

Short Communication

New locality record of *Dendrelaphis tristis* (Daudin, 1803) (Colubridae: Squamata) from Bir Shikargaha Wildlife Sanctuary, Haryana, India

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Abstract

Common Bronzeback tree snake, *Dendrelaphis tristis* (Daudin & Sonnini, 1803), is a widely distributed species in central, south, east and west India. However, it was recorded from only one location in north India, namely Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand. This article provides the northernmost and first locality record of *D. tristis* from the Bir Shikargaha Wildlife Sanctuary, Haryana, India.

Keywords: Common Bronzeback Tree Snake, Distributional Record, North India

Introduction

The Bronzeback tree snake, *Dendrelaphis tristis* (Daudin & Sonnini, 1803), is a widely distributed species and can be found in Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan (Masroor, 2011), Bangladesh, Nepal (Van Rooijen & Vogel, 2008), Myanmar (Ziegler & Vogel, 1999). In India, it has been recorded from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh (Chandra & Gajbe, 2005), Gujarat (Patel *et al.*, 2018), Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh (Bala Subramanyam, 2017), Kerala (Palot, 2015), Tamil Nadu (Janani *et al.*, 2016), Uttar Pradesh (Kanaujia *et al.*, 2017), West Bengal (Gayen *et al.*, 2017) and Assam – Bongaigaon district (Nath *et al.*, 2011). The northernmost record of *D. tristis* is from Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand (Joshi *et al.*, 2019). However, there was no record of this snake from Haryana state.

Material and Methods

On 9th August 2018, a road-killed individual of *Dendrelaphis tristis* was recorded from the Bir Shikargaha Wildlife Sanctuary, Haryana (30.77917° N, 76.94917°

E, 312 meters msl). The individual snake was identified following Smith (1943); Whitaker and Captain (2008) and morphological characters were recorded following Dowling (1951).

Results

Following meristic and morphometric characters were recorded and the individual snake was identified by using descriptions provided in Smith (1943).

Head distinctly broader than neck, snout bluntly rounded two supralabials in contact with eye, bronze-brown colored back. Scales in 15:15:9 oblique rows, ventrals – 209, anal divided; supralabials 8 (5th and 6th touching the eye), 1 preocular and 2 postoculars, total body length – 80.5cm (snout to vent length– 55 cm and tail length – 25.5cm). The snout-vent length and tail-length were measured by marking the length on a piece of string and subsequently measuring the position of the mark to the nearest 0.5cm. The snout-vent length was measured to the posterior margin of the anal plate. Interparietal spot present. The underside was pale green in colour (Figure 2A & 2B).

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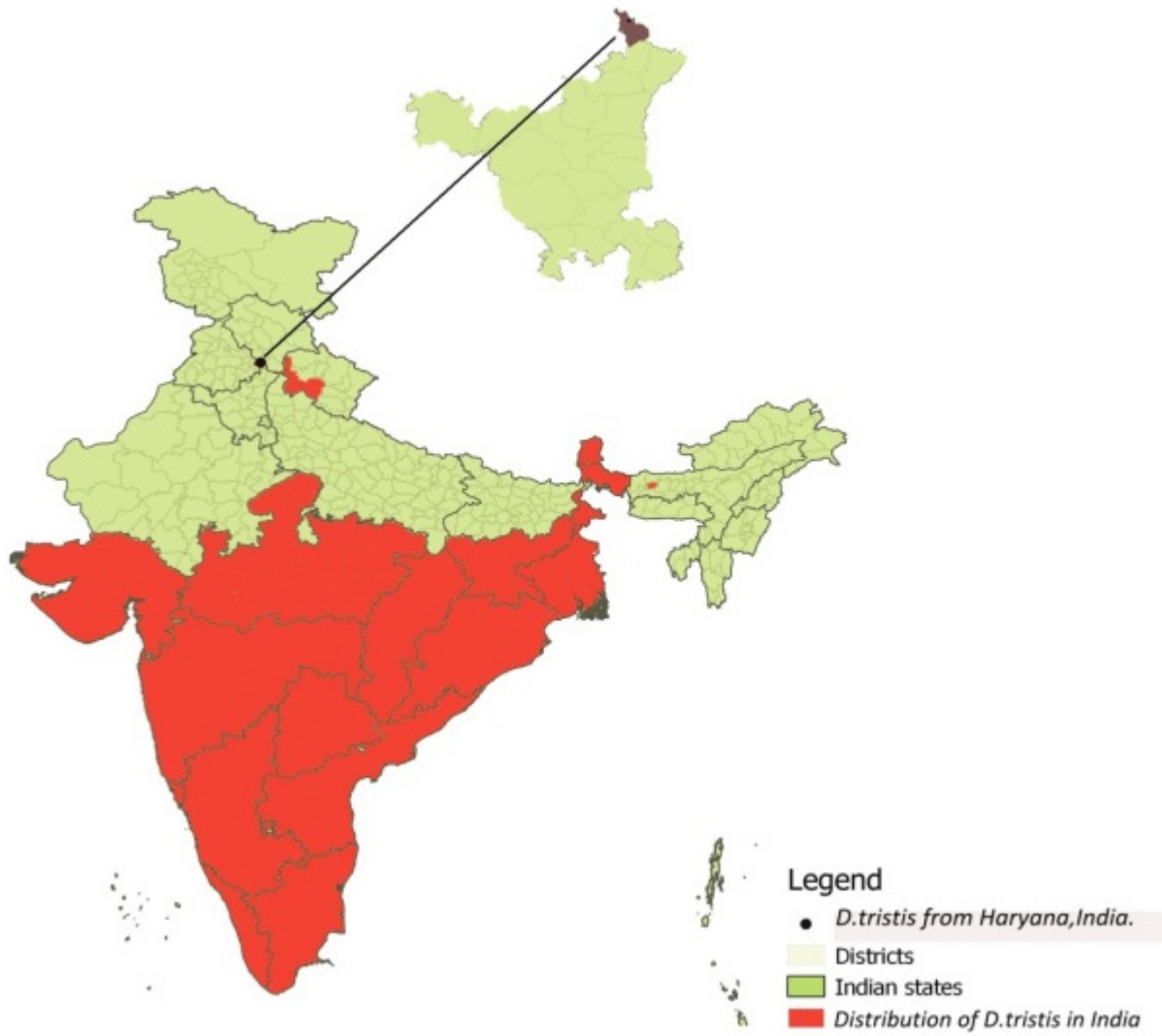


Figure 1. Map showing the distribution of *Dendrelaphis tristis* (red shading) and new locality record (brown shading) from Haryana, India.



Figure 2. (a). Inter parietal spot on *D. tristis* (b). Ventral view of *D. tristis*.

Discussion

The distribution of *Dendrelaphis tristis* ranges from Sri Lanka northwards through most of India to Myanmar and Nepal (Van Rooijen & Vogel, 2008). The northernmost record of *D. tristis* is from Rajaji Tiger reserve (267 meters msl), Uttarakhand (Joshi *et al.*, 2019). Aerial distance between Bir Shikargah Wildlife Sanctuary and Rajaji National Park is 168 km. The present communication reports the new locality record for *D. tristis* from Bir

Shikargah Wildlife Sanctuary, Haryana. Considering the available literature and reliable records of *D. tristis* in North India, this is the northernmost and first record from the state of Haryana.

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