



# Article

urn:lsid:zoobank.org:pub:9FC2166A-A0B8-4844-9EF6-8E325AD8F531

## A new species of the genus *Oligodon* Fitzinger, 1826 (Squamata: Colubridae) from northern Vietnam, southern China and central Laos

PATRICK DAVID<sup>1</sup>, TRUONG QUANG NGUYEN<sup>2</sup>, TAO THIEN NGUYEN<sup>3</sup>, KE JIANG<sup>4</sup>, TIANBO CHEN<sup>5</sup>, ALEXANDRE TEYNIÉ<sup>6</sup> & THOMAS ZIEGLER<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Reptiles & Amphibiens, UMR 7205 OSEB, Département Systématique et Évolution, CP 30, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, 57 rue Cuvier, 75231 Paris Cedex 05, France. E-mail: pdavid@mnhn.fr

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources, Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology, 18 Hoang Quoc Viet Road, Hanoi, Vietnam. E-mail: nqt2@yahoo.com

Present address: Department of Terrestrial Ecology, Cologne Biocenter, University of Cologne, Zùlpicher Strasse 47b, D-50674 Cologne, Germany.

<sup>3</sup>Vietnam National Museum of Nature, Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology, 18 Hoang Quoc Viet Road, Hanoi, Vietnam. E-mail: nguyenthientao@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup>State Key Laboratory of Genetic Resources and Evolution and Yunnan Laboratory of Molecular Biology of Domestic Animals, Kunming Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Kunming, Yunnan, People's Republic of China.

E-mail: jiangke87615@hotmail.com

<sup>5</sup>Management Bureau of Nonggang National Nature Reserve, Longzhou 532400, Guangxi A. R., China. E-mail: chentb1971@163.com

<sup>6</sup>Société d'Histoire Naturelle Alcide d'Orbigny, 57, rue de Gergovie, 63170 Aubière, France. E-mail: ateynie@shnao.net

<sup>7</sup>Cologne Zoo, Riehler Str. 173, D-50735 Köln, Germany. E-mail: ziegler@koelnerzoo.de

### Abstract

A new species of the genus *Oligodon* Fitzinger, 1826, *Oligodon nagao* **sp. nov.**, is described on the basis of five specimens originating from Lang Son and Cao Bang provinces in northern Vietnam, Guangxi Autonomous Region in southern People's Republic of China, and from Khammouane Province in central Laos PDR. This species differs from other species of the region by the combination of 15 or 17 dorsal scale rows at midbody, unforked hemipenes, not spinose but with papillae, entire cloacal plate, a high number of ventrals, a rather short tail and dorsal pattern made of numerous dark, butterfly-shaped blotches. On the basis of the morphology of its hemipenes, *Oligodon nagao* **sp. nov.** belongs to the group of *Oligodon cinereus*. This new species is compared with other species of the Indochinese Peninsula and China with 15 or 17 dorsal scale rows, especially *Oligodon joynsoni* (Smith, 1917). An updated list of the *Oligodon* species of this region is provided.

**Key words:** Squamata, Colubridae, Indochinese Peninsula, China, *Oligodon nagao* **sp. nov.**, taxonomy.

### Introduction

With about 75 currently recognized species (Green *et al.* 2010; David & Vogel 2012), the genus *Oligodon* Fitzinger, 1826 remains one of the largest genera of Asiatic snakes. It is widespread throughout tropical Asia but is especially speciose in the large area known as the Indochinese Peninsula. This region encompasses the territories of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, as well as Thailand north of Peninsular Thailand, and the southern part of China, including Hainan Island. Currently, about 30 species are recognized in this region but some species, such as *Oligodon cinereus* (Günther, 1864), obviously include more than one species (David *et al.* 2011).

Three specimens recently collected in Lang Son and Cao Bang provinces, extreme northern Vietnam, one specimen found in Khammouane Province, central Laos, and the fifth one from extreme southwest Guangxi Autonomous Region, southern China, proved to be morphologically distinct from all other species known from this region. Especially noteworthy is the fact that all these specimens were collected in karst hills. Furthermore, the