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II

**A NEW SUBSPECIES OF WATERSNAKE (*Natrix*  
*vibakari ruthveni*) FROM EASTERN ASIA**

BY

JOHN VAN DENBURGH

*Curator, Department of Herpetology*

Anyone who examines the table of scale-counts of specimens of *Natrix vibakari* given by Dr. Stejneger in his Herpetology of Japan and Adjacent Territory (p. 270) must be struck by the fact that specimens from the Asiatic mainland have fewer urosteges than those from the islands of Japan. The same difference is shown by the series in the collection of the California Academy of Sciences.

In *Natrix tigrina*, from the same regions, a similar difference in the number of urosteges in the mainland and island specimens has been found and is recognized in nomenclature, the island form being called *Natrix tigrina tigrina* and the mainland one *Natrix tigrina lateralis*.

No good reason is evident why these differences should be recognized in one instance and not in the other, and, since the island form of *Natrix vibakari* served as the basis of the original description, I now propose that that form be known as *Natrix vibakari vibakari* while those from the mainland are called

***Natrix vibakari ruthveni* Van Denburgh, new subspecies**

*Diagnosis:* Similar to *Natrix vibakari vibakari* but usually with fewer urosteges (55 to 65 instead of 63 to 83).



*Type:* An adult male, No. 31,487, Mus. Calif. Acad. Sci., collected at **Fusan, Kjong-Sang-Do Province, Korea**, May 8, 1911.

- *Remarks:* These subspecies seem to differ in no important respect other than in the number of urosteges. These plates average 71.4 in thirty-four specimens of *Natrix vibakari vibakari* from Japan, while the average in nine specimens of *Natrix vibakari ruthveni* from Korea and Siberia is only 61. There seems not to be much sexual difference in the number of urosteges in either subspecies, since in *N. v. vibakari* the averages are 74 in fourteen males and 71 in twelve females, while in *N. v. ruthveni* the counts in three males average 61 and in four females, 60.



Van Denburgh, John. 1923. "A new subspecies of watersnake (*Natrix vibakari ruthveni*) from eastern Asia." *Proceedings of the California Academy of Sciences, 4th series* 13, 3–4.

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