

**NEW RECORD OF BAR-NECKED KEELBACK, *FOWLEA SCHNURRENBERGERI*
(KRAMER, 1977) (SQUAMATA: COLUBRIDAE) IN BANGLADESH**

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Bangladesh is enriched with diversified wildlife resources due to the biogeographical position of this country which lies at the intersection of two tremendously enriched bio-geographical belts named Indo-China and Indo-Himalayan sub-region of the Oriental region (Shome *et al.* 2020a, Mandal *et al.* 2021). In Bangladesh's ecological, economic, and cultural sectors, snakes are playing a significant role in wildlife (Jaman *et al.* 2020, Shome and Jaman 2021). But unfortunately, the actual number of snake species is unknown (Khan 2018). As we see expirations and field research, the number of species is gradually increasing, and the new distribution record of snake species from new areas is also increasing (Khan 2018, Shome *et al.* 2020b).

The genus *Fowlea*, is endemic to Asia and is composed of eight species. Due to its close resemblance with *F. piscator* (Schneider, 1799) it was not given any taxonomic attention for a long time. In 1977 for the first time scientifically Eugen Kramer examined specimens from Nepal and provide proper taxonomic position (Uetz *et al.* 2022). *F. schnurrenbergeri* is previously recorded from India, Nepal and Pakistan (Uetz *et al.* 2022, Kästle *et al.* 2012, Purkayastha 2013). However, there was not any previous record of this species from Bangladesh with proper scientific documents (Khan 2015, IUCN Bangladesh 2000, 2015, Khan 2018). Previously in Bangladesh two species (*F. flavipunctatus* and *F. piscator*) of snakes were discovered under the genus *Fowlea* (Khan 2018). In this study, the Bar-necked keelback/Kramer's keelback *Fowlea schnurrenbergeri* (Kramer, 1977) was identified in Bangladesh for the first time in two locations (Fig. 1). The digital photographs of specimens were submitted to the Kazi Zaker Hossain Zoological Museum, Department of Zoology, University of Dhaka.

F. schnurrenbergeri is characterized by a thick bar-like black colored band present on the top of the nape with a V-shaped neck pattern and made of small blackish dots. The dorsal ground is olive-brown or grey in color with large

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blackish patches. These patches start from the neck in a broad bar or band-like collar form and proceed posteriorly in extensive black check-like patches till mid-body, from where they start becoming less distinct on the posterior one-third body (Fig. 2). The underside color is yellowish, off-white, or brownish, usually with blackish margins between ventral scales (Kumar 1977, Mohapatra et al. 2010)

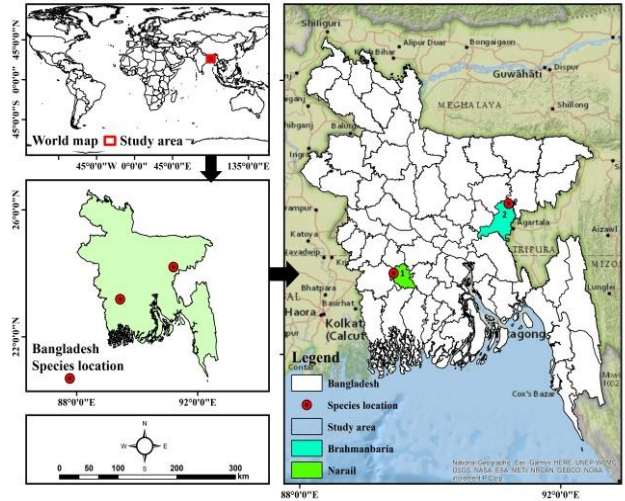


Fig.1. A map showing the present observation of *Fowlea schnurrenbergeri* in Bangladesh. 1, Tularampur, Narail, Bangladesh; 2, Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria, Bangladesh.



Fig. 2.i. *Fowlea schnurrenbergeri* with thick bar-like black colored band and ii. *Fowlea piscator*

On 14 July 2022, a single individual of *Fowlea* species (W24010; Fig.3.i) was spotted in a residence at Tularampur (23°11'11"N, 89°26'24"E), Narail District,

Bangladesh (Fig.1). We were able to get a photograph of the snake. The second individual of *F. schnurrenbergeri* was collected on 20 July 2022. (W24010; Fig.3.ii) was spotted in a residence at Nasirnagar (24°12.4'N 91°12.6'E), Brahmanbaria district, Bangladesh (Fig.1). That second snake was caught in a fishing net. A local rescuer named Md Farhan Uddin rescued and release that snake. We observed an active feeding of *F. schnurrenbergeri* during this observation.

Both two specimens of snakes were identified based on the taxonomic characteristics provided by Kramer (1977). These specimens represent the first record of *F. schnurrenbergeri* (Kramer, 1977) in Bangladesh.



Fig. 3. (i) Live *Fowlea schnurrenbergeri* (W24010) from Tularampur, Narail, Khulna. Photographs by Tarik Aziz Bappi, (ii) Live *F. schnurrenbergeri* (W24010) from Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria, Photographs by Sk Md Farhan Uddin Jubayr

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