

## Short-limbed Supple Skink *Lygosoma quadrupes* preyed upon by White-throated Kingfisher at Penanti, Penang, Peninsular Malaysia

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**Observer:** Graeme Guy.

**Photographs by:** Graeme Guy.

**Subject identified by:** Nick Baker, L. Lee Grismer.

**Location:** Penanti, Penang, Peninsular Malaysia. (Lat 5° 25.360'N Long 100° 30.469'E)

**Habitat:** Flat, mixed agricultural lowlands, with loose, sandy soil.

**Date and time:** 15 April 2013, morning.

**Identity of subject:** Short-limbed Supple Skink, *Lygosoma quadrupes* (Reptilia: Sauria: Scincidae).

**Description of observation:** One example of unknown length being preyed upon by a White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis* (Fig. 1 and close-up). Shortly after capture, the skink was taken by the kingfisher into its nesting burrow in sandy soil, presumably to feed to its brood.



Fig. 1 and close-up.

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**Remarks:** The subject was identified as *Lygosoma quadrupes* based on its elongate shape, its reduced limbs, the dark brown colour of its dorsal surface, and its beige ventral surface.

*Lygosoma quadrupes* is a species of skink with greatly reduced limbs and an elongate, sinuous body and tail. It is diurnal, terrestrial and probably spends a large amount of its time concealed under surface debris. The species occurs in many parts of mainland Southeast Asia, as well as Java, Sumatra and other islands. Grismer (2011) documents just 9 confirmed records in 6 locales in Peninsular Malaysia, with records concentrated in northern areas.

Penanti is an area with a patchwork of mixed agricultural use, including low crops and oil palm. The subject was photographed in a localised area of sparsely vegetated, loose, sandy soil. *Lygosoma quadrupes* appears to favour such loose soil conditions (Grismer, 2011): its body shape and reduced limbs suggest a partly fossorial lifestyle.

A previous incident of *Lygosoma quadrupes* being preyed upon by a White-throated Kingfisher was seen by Graeme Guy on 23 March 2012.

**Reference:** Grismer, L. L. (2011). *Lizards of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore, and their Adjacent Archipelagos. Their Description, Distribution, and Natural History*. Edition Chimaira, Frankfurt am Main. 728 pp.