



Open Access

10.11609/jott.2026.18.7.29159-29374
www.threatenedtaxa.org

26 July 2026 (Online & Print)
18(7): 29159-29374
ISSN 0974-7907 (Online)
ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)



Vachellia nilotica



P Krítika



ISSN 0974-7907 (Online); ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)

Publisher
Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society
www.wild.zooreach.org

Host
Zoo Outreach Organization
www.zooreach.org

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continued on the back inside cover

Cover: Parts of *Vachellia nilotica*, medium - watercolours. © P Kritika



New record of cob-web spider species *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778) (Araneae: Theridiidae) from Kachchh, India with detailed distribution of Indian species of *Steatoda* Sundevall, 1833

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Abbreviations: ALE—anterior lateral eye | AME—anterior median eye
| PLE—posterior lateral eye | PME—posterior median eye.

The cob-web spider family Theridiidae Sundevall, 1833 is the fourth largest family of the order Araneae Clerck, 1,757 and has 2,624 extant species belonging to 139 genera (WSC 2026), the genus *Steatoda* Sundevall, 1833, is cosmopolitan in distribution. Currently, it consists of 120 extant species, of which six species following, *Steatoda albocathrata* (Simon, 1897), *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778), *Steatoda cingulata* (Thorell, 1890), *Steatoda erigoniformis* (Pickard-Cambridge, 1872), *Steatoda paykulliana* (Walckenaer, 1806) and *Steatoda rufoannulata* (Simon, 1899) were known from India (Caleb & Sankaran 2026). The known distribution records of these six species in India are compiled (Zamani et al 2022; Tripathi et al 2023; Parmar & Pandya 2025) and illustrated in Figure 1. Among these, a single species *S. erigoniformis* (Pickard-Cambridge, 1872) is reported in Gujarat (Parmar &

Pandya 2025). Through recent investigations, we identified an additional species of genus *Steatoda* that has not been documented in Gujarat till date. Thus, this paper presents the new record and documentation of a species *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778), marking its first appearance from Kachchh district of Gujarat, India.

The specimens were hand-collected and studied under a Zeiss SteREO Discovery.V20 stereomicroscope and microphotographic images were taken by a Axiocam 208 colour digital camera attached to the stereomicroscope and enabled with the software Zeiss ZEN 3.3. The epigyne was dissected, soft tissues were cleared using 10% KOH and photographed by placing it in a cavity block filled with 70% ethanol, following Parmar et al (2024). All measurements are in millimetres (mm). The species was identified based on Levy & Amitai (1982) and Tripathi et al (2023). The examined specimens have been deposited in the reference collection of Department of Zoology, R.R. Lalan College,

Editor: Shiju T. Raj, St. Joseph's College, Kozhikode, India.

Date of publication: 26 July 2026 (online & print)

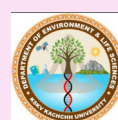
Citation: Parmar, S.I., V.U. Chauhan, K. Yogi & P.J. Pandya (2026). New record of cob-web spider species *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778) (Araneae: Theridiidae) from Kachchh, India with detailed distribution of Indian species of *Steatoda* Sundevall, 1833. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 18(7): 29364–29366. <https://doi.org/10.11609/jott.10297.18.7.29364-29366>

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Funding: Self-funded.

Competing interests: The authors declare no competing interests.

Acknowledgements: Authors are thankful to: the UGC (University Grants Commission) for providing Junior Research fellowship (Award no. 231610067756) to SIP for the doctoral research; the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, KSKVK University for providing lab facilities under DST-FIST [Pr. No. SR/FST/ES-I/2018/29(C)]; and Mr. Deep Dudiya and Mr. Seba J Gori for the technical support.



Bhuj-Kachchh, Gujarat, India.

Family Theridiidae Sundevall, 1833

Genus *Steatoda* Sundevall, 1833

Type species: *Araneus castaneus* Clerck, 1757

***Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778)**

(Images 1–4)

Aranea albo-maculata De Geer, 1778: 257, pl. 15, f. 2–4

Steatoda albomaculata Levi, 1957: 396, f. 56–65

For a complete list of taxonomic references refer WSC (2026).

Materials examined: RRLC-ZC/SP-14, 28.v.2025, 2 female, India, Gujarat, Kachchh, near Lakhadi Village (23.2705° N, 69.3823° E), 216 m, from under stones in arid habitat, leg. S. Parmar.

Diagnosis: The species can be easily distinguished by following characters: female epigyne with sclerotized transverse, elevated bridge centrally and a median furrow bordered by fleshy folds on sides, oval-shaped spermathecae connected to coiled copulatory ducts.

Description: Female (in alcohol) (images 1–4) Body length 3.55. Carapace length 1.50, width 1.11. Abdomen length 2.21, width 1.61. Eye measurements and inter-distances: AME 0.08, ALE 0.08, PME 0.07, PLE 0.08, AME–ALE 0.03, PME–PME 0.05, ALE–ALE 0.32, PME–PLE 0.06, PLE–PLE 0.38, ALE–PME 0.12. legs Measurements: leg I 4.58 [1.37, 0.44, 1.05, 1.13, 0.59], leg II 2.96 [1.17, 0.34, 0.60, 0.48, 0.36], leg III 2.89 [0.97, 0.32, 0.52, 0.66, 0.42], leg IV 4.31 [1.36, 0.50, 1.03, 0.89, 0.52].

Leg formula: 1423. Carapace yellowish-brown, sternum light brown, ocular area black. Abdomen broad, oval-shaped, dorsally covered with white patch and black wavy pattern on lateral sides, ventrally dark brown at middle. Legs yellowish-brown with dark annulations. Epigyne (as in Images 3–4) brownish, large, with centrally elevated, sclerotized transverse bridge, a median furrow present, bordered by fleshy folds on sides (Image 3), spermathecae brown, compact, and oval-shaped connected to long copulatory ducts, coiling underneath (Image 4).

Natural history: *S. albomaculata* was found in the arid habitat of Kachchh, where it prefers dry and open areas with scattered vegetation. The species was encountered on the ground under stones. Two individuals were spotted at the same site at temperatures of 35–40 °C.

Distribution: North America, Europe, northern Africa, Russia (Europe to Far East), Caucasus, Iran, Kazakhstan, central Asia, western Asia, India, China, Korea, Japan (WSC 2026).

Distribution in India: Rajasthan (Tripathi et al. 2023), Gujarat (New record) (Image 5).

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Images 1–4. *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778): 1—female habitus in life, dorsal view | 2—female habitus, dorsal view | 3—epigyne, ventral view | 4—same, dorsal view. Scale bars: 0.5 mm (1) | 0.1 mm (3–4). © Subhash Parmar.

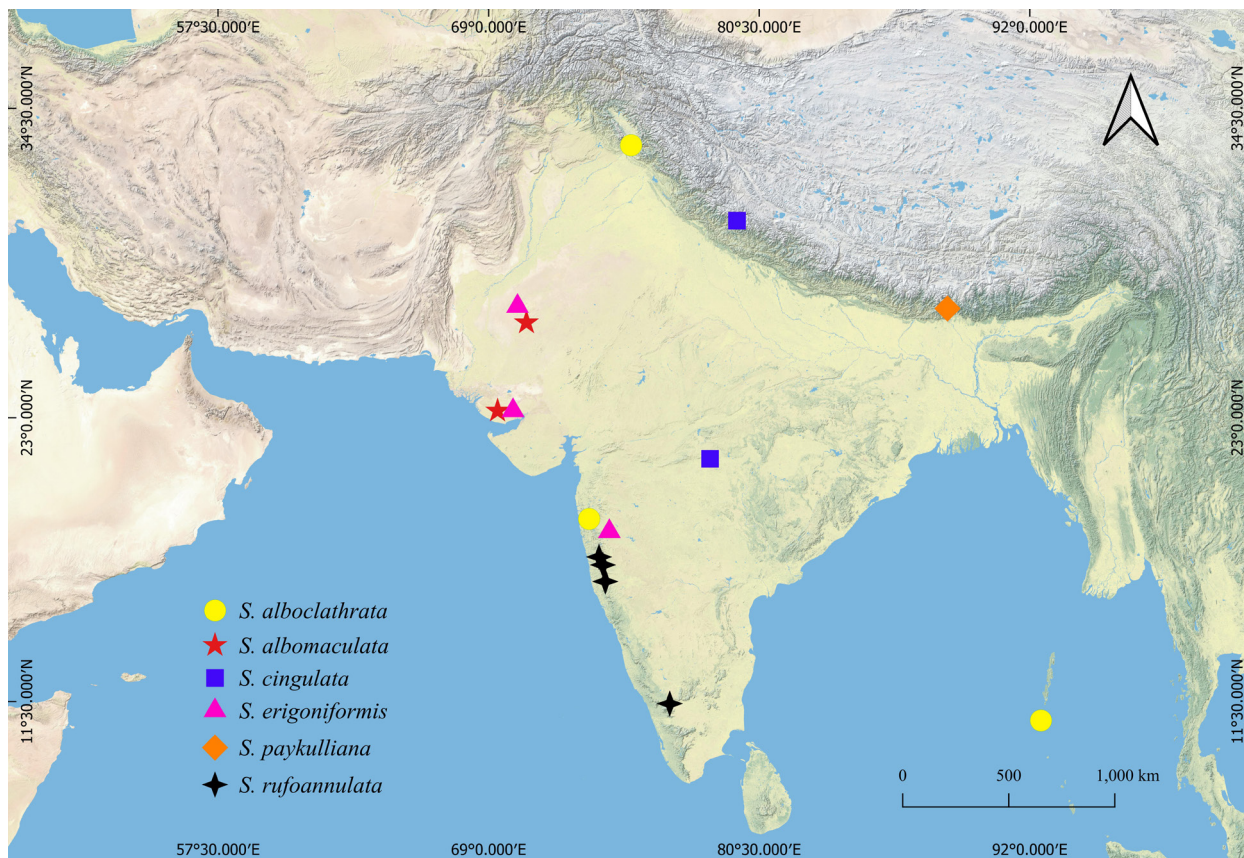


Image 5. Known distribution records of the six species of *Steatoda* Sundeval, 1833 reported from India.

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Print copies of the Journal are available at cost. Write to:
The Managing Editor, JoTT,
c/o Wildlife Information Liaison Development Society,
3A2 Varadarajulu Nagar, FCI Road, Ganapathy, Coimbatore,
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Journal of Threatened Taxa is indexed/abstracted in Bibliography of Systematic Mycology, Biological Abstracts, BIOSIS Previews, CAB Abstracts, EBSCO, Google Scholar, Index Copernicus, Index Fungorum, JournalSeek, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, NewJour, OCLC WorldCat, SCOPUS, Stanford University Libraries, Virtual Library of Biology, Zoological Records.

NAAS rating (India) 5.64



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ISSN 0974-7907 (Online) | ISSN 0974-7893 (Print)

July 2026 | Vol. 18 | No. 7 | Pages: 29159–29374

Date of Publication: 26 July 2026 (Online & Print)

DOI: 10.11609/jott.2026.18.7.29159-29374

Articles

The need for rigorous peer-review of Environmental Impact Assessments: a case from the Western Ghats, India

– Malaika Mathew Chawla, Sinead D'Silva, Madhushri Mudke, Anushka Rege, Nisha Bhakat, Nandini Velho, Vidyadhar Atkore, R. Sahanashree, Jerusha D'Souza, Aparna Kolekar, Anuja Date, Anish Paul, Aayush Gupta, Karthik Teegalapalli, Giridhar Kulkarni, Pronoy Baidya, Ajinkya Bagal, Katrina Fernandez, Omkar Dharwadkar & Parag Rangnekar, Pp. 29159–29180

Regional, ecological and biodiversity context of the Kashmir Valley, northwestern Himalaya, India

– Mohsin Javid, Khurshed Ahmad, Orus Ilyas, Junid N. Shah & Affiullah Khan, Pp. 29181–29195

Metabarcoding-based diet characterization of the Kolar Roundleaf Bat *Hipposideros hypophyllus* Kock & Bhat, 1994 (Chiroptera: Hipposideridae) and its peninsular Indian congeners

– Bhargavi Srinivasulu, Aditya Srinivasulu & Chelmala Srinivasulu, Pp. 29196–29211

A decadal study on the waterbirds and an analysis of the declining species in Perur-Sundakamuthur Lake, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

– G. Parameswaran, R. Sivashankar & R. Vridhi, Pp. 29212–29225

Diversity and habitat associations of avifauna in the Poovar Estuary, Kerala, India

– B.S. Bipitha, V. Reshmi, H. Maitreyi & H. Byju, Pp. 29226–29237

Abyssinian Blue-winged Goose *Cyanochen cyanoptera* Rüppell, 1845 population size, distribution, and habitat association in the central-south highlands of Ethiopia

– Solomon Mengistu & Afework Bekele, Pp. 29238–29250

Foraging postures and techniques used by the White-bellied Heron *Ardea insignis* Hume, 1878 (Aves: Pelecaniformes: Ardeidae) in Namdapha Tiger Reserve, India

– Himadri Sekhar Mondal & Gopinathan Maheswaran, Pp. 29251–29260

Breeding ecology and nest-site characteristics of the Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* in Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, a Ramsar Wetland of Gujarat, India

– Sandeep Munjpara, Divyrajsinh Jadeja, Nita Solanki, Amitkumar Nayak & B.P. Pati, Pp. 29261–29268

An updated checklist and new records of butterfly species in Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary (western Himalaya), Uttarakhand, India

– Anand Kumar, Priyanshu Kumar, Gourav Lochan, Prachi Arya & Rajeev Lochan, Pp. 29269–29286

Abundance, habitat preference, and ethnobiological assessment of the invasive Golden Apple Snail *Pomacea canaliculata* (Lamarck, 1822) in selected rice fields in Lanao del Sur, Philippines

– Ashiah M. Dimalutang, Mohammad Al-Thanie U. Paudac, Jonald C. Bornaes, Rosabeth M. Macapil, Mayleen P. Malagamba & Naima R. Sirad, Pp. 29287–29301

An annotated checklist of bryophytes of Rajouri District, Jammu & Kashmir, India

– Manju Sharma, Nazia Kouser, P.L. Uniyal & Shreekar Pant, Pp. 29302–29313

Communications

First successful post-release breeding of captive-bred White-rumped Vultures *Gyps bengalensis* (Accipitriformes: Accipitridae) in the wild at Buxa Tiger Reserve, India

– Soumya Sundar Chakraborty, Debal Ray, Apurba Sen, P.J. Harikrishnan & Nabi Kanta Jha, Pp. 29314–29321

A checklist of the avifauna of the Noakhali Science and Technology University campus, Noakhali, Bangladesh

– Ashikur Rahman Jibon, Tanzina Alam & M. Rakibur Rahman, Pp. 29322–29330

Record of the crambid moth *Aethaloessa calidalis* (Guenée, 1854) (Lepidoptera: Crambidae: Spilomelinae) from Chhattisgarh, India

– Akanksha Chandrakar & Shashi Gupta, Pp. 29331–29335

Short Communications

First photographic record of the Northern Swamp Deer *Rucervus duvaucelii* *duvaucelii* in Upper Ganga River Ramsar Site, India

– Aftab Alam Usmani, Pichaimuthu Gangaamaran, Ruchi Badola & Syed Ainul Hussain, Pp. 29336–29339

First image-based evidence of Wroughton's Free-tailed Bat *Otomops wroughtoni* (Thomas, 1913) (Chiroptera: Molossidae) from the Yamuna Floodplain, New Delhi, India

– Umendra Sirohi, Mohan Singh, M. Faisal, Ekta Khurana, Sumit Dookia & Faiyaz A. Khudsar, Pp. 29340–29344

New distribution record of *Hydrocotyle bonariensis* Lam. (Magnoliopsida: Apiales: Araliaceae) from India

– Balasiewdor Kharsyntiew, H.T. Lalmuankima, Vijay, Poonam Sharma & Rambir Singh, Pp. 29345–29349

Recorded and lost: *Methles indicus* Régimbart, 1899 (Coleoptera: Dytiscidae) a new distribution record from the state of Telangana: a case study on habitat loss due to urban encroachment

– Shiva Shankar, Deepa Jaiswal & Devadoss Kumar, Pp. 29350–29353

Notes

Camera-trap record of the Indian Grey Wolf *Canis lupus pallipes* (Sykes, 1831) (Mammalia: Carnivora: Canidae) from Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary, Odisha, India

– Siddhanta Kumar Mohanta & R. Kalaivanan, Pp. 29354–29356

Decline in winter visiting Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* (Falconiformes: Falconidae) at Rani, Assam 2011–2024

– Sachin Ranade, Pp. 29357–29359

Coprophagy in Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* (Accipitriformes: Accipitridae) at Jorbeer carcass dump, Rajasthan

– Sachin Ranade & Hemant Bajpai, Pp. 29360–29363

New record of cob-web spider species *Steatoda albomaculata* (De Geer, 1778) (Araneae: Theridiidae) from Kachchh, India with detailed distribution of Indian species of *Steatoda* Sundevall, 1833

– Subhash I. Parmar, Vivek U. Chauhan, Ketankumar Yogi & Pranav J. Pandya, Pp. 29364–29366

Predation record of the hornet *Vespa basalis* Smith, 1852 (Hymenoptera: Vespidae) by the orb-weaver spider *Nephila pilipes* (Fabricius, 1793) (Araneae: Araneidae)

– Shantam Ojha & Gautam, Pp. 29367–29369

Notes on the occurrence of southeastern Asian taxon *Scopellaria marginata* (Blume) W.J.de Wilde & Duyfjes (Cucurbitaceae) in the Nicobar Islands: a new distribution record in the Indian part of Sundaland

– K. Pradheep, K. Joseph John, I. Jaisankar & P.K. Singh, Pp. 29370–29374

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