



# Article

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## The dog-faced water snakes, a revision of the genus *Cerberus* Cuvier, (Squamata, Serpentes, Homalopsidae), with the description of a new species

JOHN C. MURPHY<sup>1,2</sup>, HAROLD K. VORIS<sup>1</sup> & DARYL R. KARNS<sup>1,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Zoology, Field Museum of Natural History, 1400 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL USA

<sup>2</sup> Corresponding author E-mail: fordonia1@comcast.net

<sup>3</sup> Deceased. Department of Biology, Rivers Institute, Hanover College, Hanover, IN 47243 USA

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### Abstract

Snakes of the genus *Cerberus* Cuvier, 1829 occupy a unique, widespread coastal distribution and have a salt-tolerant physiology that allows members of the genus to move across a wide range of salinities from full salt water to freshwater. *Cerberus* nomenclature is revised based upon morphology and builds on previous molecular studies. Three species have been recognized by recent workers, here we recognize five species: the South Asian *C. rynchops* (Schneider 1799); the Southeast Asian-Philippine *C. schneiderii* (Schlegel 1837), a new combination; the freshwater Philippine endemic *C. microlepis* Boulenger 1896; the Australopapuan *C. australis* (Gray 1842); and a new species from Micronesia. We also select a lectotype for *Homalopsis schneiderii* Schlegel based upon a figure published in 1837 and restrict the type locality for this species to Timor. Evidence is also presented for a population of *Cerberus australis* in Indonesia, west of Weber's Line.

**Key Words:** aquatic snakes, Australia, coastal distribution, new species, nomenclature, Southeast Asia, systematics, taxonomy