

COLUBRIDAE

***Pseudohaje goldii* (Boulenger, 1895)
Goldie's Tree Cobra**

HABITAT

On 30 October 2001, we collected the specimen IRSNB 16398 (field number P775) (male; 1 preventral + 198 ventrals; anal single; 94 divided subcaudals; 15-15-11 smooth dorsal scale rows) in the city of Ntoum (0°23'25"N 9°45'35"E), Komo-Mondah Dpt, Estuaire Province, Gabon.

It was a traffic victim, still dying when we found it on the road in the afternoon, obviously hit by a car a few minutes before, as confirmed by locals. Ntoum is a city situated 42 km east of the capital city Libreville, and is far from the nearest forest patch. On 15 October 2001 we also examined another dead specimen (not collected; male; ? ventrals; anal single; 93 divided subcaudals; 17-15-11 smooth dorsal scale rows) at Mandilou (1°16'37"S 10°36'38"E, alt. 100 m. a.s.l., Tsamba-Magotsi Dpt, Ngounié Province, Gabon) in a highly cultivated area. It had been beheaded by a farmer in a nearby field, then thrown onto the road; its approximate total length was 1.8 m. This second locality was also far from any forest. *Pseudohaje goldii* is reputedly a typical sylvicolous species. For instance, Chippaux (1999, Les serpents d'Afrique occidentale et centrale. IRD Editions, Paris, pp 1-278) noted that the species is found in primary or secondary forest, but still close to water. Spawls & Branch (1995). The dangerous snakes of Africa. Natural history. Species directory. Venoms and snakebite. Blandford, London: 1-192) indicated that its biotope is forest or thick woodland.

In the same way we have shown (Pauwels *et al.*, 1999. *Afr. Herp News* 30: 32-33) that the diet of *P. goldii* is much more eclectic than generally reported in the literature. The habitat of *P. goldii* seems to encompass many kinds of biotopes, from dense primary forests to urbanized areas. *P. goldii* thus seems to be at least as eclectic and ubiquitous as the sympatric cobra *Naja melanoleuca*.

We take this opportunity to mention that the specimen MNHN 3964, from Gabon, collected by A. Lecomte and entered as a *Pseudohaje goldii* in the Paris Museum collections register, has been re-identified by us as a *Naja melanoleuca*. The main scalation characters of this female are: 1 preventral, 221 ventrals, anal single, 64 divided subcaudals, 19 scale rows around midbody.

Acknowledgements

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BIBLIOTHÈQUE
HERPÉTOLOGIQUE
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