

Need for Conservation: Why Should King Cobras be Conserved?

- King Cobras play a vital role in the ecosystem. They are ecological indicators and presence of this species indicates a healthy and balanced ecosystem.
- King Cobra antivenom is only made in Thailand. The venom is also used in medical research.
- King Cobras routinely kill and eat the snakes which cause so many serious and fatal snakebites, including Cobras, Kraits, Vipers and Pit Vipers.
- There are many scriptures and folk tales in Nepalese culture and traditions regarding King Cobras. Many people worship the King in the snake festival Naagpanchami, believing that it's bite can be avoided and peace and prosperity will occur in their lives.
- The King Cobras are limited to South and South-east Asia only and listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, included in Appendix II of the CITES, protected species in Nepal and declared as Vulnerable by the National Red Data Book. If not protected now, King Cobras will reach the endangered category in the near future.



How Can You Contribute in King Cobra Conservation?

- Participate in any awareness programs related to King Cobras and learn more about the species. Differentiate the misconceptions and myths about King Cobras from the real facts and share this knowledge with your colleagues.
- Due to the rapid increase in urbanization, industrialization and deforestation, there is a loss of habitat of the King Cobra and as a result they sometimes enter villages and towns, encountering humans resulting in human-King Cobra conflicts. Please support for habitat preservation and nature conservation.
- If you encounter a King Cobra inside/outside your residence, don't try to kill it, instead leave it alone and call a rescue centre or inform the nearest Division Forest Office.
- If you come across any of the following illegal activities such as: hunting, killing, poaching, destroying the eggs and nest, disturbing the mating process and stunts/ showmanship using King Cobras, inform your nearest Forest Department, Division Forest Office, Police Department, Snake Information Centre or Animal Rescue Centre or any related departments,
- Let's unite and raise our hands to participate in the "Save The King" campaign nationwide and internationally.



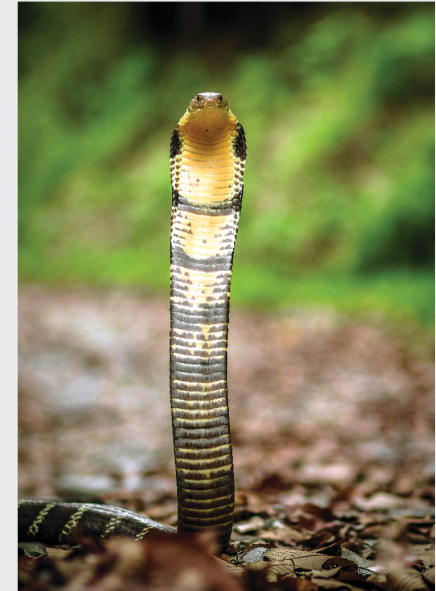
Photo Reference

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Photo 3: Dev Narayan Mandal
Photo 4: Ajay Giri
Photo 5: <https://imgur.com/Dn40gWM.jpg>

Map and all other photos:
Nepal Toxinology Association

SAVE THE KING

Human-King Cobra Co-Existence



Organized By



Supported By:



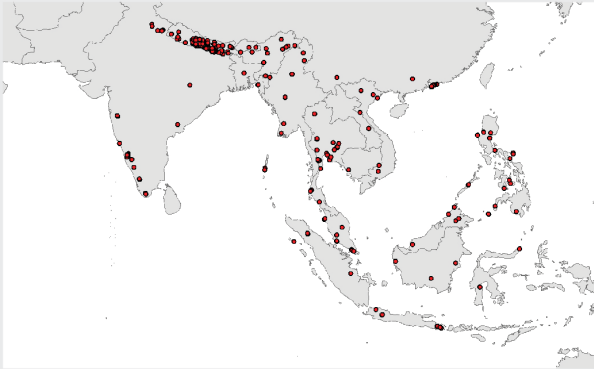
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Introduction

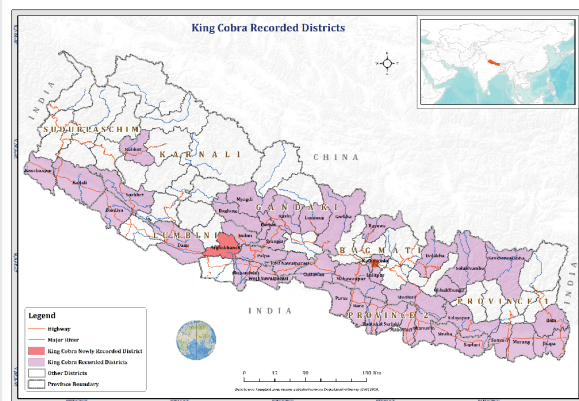
Scientific name: *Ophiophagus hannah* (Cantor, 1836)

Common name: King Cobra

Nepali name: Raj Goman, Naagraja, Kalinaag, Daraad, Kenwata, Bhainsedom, Alaad, Alahaad



Distribution: King Cobras are widely distributed throughout South and Southeast Asia; Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.



Distribution in Nepal: The King Cobra has been confirmed from 42 districts of Nepal and can be found from sea level to >2566 m elevation.

Conservation Status of the King Cobra: The King Cobra is listed as a "Vulnerable" in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species and has also been listed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix II. It is a protected species in Nepal and declared as Vulnerable by the National Red Data Book.



Natural History / Behaviour:

King cobras are the longest venomous snakes in the world reaching up to 6m (19.6ft) with neurotoxic venom (can inject upto 7ml in a single bite) and is the only snake that exhibits the unique behavior of building nests and guarding the eggs (7-53 eggs) until they hatch (66-105 days at 28°C).



King Cobras are also called snake-eaters (i.e., ophiophagus) because they feed primarily on snakes including their own species (i.e., cannibalism) and sometimes eat monitor lizards.



They are oviparous and mate between January to March.



King Cobras are recorded from diverse habitats such as forest, grassland, agricultural land, scrubland, human settlements, human-dominated landscapes; sometimes small waterways in the vicinity of human habitation and areas close to river banks, ponds etc. Fortunately bites are very rare since King Cobra avoids contact with humans. King Cobras don't want to bite people and want to be left alone but if they are harassed or injured, they will bite in defense.



Till date only one death from King Cobra bite has been reported from Nepal, an unfortunate case of careless handling