

King Cobra

The king cobra, scientifically known as *Ophiophagus hannah*, is the world’s longest venomous snake and is considered a highly dangerous species. It is a fascinating creature, but one that should be approached with caution. The king cobra is native to Southeast Asia, but is also found in the Indian subcontinent.

Characteristics	Description
Name	King Cobra
Scientific Name	<i>Ophiophagus hannah</i>
Colour	Olive-brown to black
Length	10 to 18 feet (3 to 5.5 meters)
Habitat	Tropical forests and plains
Type of Venom	Neurotoxic and cardiotoxic venom
Indian states where its found	Found in various parts of India including the Western Ghats, North-Eastern India, and parts of the Himalayas
IUCN status	Vulnerable

Features

King cobras are known for their impressive size and appearance. They can grow up to 18 feet (5.5 meters) in length, with an average length of around 10-12 feet (3-3.5 meters). They are usually olive green, black or brown in colour, with distinctive yellow or white bands that run along the length of their body. They have a broad, flattened head and large, highly sensitive eyes.

In addition to their size and colouration, king cobras are also known for their speed and agility. They are capable of moving quickly and are highly adaptable, able to climb trees

and swim in water.

Type of Venom

The venom of the king cobra is highly toxic and contains neurotoxins that affect the nervous system. It is estimated that a single bite can deliver enough venom to kill 20-30 people. However, while the venom of the king cobra is extremely potent, it is not as fast-acting as some other species of venomous snakes. This means that a person who has been bitten by a king cobra may have a little more time to seek medical attention before the full effects of the venom are felt.

Habitat and food

King cobras are found in a variety of habitats, including rainforests, swamps, and grasslands. They are also known to inhabit human settlements, particularly in rural areas. They are active hunters and feed mainly on other snakes, including venomous species such as kraits and other cobras. They are also known to eat lizards, rodents, and even birds.

Where is it found in India

The king cobra is found in the western and eastern ghats of India, as well as the foothills of the Himalayas. It is also found in other parts of Southeast Asia, including Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Importance to ecosystem

The king cobra plays an important role in the ecosystem as a top predator. It helps to control the population of venomous snakes, including other cobras and kraits, which can pose a danger to humans and other animals. The king cobra is also

revered in many cultures, particularly in India, where it is often associated with deities and considered a symbol of power and strength.

IUCN status

The king cobra is listed as a species of least concern on the IUCN Red List. However, it is protected under Indian law and is considered a threatened species in some parts of its range due to habitat loss, hunting for its skin and medicinal uses, and accidental capture in traps meant for other animals. Conservation efforts are underway to protect the king cobra and its habitat, including the establishment of protected areas and education programs aimed at raising awareness about the importance of this iconic species.