

On the occurrence of common garden skink in Aravalli foothills of Bundi, Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

Among lizards (Reptilia, Squamata, Sauria/Lacertia) skinks are still insufficiently studied and their taxonomy and identification is many times controversial. Earlier, the old genus *Mabuya* was less studied and later it was split into three distinct genera. It is highly cryptic, shy and endangered forest and garden dwelling skink that is not easily seen. Present paper describes this particular skink from Aravalli foothills, near Bundi, Rajasthan for the first time.

KEY WORDS: ARAVALI FOOTHILLS, OCCURRENCE, MABUYA CARINATA

INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan is situated in north western part of India, between the latitude 23°3' and 30°12' N and longitude 69°30' and 78°17' E. The mean annual rainfall of study area is 573 mm and temperature ranging in between 2 to 46°C in the season.

The Aravalli range forms the chief topographical features in Rajasthan, which diagonally bisects the state into 3/5th western arid region and the 2/5th Eastern semi arid zone with a total area of 3,42,239 square kilometers, which is 10.4 % of the country. It has most diversified climatic conditions with a specific characteristics.

Class Reptilia is primarily a terrestrial class of Phylum Chordata, though some have acquired amphibious and aquatic mode of life. Lizards are generally terrestrial and has occupied urban (buildings and gardens) and forest habitat. These have been reported from various parts of India including Rajasthan (Murry 1884, Mc Cann 1942a,b; Smith 1931,1935 and 1948).

Common garden skinks have been reported from various locations including Jodhpur, Bikaner, Udaipur and Ajmer Divisions (Gaur and Pandey, 2007; Sharma and Joshi, 2007; Sexena, 2007; Bhatnagar and Mahur 2008). No significant researches have done on the Herpetofauna of south eastern Rajasthan specially in Bundi district. The present observation is documented record of common garden skink *Mabuya carinata* in Aravalli Foothills, district Bundi, Rajasthan.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Visual encounter surveys and regular field visits were done during day, evenings and nights from January to December, 2013. The animals killed during road accidents and dead remains of them were also observed and recorded. Survey areas included human habitats, forests, gardens and agriculture fields in the region. Species was identified using field guide of Daniel (2002).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the period of study (January to December, 2013) 14 specimens of *Mabuya carinata* were observed including four

ARTICLE INFORMATION:

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Received 10th December, 2013

Accepted after revision 29th December, 2013

BBRC Print ISSN: 0974-6455

Online ISSN: 2321-4007

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Online Contents Available at: <http://www.bbrc.in/>

***Mabuya carinata***

dead bodies and accidental body remains. One specimen was captured above under the leaf litter near Nainwa Village, in the district Bundi, Rajasthan, of about 8.0 cm (TBL), the specimen was dark brownish with lateral yellow longitudinal lines from head to tail; it may have been a juvenile. We did not kill the specimen, only measurements and photographs were taken and thereafter the specimen was released immediately. The specimen was photo documented using a digital camera (Cannon, DSC 50) both in natural habitat and then after catching it. It was identified using Daniel's field guide.

The species reported here has also been observed elsewhere too (Gaur and Pandey, 2007; Sharma and Joshi, 2007; Saxena, 2007; Bhatnagar and Mahur, 2008). Mirza et al., (2010) described that the *Lygosoma lineata* is mostly found under rocks, under driftwood and among leaf litter with other sympatric species like *Calliophis melanurus*, *Eutropis carinata*, *Eutropis macularia* and *Ramphotyphlops braminus* have been a. Naik and Vinod (1994) stated that though not a rare lizard but its numbers are in decline owing to loss of habitat. Interestingly the present record gives a new range where the mixed deciduous forests exist.

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