

## Fauna of the Week



*C. haematoetron* adult female (photograph)

*Calliophis haematoetron* Smith, Manamendra-arachchi & Somaweera, 2008  
E- Blood-bellied coralsnake

### Special features

This is the second known species of coralsnake from Sri Lanka.

### Description

It differs from *C. melanurus* mainly by its bright red body venter and red pigment lateral to the blue under-tail colour.

### Range and distribution

Endemic. Currently known from few records (holotype and paratype localities) in the Central Province. Holotype collected from Wasgamuwa National Park in 1997 and paratypes collected from Rattota, Matale in 1944.

### Habitat

Holotype was found under a thick layer of brown leaves on the forest floor. Altitude ca. 90-570m. Wasgamuwa contains tropical dry (mixed) evergreen forest and Rattota contained tropical moist semi-evergreen forest.

### Etymology

The specific name, *haematoetron*, is derived from the Greek adjective *haematodes* (bloody), and the Greek noun *etron* (belly) meaning “bloody belly” in reference to the bright-red venter of this “beautiful snake” (= *Calliophis*).

### Status

Not assessed. Flora & Fauna Protection Ordinance- Protected.

### Reference

Bahir, M.M. (1999) Scaring the enemy-slender coralsnake. *Sri Lanka Nature*. Sept. pp.22-24.

Smith, E.N., Manamendra-arachchi, K & Somaweera R. (2008). A new species of coralsnake of the genus *Calliophis* (Squamata: Elapidae) from the Central Province of Sri Lanka. *Zootaxa* 1847:19-33.

Somaweera, R. (2006) Sri Lankave Sarpayo ( The Snakes of Sri Lanka). Wildlife Heritage Trust, Colombo. pp. 270

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