

# Golden Tree Snake – Mildly Venomous – Not Very Dangerous



Golden Tree Snake – Venomous – Little Danger to Humans

These Golden Tree Snakes are also known as Flying Snakes. They glide very well, perhaps the best of any snake in the world, and even better than some squirrels and lizards. Golden Tree Snakes are a lime green (เขียวขี้ม้า) and black checkered type patterned snake. They are tree dwellers but can climb anything, even walls. They appear to have a favorite food – the Tokay Geckos that reach sizes of 12 inches long in adulthood. They are frequently seen eating Tokays.

## *Chrysopelea ornata ornaticissima* (Golden Tree Snake)

**Thai language:** Ngoo kee-ow ly dok mak

**Appearance:** *Chrysopelea ornata* in Thailand is lime green with some black and green cross hatches. This snake's head is rather flat with a thin neck and atypical blunt nose, large eyes which sometimes are red depending on the angle. Generally seen as a green snake (เขียวขี้ม้า) while moving.

**Length:** Up to 140 cm (almost 5 feet). They only get about as thick as 2-3 fingers held together.

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

**Habitat:** Golden Tree Snakes can be found just about anywhere – in an apartment in Bangkok, or climbing bushes at 500 meters vertical elevation. Typically I see them at sea-level crossing the roads, or laying flat out along the stem of a low-lying

palm tree branch.

**Notes:** If you're trying to catch one of these snakes it can be very difficult. They are excellent escape artists and once they get into a clump of bushes or up a tree – forget it. Go look for something else, you won't catch it. They can disappear in trees so fast it's hard to believe. Occasionally you can find these in caves – they eat bats too.

**Active Time?** Diurnal – daytime.

**Food:** Small geckos, lizards, large Tokay geckos, rodents, bird eggs, insects, another snake occasionally, and bats. Golden Tree Snakes kill by squeezing the neck of their prey, crushing it.

**Natural Enemies:** King cobras and Kraits will eat these snakes when they can catch them. When they are small, birds eat them.

**Defensive Behavior:** Golden Tree Snakes (flying snakes) bite quickly when played with. As adults they may not lose that temperament. As babies – I have one now for some photos and video, they lose it quickly – and are OK with being held. They are very fast snakes when escaping.

**Venom Toxicity:** Rear fanged mildly venomous snake – but the venom is not known to be dangerous to humans. Just the same, don't let it bite down on you more than a second or two before you remove it. Don't give this snake a chance to inject a lot of venom and you'll likely be just fine if no allergies to it. There have been no confirmed cases of medically significant envenomation with Golden Tree Snakes.

**Offspring:** Little is known about the breeding habits of these snakes because nobody can seem to get them to mate while captive. Being oviparous it lays 6-12 eggs in May-June and they hatch in June. Baby snakes are 11-15cm long (4-6")

Kingdom: Animalia

Phylum: Chordata  
Class: Reptilia  
Order: Squamata  
Suborder: Serpentes  
Family: Colubridae  
Subfamily: Colubrinae  
Genus: *Chrysopelea*  
Species: *C. ornata*  
Binomial name: *Chrysopelea ornata*

Discovered, classified by Shaw, 1802

### **Golden Tree Snake Photo:**



In Thailand the golden tree snakes typically have this coloration and pattern.

### **Video: My Baby Golden Tree Snake in Thailand:**

#greenpython #greensnake