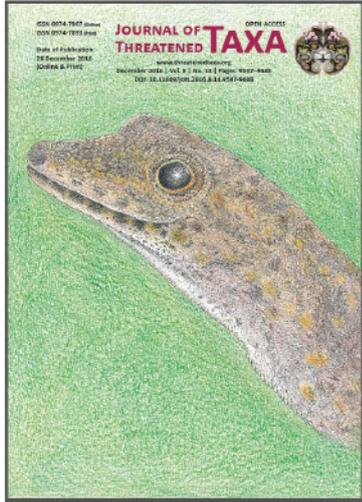


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NOTE

THE FIRST RECORD OF STRIPE-NECKED MONGOOSE *HERPESTES VITICOLLIS* BENNETT, 1835 (MAMMALIA: CARNIVORA: HERPESTIDAE) FROM THE EASTERN GHATS OF ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

Kumpatla Balaji & Jarugulla Eswar Satyanarayana

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The genus *Herpestes* belongs to the family Herpestidae. Herpestidae, which comprises 34 species in the world of which seven species are known from India (Mudappa 2013; Nameer 2015). Among them three are known from the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh: the Indian (Common) Grey Mongoose *Herpestes edwardsii*, Small Indian Mongoose *H. javanicus*, and Ruddy Mongoose *H. smithii* (Chakraborty et al. 2004). The largest of the Asiatic mongooses is the Stripe-necked Mongoose *Herpestes vitticollis* (Prater, 1971) classified as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List in 2016 (Mudappa et al. 2016). It is placed in Schedule II, Part II of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, and the Indian population is listed on CITES Appendix III.

The range distribution of the Stripe-necked Mongoose was restricted to the southern part of India and Sri Lanka (Mudappa 2013). The Stripe-necked Mongoose was recorded from many parts of the Western Ghats (Pocock 1941; Prater 1971; Corbet & Hill 1992; Van Rompaey & Jayakumar 2003; Mudappa 2013; Menon 2014; Sreehari & Nameer 2016). Distribution of the Stripe-necked Mongoose in Similipal Tiger Reserve, Odisha was reported by Nayak (2014). Similipal is the southeastern extension of the Chota Nagpur plateau (Ray 2005). Although there was a sighting record, there were no specimens from the Eastern Ghats (Allen 1911). Van Rompaey & Jayakumar (2003) opined that Allen's record was doubtful on the grounds of habitat.

The primary habitat of the Stripe-necked Mongoose is deciduous forests (both dry and moist) and evergreen

THE FIRST RECORD OF STRIPE-NECKED MONGOOSE *HERPESTES VITTCOLLIS* BENNETT, 1835 (MAMMALIA: CARNIVORA: HERPESTIDAE) FROM THE EASTERN GHATS OF ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

Kumpatla Balaji¹ & Jarugulla Eswar Satyanarayana²

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Zoology, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh 530003, India

¹ Current address: Housing Board Colony, Lalacheruvu, Rajamahendravaram, Andhra Pradesh 533101, India

² Research Scholar, Department of Environmental Sciences, University college of Sciences, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh 522510, India

¹biolabballu@gmail.com, ²eswarbiodiversity@hotmail.com (corresponding author)

forests, plantations and scrub, favouring swampy areas or those close to watercourses. It prefers hilly country and has been recorded up to 2,200m (Menon 2014).

A faunal survey was carried out in Papikonda National Park and its adjacent reserve forest in 2014 (Fig 1). Sign surveys and camera trapping was carried out to know the presence of wildlife. During this survey, three sighting records and at two different locations the Stripe-necked Mongoose were camera trapped (Cuddeback attack model infra-red camera traps) (Images 1 & 2). Locations and altitudes were recorded using a Garmin Etrex 10 GPS receiver (Table 1). Five records confirm the Stripe-necked Mongoose in Papikonda National Park and adjacent reserve forests. Along with the Stripe-necked Mongoose, the Gaur *Bos gaurus*, the Indian Spotted Eagle *Clanga hastata*, Indian Peafowl *Pavo cristatus* were recorded at the same location.

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Figure 1. Sightings and camera trap records of the Stripe-necked Mongoose *Herpestes vitticollis* in the Eastern Ghats.



Images 1 & 2. Stripe-necked Mongoose *Herpestes vitticollis* from Satlavada Reserve Forest, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, India, 22 August 2014.

The forest types of the Papikonda National Park and Satlavada Reserve Forest come under the southern dry mixed deciduous forests (5A/C3) and the southern moist mixed deciduous forests (3B/C2) (Champion & Seth 1968). Hence the forest and habitat of the Stripe-necked Mongoose also extends to these forest types that are similar in habitat to that of earlier records elsewhere. In the present findings, the Stripe-necked Mongoose was recorded at 500–550 m which corroborates with the altitudinal ranges of between 400m and 1400m

by Van Rompaey & Jayakumar (2003). The local tribes Konda Reddy, Koya Dora, Valmika tribes of this region call the Stripe-necked Mongoose ‘Yentawa mungisa’ this vernacular name is also used for the Indian Grey Mongoose in the Telugu language.

There was a historical sight-record from the Horsley Hills in the Eastern Ghats but hitherto dismissed as doubtful by Mudappa et al. (2016). There has been no records of the Stripe-necked Mongoose from the entire range of the Eastern Ghats. Hence, this is the

Table 1. Current records of Stripe-necked Mongoose *Herpestes vitticollis* in Papikonda National Park and Satlavada Reserve Forest, Eastern Ghats, Andhra Pradesh, India

Date	Locality (area name)	Coordinates	Time	Record	Elevation (m)	Forest type
01.viii.2014	Satlavada RF	17°40'35.76"N & 81°36'32.94"E	14:22	Camera trap	520	Moist deciduous forest
22.viii.2014	Satlavada RF	17°40'35.76"N & 81°36'32.94"E	16:11	Camera trap	520	Moist deciduous forest
26.viii.2014	Satlavada RF	17°40'39.5"N & 81°36'37.87"E	10:15	Direct Sight	530	Moist deciduous forest
29.viii.2014	Inside Park boundary	17°40'14.49"N & 81°35'53.96"E	11.45	Direct Sight	530	Moist deciduous forest

first photographic evidence reported on distribution of Stripe-necked Mongoose from Papikonda National Park and its adjacent reserve forests in the Eastern Ghats, Andhra Pradesh. There is a need to carry out research by the park managers and researchers on the conservation status and threats to the Stripe-necked Mongoose, assuming this is an isolated population in the entire Eastern Ghats, Andhra Pradesh.

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