

STUDIES ON THE LIZARD AND SNAKES OF NORTH BIHAR

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INTRODUCTION

The present work on the reptiles of north Bihar is based on the material present in the Zoological Survey of India and which was collected by the Senior author from different areas of north Bihar from time to time.

Since the publication of Smith's volumes in the FBI series (1935, 1943), our knowledge on the lizards and snakes of Bihar has increased considerably. Some work on the similar lines has been carried out by Hora (1948) and Acharjee (1955), no comprehensive work in this respect was available so far from north Bihar. The result of present study from this zone revealed the presence of twenty one species (17 genera) belonging to 7 families. Of these, four species constitute the new records from north Bihar.

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

Order 1 SQUAMATA
Suborder (i) SAURIA
Family (1) GEKKONIDAE

1. *Hemidactylus bowringi* (Gray)

Material : 2 exs., Kolassy, Dist. Purnea, 28. 5. 1872. Anderson. (Reg. No. 5642 & 5644)

Measurements : Snout to vent 42 - 51 mm, tail missing.

Distribution : India : Godavari valley ; Sikkim ; Darjeeling ; Elsewhere ; : Burma ; Honkong ; S. China.

Remarks : Back with pale brown small granules intermixed with larger tubercles on posterior side, ventral surface greyish brown. This species is not widely distributed in India and comprises the first record from Bihar.

2. *Hemidactylus brooki* Gray

Spotted House Gecko

Material : 2 exs. Kishengaunje, Dist. Purnea ; 14. 4. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Mugraha, West Champaran dist. ; 11.10. 1977 ; N.C. Gayen (Reg. No. 23498).

Measurements : Snout to vent 32 - 44 mm ; tail 39 mm.

Distribution : The whole of India Elsewhere : Sri Lanka ; Singapore ; China ; East Indian Archipelago ; North Africa & West Indies.

3. *Hemidactylus flavivirtidis* Ruppell

Yellow-Bellied House Gecko

Material : 1 ex. Mugraha, Dist. West Champaran ; 11.10.1977 ; N. C. Gayen (Reg. No. 23497).

Measurements : Snout to vent 71 mm; tail 61 mm.

Distribution : From Punjab to West Bengal. Elsewhere : Iran ; Arabia ; shores of Red Sea.

4. *Hemidactylus frenatus* Schlegel

South Asian Wall Gecko

Material : 3 exs. Forbesgaunge, Purnea Dist. ; 8. 4. 1986 S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. vill. Gerabarhi, Katihar Dist., 5. 4. 1986; S. Ahmed & Party ; 3 exs. Dauran, Madhepura dist. ; 20. 4. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party.

Measurements : Snout to vent 32 - 55 mm ; tail 23 - 43 mm.

Distribution : India : Southern India ; West Bengal. Elsewhere : Sri Lanka ; Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea ; Hainan ; Yunnan ; Hongkong ; Southern China ; Malaysia ; Australia ; East Africa ; St. Helena.

Remarks : This lizard which is common in southern India has been reported for the first time from Bihar.

Family (2) SCINCIDAE

5. *Mabuya carinata* Schneider,

Brahminy / Common Skink

Material : 1 ex. Manihari village, Katihar dist., 31. 3. 1986, S. Ahmed & party (Reg. No. 24447).

Measurements : Snout to vent 99 mm; tail 122 mm.

Distribution : Indian Peninsula ; Elsewhere : Sri Lanka.

6. *Nabuya macularia* (Blyth)

Bronge Back Skink

Material : 1 ex. Dighikatihar, Katihar dist. ; 2. 4. 1966, S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Barari village, Purnea dist. ; 11. 4. 1986, S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Khursela, Purnea dist., 11. 4. 1986 S. Ahmed & party.

Measurements : Snout to vent 45 - 55 mm., Tail 60 - 89 mm.

Distribution : India : Uttar Pradesh ; Bihar ; West Bengal and Assam. Elsewhere : Thailand ; Burma, Kampochea, South Vietnam ; Malaysia.

7. *Riopa albopunctata* Gray

Material : 1 ex. Bhownaipore village, Purnea dist., 12. 4. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Gerabari, Katihar dist. ; 5. 4. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party.

Measurements : Snout to vent 51 - 55 mm. ; tail 26-48 mm.

Distribution : Maharashtra ; Madhya Pradesh ; Uttar Pradesh ; Bihar ; West Bengal ; Orissa, Elsewhere : Nepal.

Family (3) AGAMIDAE

8. *Calotes versicolor* (Daudin)

Blood Sucker

Material : 1 ex. Mirchabari, Katihar dist., 1. 4. 1986, S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Khursela, Purnea dist., 11. 4. 1986, S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Dauran, Madhepura dist., S. Ahmed & party.

Measurements : Snout to vent 84 - 86 mm ; tail 77 - 230 mm.

Distribution : The whole of India; Thailand; Laos; Kampuchea; Vietnam; Afganistan ; Sri Lanka ; Hainan ; Hongkong ; S. China ; Malaysia ; and Sumatra.

9. *Sitana Ponticeriana* Cuvier

Fan-Throated Lizard

Material : 1 ex. Mugraha forest, West Champaran dist., 11. 10. 1977, N.C. Gayen. (Reg. No. 23500).

Measurements : Snout to vent 39 mm, tail 74 mm.

Distribution : The whole of India.

Suborder (ii) SERPENTES

Family (4) COLUBRIDAE

10. *Amphiesma stolata* (Linnaeus)

Striped Keel Back

Material : 1 ex. Manihari village, Katihar dist., 31. 3. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party ; 1 ex. Khursela, Purnea dist., 11. 4. 1986 ; S. Ahmed & party.

Measurements : Total length 445 - 496 mm. ; tail 102 - 125 mm.

Distribution : The whole of India ; Sri Lanka ; Pakistan ; Southern China ; Hainan ; Vietnam ; Laos ; Kampochea, Amdaman Islands.

11. Elaphe helena (Daudin)**Trinket Snake**

Material : 1 ex. caragola, Purnea dist., ? T.S. Hill. (Reg. No.12544).

Distribution : Assam ; West Bengal ; Uttar Pradesh.

Remarks : This snake has been reported for the first time from Bihar.

12. Enhydris enhydris (Schneider)**Schneiders Water-Snake/Smooth Water Snake**

Material : 1 ex. Samshergaunge, Katihar dist., 4. 4. 1986, S. Ahmed & party. (Reg. No. 24442).

Measurements : Total length 621 mm., tail 114 mm.

Distribution : Uttar Pradesh ; Bihar ; Andhra Pradesh ; Orissa ; West Bengal ; Assam ; Burma ; Thailand Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea ; S. China ; Malaysia

13. Enhydris seiboldi (Schlegel)

Material : 1 ex. Purualia, Champaran dist., ? M. Mackenzie. (Reg. No. 16614).

Measurements : Total length 485 mm. ; tail broken.

Distribution : India : Delhi ; Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh ; Bihar ; Kerala ; Assam. Elsewhere : Burma.

14. Boiga forsteni (Dumeril & Binron)

Material : 1 ex. Purnea, Purnea dist., ?? (Reg. No. 13542).

Distribution : Sri Lanka and Peninsular India ; Western Ghats ; Ganga valley ; Orissa ; W. Bengal ; Eastern Himalayas.

Remarks : Damaged specimen.

15. Boiga trigonata (Schneider)**Indian Gamma / Common Cat Snake**

Material : 1 ex. Kolassy, Purnea dist., 6. 9. 1872, G.W. Shillingford. (Reg. No. 8710).

Distribution : All over India ; Sri Lanka & Pakistan.

16. Ahaetulla mycterizans (Linnaeus)

Material : 1 ex. Purnea, Purnea dist., 11. 1880, F. Fedden. (Reg. No. 10977).

Measurements : Total length 1459 mm. ; tail 559 mm.

Distribution : India : Rajasthan ; Bihar ; West Bengal & Assam.

17. *Lycodon aulicus* (Linnæus)

Common Wolf Snake

Material : 1 ex. Purnea, Purnea dist., ? C.R.M. Green. (Reg. No. 13750).

Measurements : Total length 300 mm, tail broken.

Distribution : All over India ; Nepal ; Burma ; Sri Lanka ; Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea ; Southern China ; Hongkong ; The Maldives, the Malaysia and Celebes and the Philippines.

18. *Lycodon striatus* (Shaw)

Material : 1 ex. Siripur, Saran dist., ? M. Mackenzie. (Reg. No. 17557).

Measurements : Total length 356 mm, tail 56 mm.

Distribution : India ; Himachal Pradesh ; Uttar Pradesh ; Bihar. Elsewhere : Sri Lanka ; Pakistan ; Transcaucasia.

19. *Argyrogena diadema* (Schlegel)

Material : 1 ex. Purnea, Purnea dist. ?? (Reg. No. 10978).

Distribution : India ; Kashmir ; Rajasthan ; Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. Elsewhere : Baluchistan, Afghanistan, Southern Turkestan and Iran to North Africa.

Remarks : This species is reported for the first time from Bihar.

Family (5) DASYPELTIDAE

20. *Elachistodon westermanni* (Reinhardt)

The snake of Purnea district which is in the collection of Zoological Survey of India, was described by Wall, 1913.

Family (6) ELAPIDAE

21. *Bungarus caeruleus* (Schneider)

Common Indian Krait / Blue Krait

Material : 1 ex. Champaran, Champaran dist. ? Major, A. H. McMohan.

Measurements : 1 ex. Total length 1234 mm ; tail 154 mm.

Distribution : Rajasthan ; Uttar Pradesh ; Madhya Pradesh ; Bihar ; West Bengal ; Orissa ; Andhra Pradesh and Andaman Islands. Elsewhere : Sri Lanka.

SUMMARY

The present work on lizards and snakes of North Bihar reveals the presence of 23 species

belonging to 17 genera under 6 families. Of these, four species have been recorded for the first time from the area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are thankful to Dr. B.S. Lamba, Joint Director-in-Charge, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, for all the facilities, to Dr. S.K. Bhattacharya and Dr. O.B. Chhotani, for encouragement. Thanks are also due to Dr. Q.H. Baqri, Dr. S.K. Gupta, Shri D.P. Sanyal, Shri B. Duttagupta, and Shri N.C. Gayen, for help in various ways in connection with this work.

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