

WESTERN BUSH VIPER

Atheris chlorechis

Pel, 1851



PIERRE DE CHABANNES

CLASSIFICATION

Class: Reptilia

Order: Squamata

Family: Viperidae

No recognized subspecies



NOT LISTED

VERY RARE



LEAST CONCERN

Identification: Adults can reach a maximum length of 70 cm. Head covered with strongly keeled scales and very distinct from body. Coloration is bright green with two rows of yellow spots on flanks. Prehensile tail. Green eyes.

Range: The species is found in western Africa, from Senegal to Mali and Guinea, south to Ivory Coast and Ghana. May also occur as far east as Nigeria.

Habitat : Forest specialist, found in dense bushes up to 2 meters above ground.

Behavior: This species is active both by day and night. Mostly arboreal. Little known. Feeds on rodents and possibly reptiles. Viviparous, gives birth to up to 9 young.

Status in the wild: The species is still safe so far although deforestation occurs within its range. Intense deforestation and capture for trade can become major threats.

In captivity: The species is commoner in private collections than it is in zoos today. Known mostly from American zoos and only kept in 3 public collections in Europe. Bred mostly in private collection. First displayed in Europe at Berlin Zoo in 1932.