

A New Distribution Record of Dumerils Black headed Snake (*Sibynophis subpunctatus*, Dumeril & Bibron, 1854) from Khammam District, Telangana, India.

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ABSTRACT

This is the present note a new distribution record of *Sibynophis subpunctatus* (Dumeril's Black-headed snake) from ayyagaripeta & Gandhinagar Colony Sathupally town, Khammam District, Telangana, India. The species had antecedaently has been recorded in Telangana only from Komaram Bheem- Asifabad and Nagarkurnool and Calliophis melanurus recorded Nalgonda district. The present record extends its non-distribution range within the Telangana state contributes to the regional hepatofaunal database.

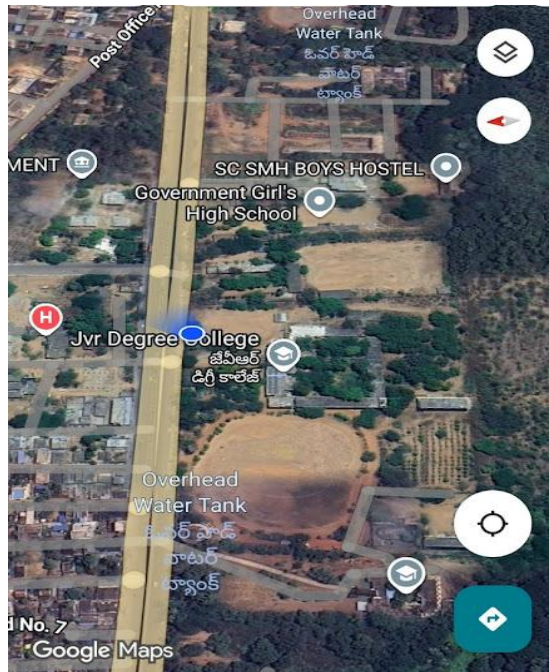
Keywords: *Sibynophis subpunctatus*, new locality record, non-venomous, reptile distribution, khammam, Sathupally.

INTRODUCTION

The Dumeril's Black-headed snake (*Sibynophis subpunctatus* / Dumeril & Bibron, 1854) is a small, Slender, non - venomous colubrid distributed across the Peninsular India and the parts of Sri Lanka (Whitaker & captain 2008). It is easily recognized by its glossy scales, pale brown or grey dorsal coloration and distinctive jet- black head with a narrow light collar behind the head. Earlier studies (Gandla et. al 2017) documented this species for the first time from Telangana, specifically in the Northern (Komaram Bheem-Asifabad), and Southern (Nagar Kurnool) regions. However, no previous records existed from the Khammam District region. This paper reports a new locality record from Sathupally, representing on eastward extension of the species known range in Telangana.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A specimen of the Dumeril's Black-headed snake (*Sibynophis subpunctatus*, Dumeril & Bibron, 1854) was observed on 24th July 2024 JVR Government College, Sathupally Khammam District,



Map. The species found at blue dot Google map located area in the JVR Govt. College, Sathupally.



Photoplate 1: The specimens found in the leaf litter near to the moist area adjacent to the college garden.

Telangana, India. (approx. coordinates 17.211772 N, 80.24448 E). The specimens were found in the leaf litter near to the moist area adjacent to the college garden two number of Same species were found. One of these snakes killed by while collecting the garbage in the garden, a snake was accidentally killed by the tool in hand. And another snake came out from the litter, I recorded photographic documentation and it safely went back to the natural habitat within the college premises that area is a semi urban landscape region.

The *Sibynophis subpunctatus* is semi fossorial species, body is thin, slender and unlike Slender Coral snake It ends in a normal tail having pointed tip. It is in a small sized snake that grows up to 46 cm/18 inches in length (Indiansnake.org). Morphological feature such as Black headed narrow pale collar and greyish with smooth scales confirmed the species identification based on the field guide by whitakar & captain (2008).



Fig. 1: Black headed narrow pale collar and greyish with smooth scales

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The specimen measured approximately + or - 30 cm total length with characteristic glossy scales and distinct back head coloured while the body is brown from neck to end of the tail. (Figure 1, 2, 3). The snake ventral's scales up to tail yellowish-green and touch to the dorsal side by a long ventral and a dot like black small stickers both and area of each ventralis. The specimen dorsal side of the body covered with hexagonal small scales, black colour stickers size dots in the mid-dorsal area, those are started from neck band region to up to the end of the tail. The dots started from the neck region, appearing slightly dark in colour, and gradually faded in shade towards the tail region. Scalation 9 super labials (rarely 8) 4th to 6 th or 3 rd to 5 th in contact with eyes: lower wedged between 7 th and 8th or 6th and 7th superlabials, parietal in contact with both post oculars so, temporal are excluded from post oculars. Dorsal scale smooth in 17 mid body rows. (Indainsnakes.org)

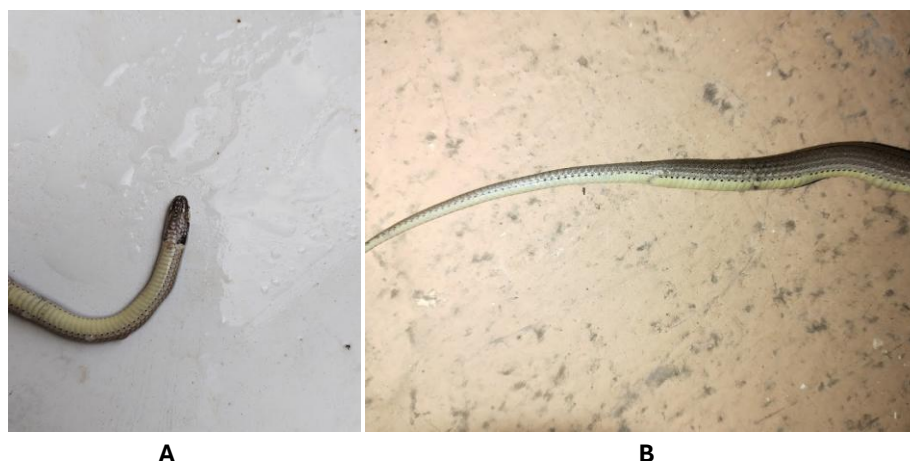


Fig.2 : A- Scalation 9 super labials(rarely 8) 4th to 6 th or 3 rd to 5 th in contact with eyes : lower wedged between 7 th and 8th or 6th and 7th superlabials

B: The dots started from the neck region, appearing slightly dark in colour, and gradually faded in shade towards the tail region.

This record adds a new distribution point for the species in the Southern Telangana. The presence of *Sibynophis subpunctatus* at sathupalli indicates that these species may be more widely distributed in semi-urban and scrub habitats than previously documented. Earlier Gandla et al. (2017) published the first records of the snake from Telangana. The present sighting further strengthens the understanding of this spread within the state. The presence of species in an edge distribution suggests potential ability to modify landscapes. Further surveys in urban edge zone may reveal additional population and inform conservation assessments of these and similar colubrid snakes in the region. The observations also underscore the value of opportunistic documentation of herpetofauna outside the protected natural areas.

CONCLUSION

These observations represent a new locality record of *Sibynophis subpunctatus* from Khammam District, Telangana. Such records are essential to build comprehensive distribution maps of reptile in the State and contribute to conservation awareness and Biodiversity documentation. Moreover many of people kill the snakes out of fear without knowing those are Non-venomous are venomous snakes. To make the people snakes how they balance the Ecosystem they help control the population of rats, insects and protect our crop's and food stores.

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Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

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