

RECENT RECORDS OF SOME LIZARDS FROM
WESTERN GHATS, INDIA

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INTRODUCTION

The present study is the result of systematic collecting carried out by the author and his colleagues over a decade and half from 1967 through 1980 covering not only the main hill ranges—Anaimalais, Nilgiris, Cardamom Hills, and Palnis—but also the hitherto unexplored rain forests of Silent Valley and New Amarambalam with herpetology as the primary objective.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Terrestrial species were obtained by searching on foot. Diurnal forms were taken between dawn and mid-day or shortly before sunset. Lizards found at high altitudes were generally seen and caught at mid-day. Tree living lizards were trapped by a noose or by light blows delivered at their necks.

Whenever possible, small series rather than a single specimen were picked up from an area. Species common throughout India were observed and left after examination. Specimens found "dead on road" were preserved if they were in tolerably good state for transportation and study.

Treated in detail are 21 species out of the 58 species known to occur in Western Ghats. The taxonomic arrangement follows broadly that of Smith (1935) as revised by Constable (1949), Mittleman (1952), and Underwood (1954). Measurements, scale counts, and other descriptive data are from specimens examined. The snout-vent and tail lengths of all the specimens examined excepting those with tails damaged or lost are given in parentheses after the departmental register number. Most of the colour descriptions are from live or freshly preserved specimens. Total range of the species in the Western Ghats and elsewhere as well has been given.

The entire collection is incorporated in the named reptile collections of the Southern Regional Station, Zoological Survey of India, Madras.

Key to the abbreviations :—SRSL.—Lizards of the Southern Regional Station, WRSV.—Vertebrates of the Western Regional Station, Coll.—Collector or Collected by, Juv./Juvs.—Juvenile/Juveniles, ex.—example/examples, NARF.—New Amarambalam Reserve Forest.

ACCOUNTS OF SPECIES

Family GEKKONIDAE

1. *Cnemaspis gracilis* (Beddome)

Material : 1 ♂, SRSL., 99, 51 (22+29) mm., Meenmutty, NARF., 23. ii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Hills of South-Western India.

2. *Cnemaspis kandiana* (Kelaart)

Material : 1 ♂, SRSL. 101, Snout-vent : 32 mm., Panpuzham NARF., 27. ii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : (i) Western Ghats—Hills as far north as lat. 12°. (ii) *Elsewhere*—(A) India : Jog Falls and Yellapur, North Canara, Karnataka and Andaman Islands. (B) *Outside India* : Sri Lanka and Islands west of Sumatra.

3. *Cnemaspis indica* (Gray)

Material : (i) 3 ♀ ♀ ♀, SRSL., 155, Snout-vent : 31-33 mm., Doddabetta, Nilgiris, 13. iii. 1978, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll. (ii) 1 ♂, SRSL. 100, 79 (40+39) mm., Meenmutty, NARF., 23. ii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll. (iii) 1 ♂, SRSL., 107, 78 (38+40) mm., Sayivala, NARF., 16. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll. (iii) 2 ♂ ♂, SRSL., 105-106, 68-78 mm., Sayivala, NARF., 16. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll. (iv) 2 ♂ ♂, SRSL., 105-106, 68-78 mm., Sayivala, NARF., 15. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll.

Distribution : Nilgiris in the Western Ghats. Smith (1935) adds Jerdon found it in Coorg (Karnataka).

4. *Cnemaspis sisparensis* (Theobald)

Material : (i) 1 ♂, SRSL., 198, 58 (33+25) mm., Silent Valley, 27. i. 1979, *R. S. Pillai*, Coll. (ii) 1 ♂, 32 mm., (tail lost), Sayivala, NARF., 15. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll.

Distribution : The three types known were reported from the Sispara Ghat, Nilgiris and Kavalai, Kerala. This forest gecko is being recorded for the first time from Silent Valley and New Amarambalam area of Kerala.

5. **Cnemaspis wynadensis** (Beddome)

(Plate 1, fig. 1)

Material : (i) 1 ♂, SRSL., 102, 62 (34+28) mm., Meenmutty, NARF., 1. iii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll. (ii) 1 ♂, SRSL. 103, 73 (34+39) mm., Silent Valley, 22. i. 1979, *R. S. Pillai*, Coll.

Distribution : "Wynaad and hill ranges farther South" according to Smith (1935). The present records are from the Silent Valley and New Amarambalam area of Kerala.

Remarks : This species is being recorded from the Silent Valley for the first time.

6. **Cyrtodactylus collegalensis collegalensis** (Beddome)

Material : 1 juv., SRSL., 157, 69 (39+30) mm., Meenmutty, NARF., 15. ii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Hills of Southern India and Sri Lanka.

Remarks : The specimen under study is the first record from New Amarambalam area. A rare gecko.

7. **Dravidogecko anamallensis** (Günther)

(Plate 1, fig. 3)

Material : 2 ♂ ♂, SRSL., 158, 81-88 mm., Kodaikanal, Palnis, 5. ii. 1972, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Anaimalais, Palnis and Hills of Tirunelveli in the Western Ghats.

Remarks : These rare geckos are additional interesting records for the area under study.

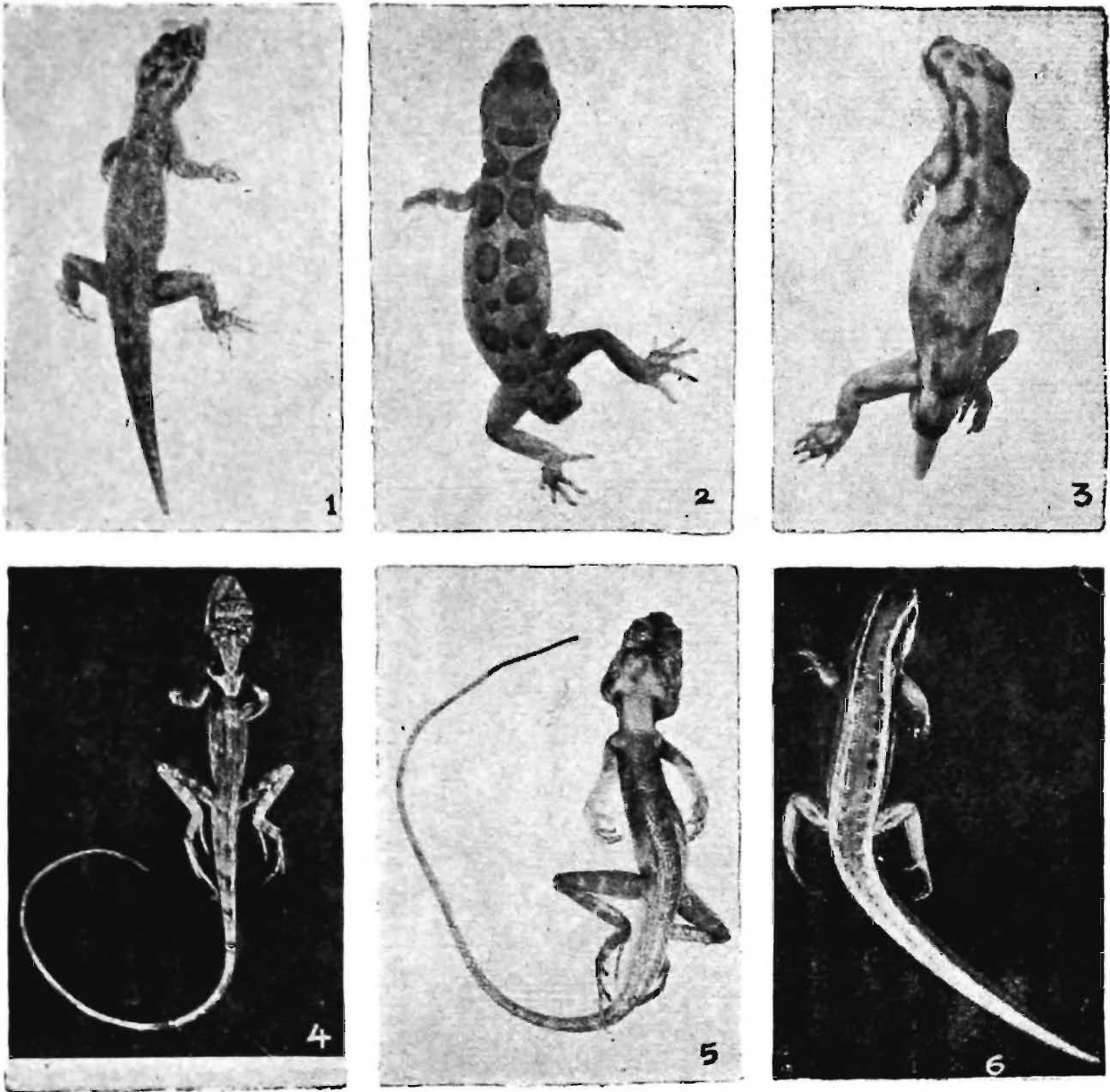
8. **Hemidactylus frenatus** Schlegel

Material : (i) ♂, SRSL., 148, 139 (67+72) mm., Meenmutty, NARF., 14. iii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll. (ii) 1 ♀, SRSL., 153, 52 mm., (tail damaged), Sayivala, NARF., 15. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll.

Distribution : (i) *India* : Southern India. (ii) *Elsewhere* : Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indo-china, Hainan, Yunnan, Hongkong, Southern China.

9. **Hemidactylus reticulatus** Beddome

Material : 1 ♀, SRSL., 145, 62 (28+34) mm., Kodaikanal, Palnis, 7. iv. 1980, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.



Figs. 1. *Cnemaspis wynadensis*, 2. *Cyrtodactylus collegalensis collegalensis*,
3. *Dravidogecko anamallensis*, 4. *Calotes ellioti*,
5. *Calotes rouxi*, 6. *Sphenomorphus dussumieri*.

Distribution : (i) Western Ghats—Palnis. (ii) *Elsewhere* : Shevaroy Hills and Palkonda Hills (Eastern Ghats) and Karnataka.

Remarks : This specimen under study is the first record of this species from Palnis. A rare gecko.

Family AGAMIDAE

10. *Calotes calotes* (Linnaeus)

Material : (i) ♂, SRSL. 18, 612 (125+487) mm., Topslip, Anaimalais, 5. vi. 1973, G. U. Kurup, Coll. (ii) 1 juv., SRSL. 19, 413 (93+320) mm., Kulathupuzha, Tenmalais, 10. xii. 1973, Koshy Mathew, Coll. (iii) 1 juv., SRSL. 20, 412 (93+319) mm., Silent Valley, 17. x. 1974, G. U. Kurup, Coll.

Distribution : (i) Western Ghats—Anaimalais, Hills of South Kerala and Silent Valley. (ii) *Elsewhere* : (a) *India*—Shevaroy Hills (Eastern Ghats) and Nicobar Islands. (b) *Outside India*—Throughout the hills of Sri Lanka.

11. *Calotes elliotti* Günther

(Plate 1, fig. 4)

Material : (i) Juv., SRSL., 21, 215 (58+157) mm., Kodaikanal, Palnis, 18. x. 1972, T. S. N. Murthy, Coll. (ii) 3 juvs., SRSL., 22-24, 215-218 mm., Karianshola, Topslip, Anaimalais, 20. x. 1974, T. S. N. Murthy, Coll. (iii) 1 ♂, SRSL., 68, 249 (73+176) mm., Meenmutty, NARF, T. S. N. Murthy, Coll. (iv) 2 ♀ ♀, SRSL., 25-26, 227-234 mm., Attakatti, Anaimalais, 4. iii. 1976, T. S. N. Murthy, Coll. (v) 1 ♀, SRSL., 136, 270 (83+187) mm., Mukkali, Silent Valley, 16. i. 1980, K. R. Rao, Coll.

Distribution : Restricted to the Western Ghats. Reported hitherto from Anaimalais, Tirunelveli and Sivagiri Hills. The present studies extends the range of this species to Palnis.

12. *Calotes rouxi* Dumeril and Bibron

(Plate 1, fig. 5)

Material : (i) 1 juv., SRSL., 31, 159 (27+132) mm., Thekkady, Cardamom Hills, 28. x. 1974, T. S. N. Murthy, Coll. (ii) 1 ♂, SRSL., 57, 239 (67+172) mm., Punchakolli, New Amarambalam, 24. iii. 1979, K. R. Rao, Coll. (iii) 1 ♂, SRSL., 58, 221 (58+163) mm., Ottakkal, Tenmalais, 26. xi. 1973, Koshy Mathew, Coll.

Distribution : It is now reported from the Cardamom Hills and Tenmalais of Western Ghats.

13. **Calotes versicolor** (Daudin)

Material : (i) 1 juv., SRSL., 32, 218 (66+152) mm., Attapadi, Silent Valley, 15. x. 1974, *G. U. Kurup*. Coll. (ii) 2 ♂♂, SRSL., 33-34, 318 (118+200) mm., Courtallam, Tirunelveli Hills, 30. x. 1975, *R. S. Pillai*, Coll. (iii) 1 juv., SRSL., 35, 210 (65+145) mm., Muthanga, 10. x. 1976, *R. S. Pillai*, Coll.

Distribution : Common throughout India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Indo-China.

14. **Draco dussumieri** Dumeril and Bibron

Material : 2 ♀♀, SRSL., 55, 177-183 mm., Punchakolli, NARF., 25. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll.

Distribution : Southern India (Madras, Travancore, Cochin, Malabar, Coorg, Karwar, Goa). Annandale records it 'common about ten miles north of Trivandrum' *vide* Smith (1935).

15. **Otocryptis beddomii** Boulenger

Material : 1 juv., SRSL., 151, 108 (35+73) mm., Kodaikanal, Palnis, 7. iv. 1980, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Cardamom Hills. First record from Palnis.

Remarks : Collected nearly after a century since its description. A rare agamid.

Family SCINCIDAE

16. **Ristella beddomii** Boulenger

Material : (i) 2 juvs., SRSL., 76-77, Poochipara, NARF., 12. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll. (ii) 3 juvs., SRSL., 93-97, 30-35 mm., (tail damaged), Meenmutty, NARF., 1. iii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Restricted to Western Ghats. Recorded hitherto from Tenmalais, Sharvathy River (Karnataka) and Parambikulam (Anaimalais).

Remarks : The specimens under study are additional interesting records of this species from New Amarambalam Area, Kerala.

17. **Sphenomorphus dussumieri** (Dumeril and Bibron)

(Plate 1, fig. 6)

Material : (i) 1 ♂, SRSL., 90, 107 (48+59) mm., Nedungayam, NARF., 28. iii. 1979, *K. R. Rao*, Coll. (ii) 2 ♂♂, SRSL., 91-92, 116 (52+64) mm., Nedungayam, NARF., 15. iii. 1979, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : (i) Western Ghats—From South Canara District (Karnataka) to Trivandrum (Kerala). (ii) *Elsewhere* : A single specimen from Sri Lanka.

18. **Scincella bilineatum bilineatum** (Gray)

Material : (i) 1 ex., SRSL., 138, Snout-vent 59 mm., Doddabetta, Nilgiris, 13. iii. 1978, *T. S. N. Murthy* Coll. (ii) 1 ex., SRSL., 139, Snout-vent 62 mm., Coonoor, Nilgiris, 10. iii. 1978, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Nilgiris in Western Ghats only.

19. **Scincella bilineatum laterimaculatum** Boulenger

Material : 2 ex., SRSL., 142, 118 (41+77) mm., and 116 (46+70) mm., Coonoor, Nilgiris, 10. iii. 1978, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Recorded from Nilgiris and Hills of South Kerala and Tirunelveli only.

20. **Scincella palnicum** (Boettger)

Material : 1 ex., SRSL., 140, 118 (55+63) mm., Kodaikanal, Palnis, 7. iv. 1980, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Restricted to Palnis in Western Ghats.

21. **Scincella travancoricum** (Beddome)

Material : 1 ex., SRSL., 141, 136 (53+83) mm., Poomparai, Palnis, 5. i. 1972, *T. S. N. Murthy*, Coll.

Distribution : Anaimalais, Palnis and Hills of South Kerala in Western Ghats.

SUMMARY

This study is based on 21 species of lizards of the Western Ghats. Systematic accounts in brief and distributional data for all the species discussed are given. Several rare species hitherto known by one or two specimens are recollected.

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