



THE JAMAICAN BOA

An Endangered Species

Presented by
the
National Environment and Planning Agency



Introduction

- The Jamaican Boa is more commonly called the YELLOW SNAKE
- Sometimes called 'Nanka'
- Endemic
- Endangered



Introduction

- ENDEMIC
 - *Belonging exclusively or confined to a particular place*
 - *It is found in Jamaica and nowhere else in the world*
- Endangered
 - *high risk of extinction in the wild within the next 100 years if the present factors causing the decline remain the same (IUCN)*

Description

- Max. Length 2.2 metres
- Male larger than female
- Post orbital stripe
- Two-toned body
- Highly iridescent



Description



Description



Description



Description



Behaviour and Diet

- Little known about its behaviour
- Active at night – *Nocturnal*
- Sun bathes in the morning on rocks or in top of tree
- Spends most of its days in rocks and crevices
- Dry Season movement to settlements
 - Water?
 - Food source e.g. rats?

Behaviour and Diet

- Not poisonous
- Secretive
- Not aggressive
- Food include
 - Birds
 - Bats
 - Rats
 - Lizards, frogs and insects
- Constrictors – kills prey by squeezing

Reproduction

- Males have enlarged pelvic spur
- Females have very small spur



R. Miller courtesy of the Hope Zoo



R. Miller courtesy of the Hope Zoo

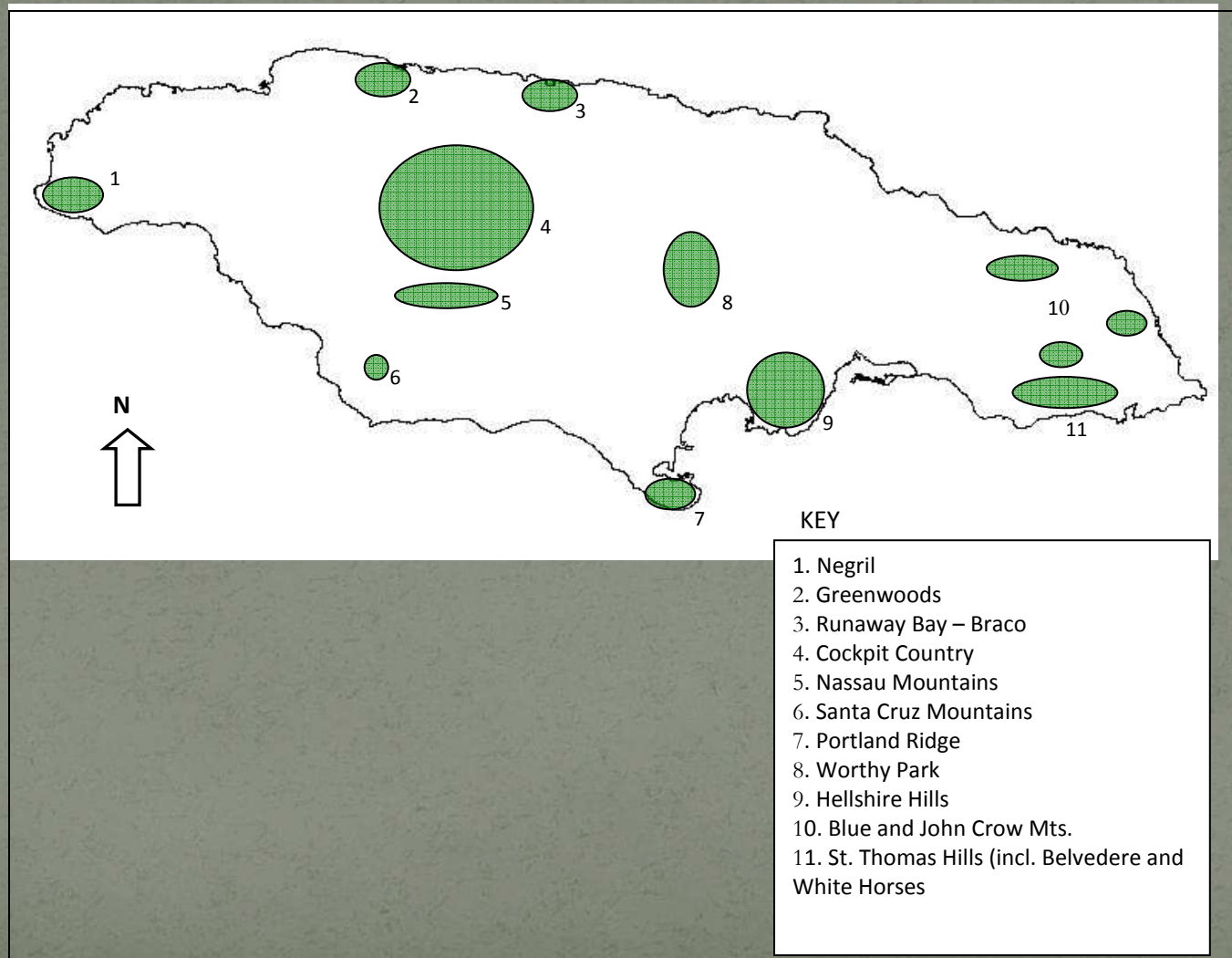
Reproduction

- Little known about the reproduction in the wild
- Mating balls have been observed
- In captivity the maximum litter size recorded was 34
- Average size about 20

Distribution & Habitat

- Historically
 - Known from every parish including Kingston
 - Common and widespread 150 years ago
- Present Day
 - Rarely encountered
 - Survive in a few 'strong-holds'
 - *Suggests that changes in land-use and killing of snakes has led to isolation of populations - Patchy*

Distribution & Habitat



Threats

- Long history of decline since colonization by Europeans
- Introduced alien mammals
 - Mongoose
 - Dogs
 - Cats
 - Pigs
- Persecution by man
- Habitat destruction

Threats

- Mongoose
 - Introduced in 1872 to control rats in cane fields
 - Ecological nightmare for all ground-dwelling native animals
 - Jamaican Petrel (*extinct?*)
 - Jamaican Poorwill (*extinct?*)
 - Black Racer Snake (*extinct?*)
 - Coney (*critically endangered*)
- Mongoose is active at day.....Yellow Snake active at night

Threats

- Encounters with MAN
 - Encountered in cane fields
 - Encountered by forest workers and farmers
 - Found in dwellings
 - Found in or near chicken coop

The Snake is **wrongly** believed to be poisonous

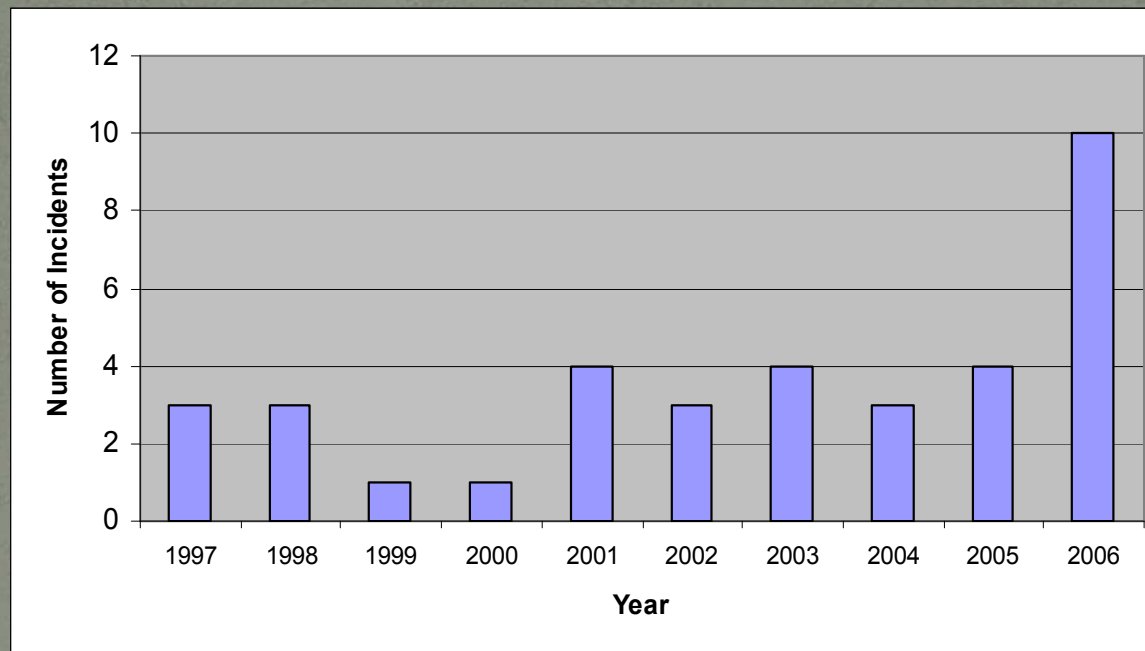
General fear of reptiles

“chop-on-site” attitude

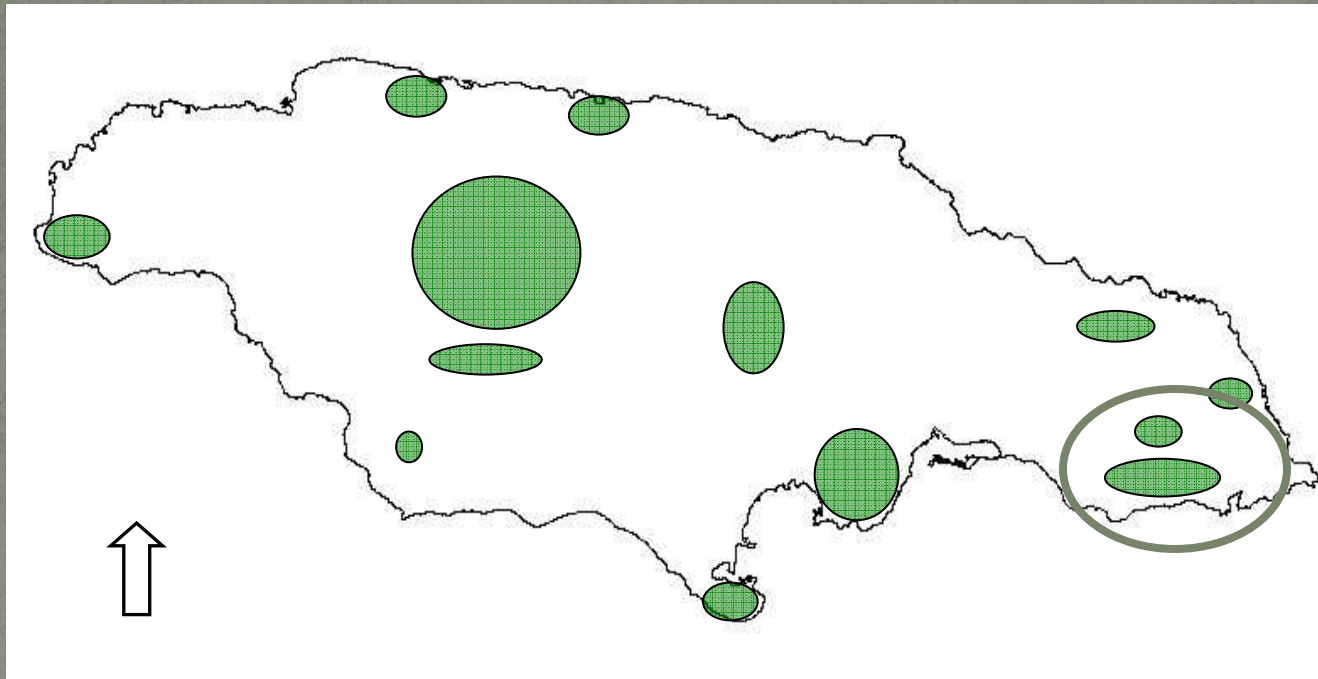


Threats

Jamaican Boa Encounters Reported to NEPA from 1997 – 2006.



Threats



The Law

- Appendix 1 of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) and the local Endangered Species (Protection, Conservation and Regulation of Trade) Act, 2000
 - Protection against international trade
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1945
 - it is illegal to kill, capture, harm or have in ones possession any living or dead protected species or parts thereof.
- Maximum Penalty of 100-thousand-dollars or 12 months imprisonment or both for breaches of above Acts

QUESTIONS?