

FIRST RECORD OF THE UROPELT TERETRURUS SANGUINEUS
(BEDDOME 1887) (REPTILIA) SERPENTES FROM
THE NILGIRIS, SOUTH INDIA

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While studying a lot of reptiles collected recently in the Nilgiri District, Tamil Nadu I came across a specimen of an uropeltid snake picked up from underneath a stone in the Longwood Shola off Kotagiri. On detailed examination I have identified the snake as *Teretrurus sanguineus* because of the separate supraocular and postocular shields in the head and the depressed caudal disc ending in a single point.

The specimen, a juvenile, bearing the Register No. 187/SRS. S. measures 105 mm in length and is characterised by 15 rows of scales, 145 ventrals and 8 caudals. Colouration is as follows : Purplish red above and uniformly reddish (in life) and blackish brown and whitish below (in spirit).

Malcolm Smith (1943) has included Wynaad, Anaimalai Hills and Travancore in the range of this species whereas Rajendran (1977) has recorded the snake from Tirunelveli Hills, Tamil Nadu and Munnar in Kerala. The present record, besides constituting the first authentic report of the occurrence of the species in the Nilgiris, extends the known range of the species considerably in the Western Ghats. Attention of the Ophiologists in India must be drawn to the fact that the rarity of several species of uropelts may be illusory since these interesting snakes have been collected at irregular intervals. It is possible that the range of the uropeltid snakes may further be widened provided they are searched for carefully.

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REFERENCES

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