



The Kenya Reptile Atlas



A project funded by the Rufford Foundation, under the auspices of the National Museum of Kenya; Department of Herpetology

A free, downloadable, atlas of Kenya's reptiles. It's a resource for every naturalist in Kenya, and it costs nothing! Starting now, regularly updated. For each species, you get illustrations, a description and a map



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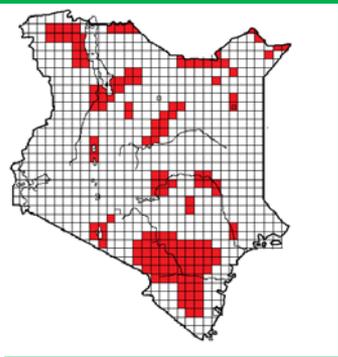
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Red Spitting Cobra *Swila nyekundu* *Naja pallida*
 Local Names: Koko kinye, Kokooya ng'uku (Kisumu), Kigipneri (Kalenjin), Kiruwa (Kitharaka), Mas Gadul (Somali)
Identification: A fairly large, slim snake, maximum size about 1.5 m, hatchlings 20 cm, adults usually 70 cm to about 1.2 m.
Distribution: Dry savanna and semi-desert, from sea level to about 1 300 m altitude. Probably occurs virtually through northern and eastern Kenya, but few records from the far eastern side near the Somali border. Recorded from a number of Kenyan towns, including Galissa, Isiolo, Kakuma, Kibwezi, Lodwar, Mandera, Mito Andei, Mwingi, Voi, Wajir, Wamba. Not found at altitude, so absent from most of southern Kenya.
Natural History: Adults nocturnal, juveniles sometimes diurnal. Hides in termite hills, in holes, under ground cover. Eats a range of vertebrates, particularly frogs.
Conservation Significance: Not evaluated, but its huge distribution within dry and agriculturally unsuitable land in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia means it is unlikely to be threatened in conservation terms. Occurs within the following Kenyan sanctuaries: Amboseli National Park, Buffalo Springs National Reserve, Losi National Reserve, Malka Mum National Park, Rahaite National Reserve, Tevoa National Park (East and West), Samburu National Reserve, Shaba National Reserve.
Medical Significance: Highly venomous, front-fanged elapid snake. Not aggressive, but can spit venom, which causes intense pain if it lands in the eyes; first aid treatment consists of prolonged gentle irrigation of the affected eye(s) with large quantities of water or any bland fluid (milk has been used), followed by treatment with antibiotic eye ointment.
 Symptoms following a bite include immediate pain, vomiting, swelling and occasionally necrosis of the skin and subcutaneous tissues. The venom may be produced in large quantities; neurotoxicity is usually absent. Fatalities are rare, but bites should be treated as emergencies and victims should be seen by a doctor. A polyvalent serum is obtainable from an Egyptian pharmaceutical company; Egi



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