A NEW SNAKE FROM THE NORTHERN FRONTIER OF ASSAM.

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Oligodon melanozonatus, sp. nov.


Type, No. 16799, co-type, No. 16798. Both in the Indian Museum.

Length 513 mm. (1 foot, 8½ inches). Tail 83 mm. (3½ inches).

Lepidosis. Rostral touching six shields, the rostro-nasal shorter than the rostro-internasal sutures. Portion visible above three-fifths to three-fourths its distance from the frontal, one-third to two-fifths the length of the frontal. Internasals: a pair. The suture between them equal to that between the prae rontal fellows, about half the internasal-prafrontals. Frontal: length greater than the snout, equal to the parietals. Supraoculars: length about equal to its distance to mid-internasals, two-thirds the frontal, three-seconds the temporal; breadth two-fifths the frontal. Nasal entire. Loral absent. Precocular: one. Postoculars: two. Temporal 1 + 2. Supralabials 6. The 1st and 2nd touching the nasal, the 2nd the praefrontal, the 3rd and 4th the eye, and the 5th the temporal. Posterior sublinguals shorter than the anterior pair, touching the 4th infra labial. Infraclabials 4; the 4th largest, longer and broader than the posterior sublinguals, and touching two scales behind. Costals two heads-lengths behind the head 17, midbody 17, two heads-lengths before the vent 15. Ventrals 171 to 173. Anal divided. Subcaudals 42 to 45, divided.

Colour. Dorsally light brown, obscurely mottled with blackish. Twenty rather ill-defined black bars cross the body to end low in the flanks, and four such bars cross the tail. In the smaller and half-grown specimen these bars are as light centrally as the dorsal brown, and are edged anteriorly and posteriorly with black as in albocinctus. A whitish, black-edged sagitta on the nape, the point directed forwards. Just before this is a black-edged, light brown sagitta with the point on the middle of the frontal shield. An obscure, blackish, praefronto-frontal bar, reappearing below the eye. Belly white with transverse, black, irregularly-disposed cross-bars, many as broad as the ventral shields. Similar marks beneath the tail.

1 These shields in the larger specimen are as shown in figure b on both sides, but in the smaller specimen as shown in figure c on the left side only, a 6th labial being wedged between the 5th and 7th.

Note. Dr. Annandale referred these specimens to *O. erythrorhachis* Wall, but a revision of the species of this genus from the material available in the Indian Museum and Bombay collections, convinces me that they represent a species hitherto not described. In *O. erythrorhachis* the costals are 15 anteriorly, 13 two heads-lengths before the vent. The ventrals are 154 and subcaudals 64. The supralabials are 7.