

# 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**

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# **Oriental Whip Snake in Yellow, Grey, and Green – Ahaetulla prasina**



Not dangerous – just beautiful.

These are some really awesome looking snakes. Usually they come in brown (tan) and green (□□□□□□□□) color variations, but Rob Green, who has copyright to the images below – took these photos of a yellow one and a grey one. Quite cool. Rob was on Koh Kood (kut) near Koh Chang in the northeastern Gulf of Thailand when he found these snakes. The yellow images were taken with a Canon 7D. The grey whip snake – with his iphone. Thanks Rob!

After you see these photos – you can see more at the [Ahaetulla prasina Fact Sheet](#) (click). There are photos and videos of me

catching them in the Thailand forest.



Probably the coolest looking of all snakes...

Grey Ahaetulla prasina:



Green Ahaetulla prasina (copyright Apornpradab Buasi):



Green Oriental Whip Snake piggy-backing on a Sunbeam snake. Green Snake (งูเขียวพันงู)