for agamids, Arnold (1989) for lacertids. Snakes: Gans (1966) for uropeltids, Kluge (1993) for erylacines, Gyi (1970), Lazell *et al.* (1991), Savage (1952), Malnate (1960), Malnate and Underwood (1988), among others, for colubrids; and Kharin (1984) for hydrophiids.

A synopsis of the reptiles of the south Asian region, comprising valid names, synonymy, information on primary types, distribution and refer-

ences is in preparation and a biogeographic summary of the fauna can be found in Das (in press). Physiographic units (see Fig. 1) include: AN (Andaman Islands), DC (Deccan), EG (Eastern Ghats), HM (Himalayas), NI (Nicobar Islands), NE (Northeast), NW (Northwest), TH (Trans-Himalayas), WG (Western Ghats) and SL (Sri Lanka). Estuarine and marine species have not been linked to any physiographic units. Species marked with a single asterisk are believed to be locally extinct, those with double asterisk are taxa from politically disputed regions. For the two species marked with a triple asterisk (*Cnemaspis boiei* and *Typhlops loveridgei*), the type locality in the original description is not precise, and have been considered restricted to a single physiographic unit.

### CHECKLIST OF REPTILES CROCODYLIA

#### CROCODYLIDAE

1. *Crocodylus palustris* Lesson, 1831:  
**Distribution:** Bangladesh\*, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. (DC, EG, HM, NE, NW, SL, WG).
2. *Crocodylus porosus* Schneider, 1801:  
**Distribution:** Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka. (estuarine).

#### GAVIALIIDAE

3. *Gavialis gangeticus* (Gmelin, 1789):  
**Distribution:** Bangladesh, Bhutan\*, India, Nepal, Pakistan. (EG, HM, NE, NW).