

Laotian Wolf Snake – Non Venomous – Not Dangerous



Laotian Wolf Snake. Less than a meter long, non-venomous, but quick to bite. These snakes are common all over Thailand.

When I say the “Laotian Wolf Snake” is “not dangerous” I mean, it’s not going to kill you or send you to the intensive care unit of a Thailand hospital. But, though this snake isn’t venomous it does have a biting problem. It bites very fast because it’s small and thin – and doesn’t give much warning when it strikes – unlike some other snakes – mangrove snakes, or monocled cobras.

Caution: There is another, highly venomous – and deadly, snake that looks similar to this harmless wolf snake. It is the yellow Banded Krait. It has thick yellow and black bands, and can grow to about 2 meters long. See [this krait page](#) >

There is another snake that you might think resembles this one. It’s called a mangrove snake. This is a type of cat snake, and it has some venom, and bites hard and deep.

Lycodon laoensis (Laotian Wolf Snake)

Thai: (ngoo plong chanwan lao, or ngoo kan plong)

Length: Up to about .5 meters (50 cm, or 19 inches).

Range: All over Thailand (and Laos!).

Notes: These are ground dwelling snakes. They are rather shy and like to hide under things. They are easily eaten by predators because they have no strong defense (venom). Laotian Wolf Snakes prefer mountains and hilly regions but also can be

found close to dwellings at times.

Active Time? Night & evenings cruising through leaf litter or just sitting on a porch curled up and waiting for a gecko to walk by.

Food: Small insects, frogs, small geckos.

Defensive Behavior: Pretty calm until they are scared or angry. They bite fast, and repeatedly. Their mouth is very small so you wouldn't end up with much of a bite, but be cautious anyway.

Venom Toxicity: No venom that affects humans. But, as with any bite, if you're bitten and it affects you – get to the hospital. You may be allergic to it.

Offspring:

Laotian Wolf Snake classification

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Serpentes

Family: Colubridae

Genus: Lycodon

Species: *L. laoensis*

Binomial classification: *Lycodon laoensis*

Laotian Wolf Snake Fideo:

If you were looking for snakes of Laos – try this report of snakes found during field-herping trips in Laos. [Laos-Snakes-PDF-Stuart & Heatwole 2008 snakes.](#)

Copperheaded Racer Snake – Non Venomous – Not Dangerous



The Copperheaded Racer snakes are so named because their head is copper colored. Though much of the body of this snake is also copper colored, there are also more yellow and brown color variations among this species. These snakes have no relation to the highly venomous “copperhead” snakes of America, and elsewhere. Thailand’s Copperheaded Racers are large rat snakes that feed heavily on large rodents and are frequently found near houses and markets where a rat population exists. These snakes will rarely bite you if you are walking by, but if you are pursuing a copperheaded racer – it will turn and move toward you with many folds in it’s neck, ready to strike. See the video below of the large 2 meter + racer I found crossing a Thai highway in southern Thailand.

There is another rat snake – the Common Malayan Racer that is a much darker color, but very much resembles the Copperheaded Racer. It generally will not bite even if handled.

Coelognathus radiatus, usually referred to as the Copperheaded Racer, Rat Snake, or Jumping Snake

Thai: Ngoo tang ma-prow ly keet

Appearance: A copper colored head with black lines on the top and neck, leading into some lateral lines that run down some of the length of the body. This snake often looks yellow as the dominant color. Because this snake is rather large it has a large mouth to match.

Length: Up to 230 cm (about 7 feet maximum). They can get as thick as an adult male's wrist. Obviously thicker if they just ate.

Range: All over Thailand and many countries in Southeast Asia.

Habitat: Copperheaded racers are ground-dwelling snakes and prefer to live where rats are. Anywhere rats are. These snakes can be found at some altitude (1500m) as well as sea-level.

Notes: These snakes bite at the slightest provocation. They strike repeatedly, but eventually tire. The Cobra show in Ao Nang, Thailand uses these snakes in a demonstration because they are great strikers. I've only seen these racers on the ground – not climbing anything.

Active Time? Diurnal – daytime. Occasionally found active at night.

Food: Rats, mice, lizards, frogs, birds.

Natural Enemies: King cobras seem to prefer these and other rat snakes, probably because the teeth are not large and they cannot inflict any damage on the cobras.

Defensive Behavior: They will come at you if you're bothering them, with a raised head – vertically inflated neck, and open mouth. See video of one crossing road and coming at me. They love to strike, and the big ones can reach over a meter when striking. If they can't deter the aggressor they roll over and play dead with their tongue hanging out. If they can get away they are very fast snakes on the ground.

Venom Toxicity: Venom in the saliva, but no means to deliver it with fangs – no fangs at all.

Offspring: No info.

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia
Order: Squamata
Suborder: Serpentes
Family: Colubridae
Family: Colubridae
Subfamily: Colubrinae
Genus: Coelognathus
Species: C. Radiatus
Binomial name: Coelognathus radiatus

Video: I Found a Baby Copperheaded Racer Crossing the Road:

Video: Large Copperheaded Racer Crossing the Road – Comes After Me!

Video: Copperheaded Racer Striking

Red Tailed Racer – Non-Venomous – Not Dangerous



Red Tailed Racer – Non-Venomous – Not Dangerous

[Last Updated: 5 May 2017]

These Red Tailed Racers are beautiful green snakes (□□□□□□□□) with a grey or reddish tail. They are non-venomous but big enough to give you a strong bite. These snakes live for about 15 years on average – if they don't encounter a predator like the King cobra.

Gonyosoma oxycephalum (Red Tailed Racer)

Thai: (ngoo kee-ow kub maak)

Length: Max length about 2.5m (7.5+ feet) They are thick like your wrist and very strong, muscled snakes.

Range: All over Thailand.

Habitat: Red Tailed Racers prefer lowland and up to about 750m above sea level in jungle, agricultural (farmed) land, mangrove forests. They spend most of their time in trees and bushes.

Notes: These are common tree snakes that are also found in caves. They have beautiful greens, with white and black mixed in to their main body color. Their belly scales are rough and ideal for climbing trees. Their top scales are smooth. Identified easily by the dark streak across the eyes, and, if you're close enough – the blue tongue that flickers in and out when aggravated. The tail is not always or even usually red... the ones I've seen are grey. They don't always do well in captivity and can strike at anytime, though usually much more when aggravated first.

Active Time? Daytime.

Food: Rats, mice, birds, bats and lizards.

Natural Enemies: King cobras love to eat Red Tailed Racer snakes!

Defensive Behavior: They flare up their body vertically – not horizontally like the cobras. They puff themselves up vertically and turn this part sideways to you so they can strike fear into you. They do bite when pestered. They can strike from nearly any position, head facing away from you too. Be careful they have strong jaws.

Venom Toxicity: No venom dangerous to humans.

Offspring: Red tailed racers reach sexually maturity at 4 years. Between September and January this snake deposits small clutches of 3-8 eggs that hatch 45cm long baby red tailed racer snakes in 91 to 112 days.



We put this snake on the ground to get a full-body shot, usually it would not be on the ground – they much prefer the trees and bushes.

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Serpentes

Family: Colubridae

Genus: *Gonyosoma*

Species: *G. oxycephalum*

Binomial name: *Gonyosoma oxycephalum*

Classified by Boie in 1827.

Video: Big Red-Tailed Racer Found on Hiking Trail – Southern Thailand

#GreenSnake #🐍🐍🐍🐍🐍🐍

Sunbeam Snakes – Non Venomous

– Not Dangerous



Sunbeam snakes in Thailand have a rainbow glow to their scales.

[Last update: 6 March 2017]

Up until yesterday I've only seen small sunbeam snakes – about 15 inches long. They are fat and can be found under plastic or other things in muddy water, or anywhere near water. I found one small sunbeam crossing the street at night during a rain in Sisaket – so I pulled him off the road and up into the brush. Yesterday I saw a 1+ meter snake at a friend's. The big ones are really impressive. Thick, smooth like glass, and with an unbelievably cool rainbow iridescence that you must see.

Sunbeam snakes get their name because they beam in the sunshine... so to speak. Their scales reflect a luminescence – like a rainbow of colors – and it's surreal to see a sunbeam snake in the bright sunshine (I have a video for you below, but it doesn't give justice to the intensity of the rainbow of colors).

Xenopeltis unicolor (Sunbeam Snake)

Thai language: Ngoo sang ateet, Ngoo leu-um deen

Appearance: Sunbeam snakes are thicker than a large banana (with skin) as adults. Their scales are very smooth and the snake has a texture like rubber. Dirt doesn't appear to stick to the scales. The head is like a shovel blade, tending toward flat. The eyes are small and designed for burrowing in dirt.

Length: Both male and female sunbeams are usually about a meter long with the female growing up to 1.3m for the maximum length (about 4 feet).

Range: All over Thailand. I've found them in Trang, Surat, Krabi and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces. Also found all over Southeast Asia from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, to Burma (Myanmar), China, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and the Malaysian Peninsula and over to the Philippines.

Habitat: These snakes love the shallow water, muddy areas where they lie hidden under leaves or junk waiting for nightfall. They can be found close to human habitat as well as any lake or other body of water. They are fossorial – meaning, they hide under things – like leaves, dirt, just about anything.

Notes: These sunbeam snakes rarely bite. They do not do well in captivity and quickly die because they get stressed out. If you keep one – be sure to have soft substrate they can burrow (dig) into to cover themselves. They need cool shade and water. Don't put them in the sun for long.

Active Time? Nocturnal – night.

Food: Frogs mostly, lizards, geckos, and other snakes. Sunbeam snakes kill prey by squeezing (constricting) it like a python.

Natural Enemies: King cobras and kraits would probably eat these snakes, though I don't have evidence that they do.

Defensive Behavior: Curl tail. Rarely bite. Very low-key, mellow snakes if you're not provoking them. They move very slow and their scales are good for water but not so great for street, rocks, and other hard smooth surfaces.

Venom Toxicity: None. No danger to humans except possibly a strong bite if you anger it. I've heard about only one person ever being bitten by this snake. It just doesn't typically happen.

Offspring: Little is known. Tough to keep very long – they die quickly in captivity.

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Subphylum: Vertebrata
Class: Reptilia
Order: Squamata
Suborder: Serpentes
Infraorder: Alethinophidia
Family: Xenopeltidae
Genus: *Xenopeltis*
Species: *X. unicolor*
Binomial name: *Xenopeltis unicolor*

Classification by Reinwardt, 1827

Sunbeam Snake Photo:



The photos and video don't do the colors justice – you really have to see the sunbeam snake in person to believe it.

My Sunbeam Snake Video:

Really, if you haven't yet read this book about Dr. Joe Slowinski – biologist bitten by a many-banded krait in Burma in 2001 – you really should. It's an excellent read, and ALL SNAKE HOBBYISTS SHOULD READ IT >

Ridley's Racer – Cave Snake – Not Venomous



Othriophis taeniurus ridleyi. Ridleys Racer. Non-venomous. Lives in caves, eats bats.

Othriophis taeniurus ridleyi (Ridley's Racer)

Length: up to 2.5 meters. I have caught eight of these, all of them under 2.25 meters.

Range: Chumpon, Thailand, south to border of Thailand-Malaysia

Habitat: Usually caves, though at times found outside caves. Recently I found a number of them in a bungalow at a nature resort and an empty wooden cabin in a rubber plantation. Then someone wrote me to ID one that was climbing around the limestone cliffs in Krabi.

Active Time? The snake is mainly nocturnal. They are active during the day only after heavy rainfall, or inside caves.

Food: Bats, birds, and maybe even rats if they happened to be on the ground.

Defensive Behavior: These Thailand snakes are calm and move slowly unless provoked substantially.

Venom Toxicity: None. Member of rat snake group – so their saliva probably contains venom, but they have no venom injecting fangs in the front or rear. They have rows of teeth in the upper jaw, but very small – less than 1/4th inch long.

Offspring: Nothing known – still updating this article.

Notes: These are often found in Thailand caves, they are excellent wall climbers. A Buddhist monk walked me through some pitch black caves at a temple with a cave in Southern Thailand and showed me this amazingly colored Ridley's Racer pictured above. This non-venomous snake, part of the rat snake family was calm and let me take video with the camera just 12 inches from her head. Ridley racer snakes hang on cave walls and snatch flying bats out of the air.

Classification:

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Serpentes

Family: Colubridae

Subfamily: Colubrinae

Genus: *Othriophis*

Species: *taeniurus ridleyi*

Ridley's Racer Video:

Here is another video taken by a visitor from France that was climbing a mountain at a local Buddhist temple and saw this snake during the daytime cruising the limestone rocks:

Burmese Python with Darker Color Profile



Burmese Python - *Python bivittatus*. Copyright 2011, Elliot Pelling - used with permission.

Snakes come in all different colors. Even snakes of the same species can have quite different coloration depending on region, or sometimes just living next to each other in Thailand's wild.

This is a Burmese Python sent to me by a friend. Quite dark compared to most I've seen here in Southern Thailand.

Recently a reader sent me some photos of a snake that very nearly bit him on one of the islands of Koh Phi Phi. When I looked at it – it was unmistakable what it was – a mangrove pit viper. However, it was brown tinted – quite brown. The guy verified it was brown, and not just a camera quirk. I've only seen them in a purple shade and with some yellow. Never brown.

Goes to show you that it is very difficult to identify the 200 some snakes native to Thailand. It's downright impossible many times from the photos I get. Even snakes I catch, some biologists cannot figure out what snake it is.

Please...

PLEASE... do not touch snakes if you are not 100% sure what it is – and only if it is non-venomous. There are many snakes that have venom in Thailand – but that are classified as non-venomous, because typically they are not dangerous to man. If you happen to be allergic to the venom though – guess what? You could be in anaphylactic shock before you know it.

Recently a “non-venomous” snake put a teenager in the Bangkok hospital in Phuket for 2 weeks with failing kidneys.

Be careful with snakes – all snakes – there are some that are quite obvious what they are, and there are others that I cannot figure out... and there are some that the biologists cannot figure out.

Striped Bronzeback Snake – Non Venomous – Not Dangerous



Juvenile *Dendrelaphis caudolineatus* – Not Venomous – Not Dangerous

Dendrelaphis caudolineatus (Striped Bronzeback Snake)

Length: Up to about 1.5 meters. The males are a bit more red on top, and slightly thinner.

Range: The Striped Bronzeback is found in southern Thailand through the Malaysian Peninsula, and to Singapore, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and the Philippines. The snake shown here was caught in Tub Kaak, Krabi Province in southern Thailand.

Habitat: Forests and lowlands up to about 1,500 meters. They are found on trees primarily, and often on the ground too in search of prey.

Active Time? Diurnal – daylight.

Food: Frogs, lizards, some say small birds in the nest.

Defensive Behavior: A quick bite – coiled beforehand, or not. I was bitten when I grabbed his tail when I first saw him. I expected it. He caused a little blood on the top of my pointer finger by the big knuckle. There are a couple small bumps there now. I experienced no serious symptoms.

Venom Toxicity: No venom. No danger.

Offspring:

Notes: Striped bronzeback snakes are somewhat larger than the other bronzebacks, and can get up to about 1.5 meters. The one in the photo and video below was caught at about 300 meters elevation (900+ feet) on a fallen tree. I stepped over the tree and the snake fell to the ground and attempted to hide under another rotting tree stump. I had to decide in about 1 second whether the snake was venomous and whether I could step lightly on his tail to stop him from disappearing. I saw the tell-tale head shape and stripe down the side and knew it was a bronzeback, but there are about 6 species of bronzeback in Thailand. I hadn't caught one of these until today.

These snakes are diurnal – active during daylight hours and are excellent climbers, as all bronzebacks are. They are twitchy snakes, and this one bit me when I first grabbed him. I had to pull him off my index finger slowly to prevent injuring him. He bit down hard for his tiny size (about 10 inches). These snakes love frogs and other small animals – geckos included.

This species of bronzeback has a black stripe on a light background running from it's neck to it's tail. The belly is white or yellowish. This snake does not have the stripe across the eye like some of the other bronzebacks. The top of the head is brown – bronze color as is the top of this snake's back.

The eye is large, like a rat snake, and the head is long almost like a whip snake, but wider in comparison to the body. Unlike other bronzebacks, the vertebral scales are not enlarged but are narrow in shape. Its lower cheeks and lips are pale yellow with small black marks or stripes running vertically near the snout.



Striped Bronzeback Scientific Classification:

Kingdom: Animalia
Phylum: Chordata
Class: Reptilia
Order: Squamata
Suborder: Serpentes
Family: Colubridae
Subfamily: Colubrinae
Genus: *Dendrelaphis*
Species: *D. caudolineatus*

"Dendrelaphis caudolineatus"
(Discovered by Gray in the year 1834)

Striped Bronzeback Snake Video:

Blood Python – Non Venomous – Not Dangerous



Blood Python from Southern Thailand rubber plantation.

Blood Python (Python brongersmai)

Thais say: (ngoo lahm pad ped)

Length: Average length is less than 2.5 meters max. Usually smaller than 2 meters. the one pictured here is 1.7 meters.

Adult Blood Pythons typically are 137-182 cm (4.5-6 feet) long. Females are slightly longer than males. These snakes weigh 5-9 kilograms (12-20 lb).

Range: In Thailand only on the island of Phuket and in the far south from Krabi province and southward. The pictured Blood python came from a rubber plantation near Tub Kaak, Thailand in province of Krabi. Found on the Malay Peninsula.

Habitat: Flat land & marshy forests. Blood pythons prefer to live near water. They are often found on rubber plantations, as this one was. They typically hide under leaves and brush, or you can find them in the water. These snakes don't go far when hunting, instead they lay still waiting for rodents or other mammals to walk by.

Active Time? Nocturnal – active at night.

Food: Rats, mice, chickens.

Defensive Behavior: A short powerful strike from the s-position. As mentioned, they can easily twist out of a snake handler's grip.

Venom Toxicity: No venom. Little danger. These pythons bite with provocation, but they have a very short strike. Though their strike is short – they pack a powerful bite.

Offspring: Oviparous, with up to 30 eggs being laid at a time. After the eggs are laid the female mother coils around the eggs and vibrates, or shivers, to produce heat (88 to 90 degrees F) which the eggs need to develop. She lays 12-30 large eggs 60-70 days after mating in the first couple months of the calendar year. The eggs are 14-16 cm long and weigh about one-hundred grams each. Young Blood Pythons have same coloring as adults and are 30-40cm at birth. First shed is 2-3 months. Blood pythons can reproduce at between 1.5 and 4 years. Breeding can be started by cutting down the daytime light to 8 – 10 hours and setting night temperature to the

mid-70's. Bring the female to the male's cage. Misting the snakes with water can facilitate breeding. Female Blood Pythons typically shed 14-20+ days after ovulation; eggs are typically laid within 30 days of post-ovulation shed.

Blood Pythons may live 25 years in captivity.

Notes: We caught another wild blood python on a rubber plantation just like this one. When catching this species one must be sure about the grip from the time grabbed because as short as it is, it is full of muscle. Though this snake appears fat, it is muscle. It is exceptionally strong when pulling out of a hold.

This snake can change the color of it's head from dark to light gray.

These snakes can have a temper if caught in the wild. They can settle down with daily handling and stroking. Babies born in captivity are usually more calm than adults. Eventually holding them is a possibility. The Thai-Malaysian Blood Pythons bite more quickly than do the Indonesian variety.

The skin of these snakes is highly prized and they are hunted because of it. Their numbers are shrinking because they are killed for their meat and skins. Over 60,000 blood pythons and short-tailed python skins are taken each year.

Substrate: Best? Newspaper. Cover the bottom of the cage with a thick pile of newspaper and crumple up some loose balls so the snake can hide under it.



Snake tail? Hard to believe, right?

Python curtus brongersmai

Scientific classification

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata

Subphylum: Vertebrata

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Suborder: Serpentes

Family: Pythonidae

Genus: Python

Species: *P. curtus*

Subspecies: *P. c. brongersmai*

Trinomial name: *Python curtus brongersmai*

Classified by Stull in year, 1938