

HERPETOFAUNA

Margarita Naming¹ and Indraneil Das²¹Sarawak Biodiversity Centre, Km 20 Jalan Borneo Heights, Semengoh,
Locked Bag 3032, 93990 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia²Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation,
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

Abstract. The Bau region of western Sarawak is known for its extensive limestone area, comprising a series of low hills, covered with largely intact tropical forest. This paper reports an inventory of the herpetofauna conducted in the region, between September 2001 and June 2003. A total of 34 species of anuran amphibians (representing 20 genera and five families), 18 species of lizards (representing 13 genera and five families), 13 species of snakes (representing 12 genera and four families) and two species of turtles (representing two genera and one family) were recorded from the 19 limestone hills sampled within the Bau Limestone Area. Among the amphibian fauna collected, the most abundant species locally was *Rana raniceps* (11 limestone hills, 48 specimens). The most abundant reptile species collected was *Cyrtodactylus consobrinus* (10 limestone hills, 17 specimens). Compared with other sites within Borneo, the Bau Limestone Area harbours a relatively rich amphibian fauna, but lacks endemics. The inventory of the reptile fauna is believed to be incomplete, and similarly lacks endemics. In addition, no limestone obligate species of herpetofauna were collected during these surveys.

Key Words: herpetofauna, limestone, biodiversity, inventory, Bau

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INTRODUCTION

The Bau Limestone Area extends in a narrow belt from near the town of Bau in western Sarawak discontinuously to near Tebekang in the south-east, and comprises a mosaic of limestone outcrops, interspersed with swampy alluvium (Wilford, 1965a,b). The rocks are dated as Upper Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous, and are of marine origin, consisting of pale, massive, fine-grained poorly bedded and jointed rocks of high purity. The limestone flora