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Geographical range

Amazing Species: Flat-tail Sea Snake

The **Flat-tail Sea Snake**, *Laticauda schistorhynchus*, is classified as 'Vulnerable' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This species is endemic to the island nation of Niue, in the southern Pacific Ocean, 2,400 km northeast of New Zealand. The Flat-tail Sea Snake is found to depths of 50 m and occupies an extent of occurrence of less than 300 km².

This species, and many others in the genus *Laticauda*, are not completely restricted to the sea. They leave their habitat on coral reefs to lay eggs in a sheltered rock mass or cave, where an average of three young are produced per clutch. However, coastal development and the predicted growth in tourism can limit the suitable grounds for nesting, and further restrict this already small ranging species. In addition, as mass coral bleaching occurs in association with episodes of elevated sea surface temperature, both the prey abundance and refuge sites of this sea snake are diminished.

Currently there are no conservation measures in place for this species. However, it is essential that for protection of the Flat-tail Sea Snake, both their terrestrial and marine habitat requirements must be taken into consideration.

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