

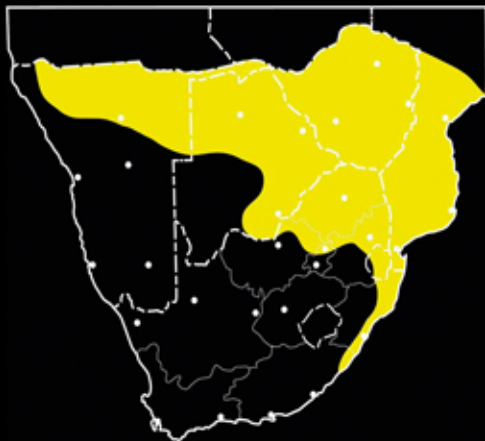


HIGHLY VENOMOUS



Southern Vine Snake (*Thelotornis capensis*)

Maximum Length:
1.47 m



Other names:

Twig Snake; Bird Snake; Takslang; Voëlslang

This perfectly-camouflaged tree-living snake is seldom seen because of its excellent camouflage and habit of remaining very still in low shrubs, observing the ground below for passing lizards and snakes. Birds often mob this snake, and it will inflate its neck with its bright orange tongue flickering – this leads to the incorrect assumption that they lure birds with their tongue. It is extremely placid but, if provoked, will inflate its neck and strike viciously. Most bites are to snake handlers. Like the Boomslang, the venom of this snake is haemotoxic affecting the blood clotting mechanism and causing uncontrolled bleeding. There is no antivenom for the venom of this snake and although a few fatalities have been reported, none were in South Africa.

