

ABSTRACTS

Fourth World Congress of Herpetology

3rd – 9th December 2001, Bentota, Sri Lanka.

113

Of the Chamaeleon.



The countries breeding Chamaeleons are Africa, Asia, and India, & for the quantity thereof I do find divers descriptions, some particular, as in *Solomonus* and *Strayer*, and some general in other Writers, all which I purpose briefly & succinctly to explicate in this place. It is said (with *redwax*) that the Frogs & the Chamaeleon are like one to the other, because they sit the same Air and insidiously in taking their meals: and so the intent that this thing may more evidently appear, both by the description and the picture, I have thought good to annex to the Chamaeleon, as amongst the *Wag-tails*, because it lieth for the most part in moist, marshy, and fenny places. I have found of the two kinds, one a lesser kind in Arabia, being of a whitish colour, all over with yellowish or reddish spots, and in quantity exceeding the green *Lizard*. The other in the hot parts of Egypt, being twice as big in quantity as the Arabian and of a changeable colour, betwixt white, green, brown & yellow, for which occasion some have called it *verisifer Chamaeleon*, that is, a Turne-coat-coloured Chamaeleon. But both these kinds of Chamaeleons have a copped head, like to a Camel, and two horns at the toppe of their brows, hanging up on either side, and hanging out: their eyes are most diverse and bright, about the big-eyes of a peaf, only covered with a skinne, so that their appearance outwardly is exceedingly more the quantity of a Milk-moode. They are very flexible, and are able at one time to look upon several ways, differently upon two several objects, whereas they exceede all other beasts. It is a haile and dull beast, like the Salamander, neither can it runne, but like a *Lizard*, therefore it is not afraid of the sight of men, neither doth it

Compiler
Anسلم de Silva

- Scientific Programme Committee**
 Michael Bull, Chairman (Australia)
 Teresa De Avila-Pires (Brazil)
 Anسلم De Silva, Congress Director (Sri Lanka)
 Rohan Pethiyagoda (Sri Lanka)
 Channa Bambaradeniya (Sri Lanka)
 Malik Fernando (Sri Lanka)
 Marvalee Wake (USA)
 Bill Branch (South Africa)
 Zbynek Rocoek (Czech Republic)

2001



ARROS
Sri Lanka

DAPTF wg
Sri Lanka



WCH

CBSG
Sri Lanka

IUCN
Sri Lanka



WHT
Sri Lanka

DAS

**COMPARISON OF THE AMPHIBIAN FAUNAS OF
SOUTHERN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIA**

Indraneil DAS

Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental conservation, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak,
94300, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia. Email: idas@ibec.unimas.my

The amphibian fauna of tropical and subtropical Asia is known to be among the most diverse on earth. Two regions are rather well marked in terms of geological history, vegetation and biota. Southern Asia as used here covers the Indian Subcontinent, defined as extending from the southern slopes of the Himalayas, south to the Indian Peninsula, and from the Balochistan highlands to the mountainous country of north-eastern India. It includes the countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, mainland India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. South-east Asia includes the mainland portion to the east of the Indian Subcontinent, from Myanmar, east through Indo-China and Indo-Malaya, including the islands situated on the Sunda Shelf, the Philippines and Sulawesi, but excluding those on the Sahul Shelf. Inger (1999) recorded approximately 650 nominal species from these two regions (although the manuscript went to press in 1994). Many additional taxa have since been recorded since, especially from the hill country of Sri Lanka, where intensive sampling has taken place. The present paper compares the amphibian fauna of southern and south-eastern Asia.

The fauna of both regions are composed of a widespread lowland fauna and a more restricted (including regional endemic) montane fauna. Taxa common to both regions include human commensals as well as species complexes that require taxonomic revision. A number of south-east Asian lineages show disjunct distribution in south Asia, which are considered relatively recent invasion and extinction of intervening populations due to climate change. South-east Asia, with a land area slightly larger than south Asia (4,489,496 sq km vs 4,073,044 sq km) has a significantly larger amphibian fauna (445 vs 258 nominal species). The richness of the south-east Asian fauna is attributable to the rapid pace of evolution on islands and their emigration to the adjacent mainland, as opposed to the presumably low levels of speciation on the south Asian mainland.