

## Predation by Two-lined Coral Snake *Calliophis bilineatus* on Brahminy Worm Snake *Indotyphlops braminus* on Palawan Island, Philippines

Emerson Y. SY & Andrew Jay CANONIGO  
[emersonsy@gmail.com](mailto:emersonsy@gmail.com) (Sy)

**Observer:** Andrew Jay Canonigo, Mary Reyna Vales.

**Photograph by:** Andrew Jay Canonigo.

**Subject identified by:** Emerson Y. Sy.

**Location:** Palawan Island, Barangay Pancol, Municipality of Taytay, Palawan Province, Philippines

**Elevation:** 28 metres ASL.

**Habitat:** Farmland near a secondary forest.

**Date and time:** 02 April 2023, 19:10 hrs.

### Identity of subjects:

- i) Two-lined Coral Snake, *Calliophis bilineatus* (Reptilia: Squamata (Serpentes): Elapidae).
- ii) Brahminy Worm Snake (Brahminy Blind Snake), *Indotyphlops braminus* (Reptilia: Squamata (Serpentes): Typhlopidae).

### Description of record:

A Two-lined Coral Snake was observed biting the posterior body of a small snake (Fig. 1). The prey tried to escape by slithering forward but was unsuccessful. The observer left after taking a short video of the incident and did not see the actual consumption of the prey.



Figure 1. Single frame taken from a video of the predation incident.

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**Remarks:**

The predator was identified as *Calliophis bilineatus* based on its dark brown dorsum with a pair of cream dorsolateral stripes, a reddish orange snout, reddish orange tail with two dark crossbars, and cream venter with dark crossbars (Taylor, 1922). The species is endemic to the Philippines and is known to occur on the islands of Balabac, Busuanga, Calauit, Culion, and Palawan (Taylor, 1922; Leviton, 1963).

The prey was identified as *Indotyphlops braminus* based on its small size, a uniformly coloured dorsum, a rounded snout, and a short tail. This small worm snake is an introduced species in the Philippines with a widespread distribution, and is the only worm snake known to occur on Palawan Island (Leviton et al., 2018; Sy, in press; Taylor, 1922).

*Calliophis bilineatus* was previously reported preying on a conspecific on Palawan Island (Sy & Gonzales, 2022). This note documents another snake in the diet of *Calliophis bilineatus*.

**References:**

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- Sy, E.Y. (in press). A naturalist's guide to the reptiles of the Philippines. John Beaufoy Publishing, Oxford, UK. 176 pp.
- Sy, E.Y. and Gonzales, R.V. (2022). Ophiophagous behaviour of the Two-lined Coral Snake *Calliophis bilineatus* on Palawan Island, Philippines. Southeast Asia Vertebrate Records 2022: 12-13.
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