

Steps to Bagging a Small (< 2m) Venomous Snake

I just got a Facebook message from a friend that was out finding snakes last night in Taiwan. He asked how I go about bagging dangerous snakes when I'm alone. I gave him this message:

Good question... I usually do this:

1. Grab the snake anywhere – usually just before mid body, I leave the tongs tight enough that it can just move forward in them a little bit at a time.
2. I move quickly to a wide open grass or dirt spot if one is available.
3. I open the snake bag with left hand and put part on the ground and lift up the top of the bag to open it up. I kind of point the snake towards it. Sometimes it goes right in. If not, sometimes I grab a handful of leaves and put those just on the inside of the bag to make it look more natural – sometimes the snake goes right in then.
4. If he isn't in yet, I re-grab at the neck – firmly with the tongs and stick his head the whole way to the bottom of the bag. I then try to get his tail in.
5. Once in I seal the bag around the tong handle and let the snake go with the tongs – tongs still in bag. I move tongs up to top of bag and locate snake's head. I twist the bag to seal off top of bag before removing tongs and tying off the bag.

Hope that helps! It is always a scary feeling to be doing it on your own...

It isn't ideal to be out looking for deadly snakes at night on your own, but I find myself in that situation quite often here

in Southern Thailand. I don't have one friend that wants to go with me – imagine that!

I take a lot of time to bag the snake, being exceptionally careful when it is a monocled cobra, krait, or something else with extremely toxic venom. I am not in any hurry, and I think if I try to go fast I'm going to make a mistake that could cause me a bite. It might take me 10 minutes or even more, to bag a snake by myself that is giving me difficulty. Take your time, and above all – be absolutely sure where the head is and where it could get to fast if it decided to strike.