

# Attempted predation of *Varanus bengalensis* (Squamata: Varanidae) by *Varanus flavescens* (Squamata: Varanidae)

ANIRBAN CHAUDHURI<sup>1</sup> & SUBHADEEP CHOWDHURY<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>6/7, Nature Mates, Bijoygarh, Jadavpur, Kolkata 700032, West Bengal, India

<sup>2</sup>Krishnachak, Dhurkhali, Howrah 711410, West Bengal, India

\*Corresponding author Email: isuvodeep@gmail.com

The yellow monitor, *Varanus flavescens* (Hardwicke & Gray, 1827), is a diurnal carnivorous lizard that feeds on a range of animal prey (Auffenberg et. al. 1989). It is distributed in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Pakistan (Wangyal, 2011). The Bengal monitor *V. bengalensis* (Daudin, 1802), is also diurnal and a generalist feeder found in India, with a range extending from Afghanistan to Myanmar including Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal (Das, 2002).

On 31 July 2007 at c.a 15:18 h, a foraging adult *V. flavescens* (about 1 m in length) was observed trying to predate a juvenile *V. bengalensis* (approx. 12 inch in length) at Bongaon, 24 Parganas (north) district, West Bengal, India (23°04'40" N, 88°82'77" E, WGS 84, elev. 15 m) (Fig. 1). The *V. flavescens* held on to the cornered juvenile *V. bengalensis* by its mid-body while in response the latter bit and held onto one of the digits of the front left leg of the predator. This situation continued for approximately 7 min. The *V. flavescens* was observed thrashing its head sideways at intervals in an attempt to release its foot which it was eventually able to do but then was seen to loosen its grip probably in attempt to secure a better hold on its prey. At this moment the juvenile *V. bengalensis* freed itself and escaped into to a small crevice in the mud wall of the village house where the incident was observed. The *V. flavescens* followed and tried to scratch the crevice with its forelegs to get access to the prey but after a several attempts gave up and left the area. The authors waited for another half an hour to see if the *V. bengalensis* would re-appear out of the crevice but it did not resurface during this time.



**Figure 1.** Attempted predation of yellow monitor lizard on Bengal monitor lizard

## REFERENCES

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