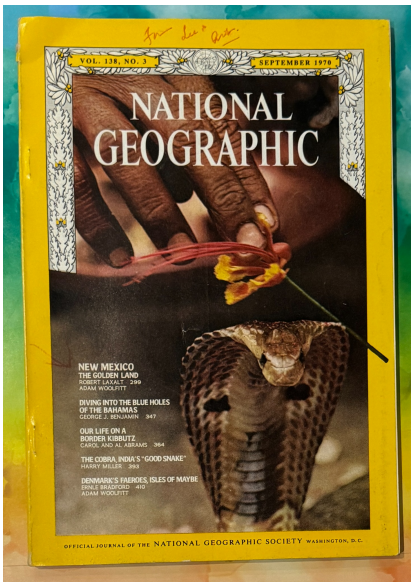
National Geographic

Magazine Research Record



September 1970. Volume 138, Number 3. The Cobra, India's "Good Snake."

Publication Identification

Field	Information
Country	United States
Publisher	National Geographic Society
Publisher address	Pending research update. Historical publication location: Washington, D.C.; exact street address not established.
Magazine title	National Geographic
Publication status	Continuing publication; the represented physical issues date from 1970 and 1971
Publication run	Founded in 1888; the full publication run extends beyond the 1970 and 1971 issues represented here
Editor	Pending research update
Printer	Pending research update
ISSN	Pending research update
Language	English
Publication type	General interest geography, science, natural history, culture, exploration, and photography magazine
Publication frequency	Monthly
Collection coverage	September 1970 and September 1971
Earliest issue represented	Volume 138, Number 3, September 1970
Latest issue represented	Volume 140, Number 3, September 1971
Years represented in the collection	1970, 1971
Publisher / organization (original field wording)	National Geographic Society

Preservation Significance

These issues have preservation significance because they preserve a subtler form of snake representation than openly sensational or inaccurate publications. National Geographic presented substantive natural history and cultural material, yet its covers still used snakes in purposeful, dramatic compositions that emphasize confrontation, size, proximity, and perceived danger. Preserving these issues makes it possible to study how even credible educational media could simultaneously foster fascination with snakes and draw upon the public's fear of them. Together with more overtly frightening portrayals in other magazines, these covers help document the long history of snakes being visually framed to attract attention, create tension, and sell publications.

Publication Metadata and Masthead Documentation

Field	Information

Field	Information
Publication	National Geographic
Publisher / organization	National Geographic Society
Publication location	Washington, D.C., as printed on the September 1970 cover
Frequency	Monthly
Publication type	General interest geography, science, natural history, culture, exploration, and photography magazine
Masthead evidence	Pending research update. Additional staff and historical street address details have not yet been established in this record.
Original address research note	Washington, D.C. (city shown on the photographed September 1970 cover; street address not verified)

International Distribution

Field	Information
United States	United States publication documented by the photographed cover
Other countries	International distribution details for these specific issues have not been verified from the provided cover

Issues Represented in the Collection

Field	Information
September 1970	Volume 138, Number 3. Article: “The Cobra, India’s ‘Good Snake’” by Harry Miller.
September 1971	Volume 140, Number 3. “Mzima, Kenya’s Spring of Life” by Joan and Alan Root. Details retained from the existing record; the 1971 cover was not supplied in this turn.

Issue Metadata

Field	Information
September 1970	Vol. 138, No. 3. Snake feature: “The Cobra, India’s ‘Good Snake’” by Harry Miller. The cover places a hooded cobra prominently in the foreground while a person handles a flower immediately above it.
September 1971	Vol. 140, No. 3. Cover story includes “Mzima, Kenya’s Spring of Life” by Joan and Alan Root. The cover shows an African rock python underwater with Joan Root, creating a dramatic face to face encounter between a very large snake and a person.

How Snakes Are Presented

These National Geographic covers are different from examples that simply vilify snakes or contain an obvious scientific error. The underlying articles are natural history and cultural reporting, and the September 1970 feature even calls the cobra India’s “Good Snake.” Nevertheless, the covers are deliberately dramatic. In both cases the snake is large, visually dominant, and positioned in immediate proximity to a human being. The 1970 cobra faces the viewer with its hood expanded. The 1971 python rises through the water directly beside a swimmer. These choices make the animals visually arresting and potentially menacing even when the accompanying journalism is more nuanced.

Collection / Bibliographic Notes

The two issues are especially useful together because they show that dramatic snake imagery was not limited to horror, hunting, or sensational entertainment magazines. A respected general interest publication could present serious natural history while still selecting a cover photograph that exploited the visual tension created by close human contact with a snake. This distinction matters: the snakes need not be factually misrepresented for the imagery to participate in a broader cultural pattern in which snakes are used to provoke apprehension, fascination, or fear.

Verification Notes

The issue dates, volume and issue numbers, cover imagery, and visible cover wording are taken directly from the photographed physical copies. Bibliographic checking confirms “The Cobra, India’s ‘Good Snake’” in September 1970 and “Mzima, Kenya’s Spring of Life” by Joan and Alan Root in September 1971.