



First Record of the Twin-spotted Wolfsnake, *Lycodon jara* (Shaw 1802), from Bihar, India

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Wolfsnakes in the genus *Lycodon* are represented by 50 species distributed throughout southern and southeastern Asia (O’Shea et al. 2018), of which 16 species have been reported from India (Chaudhuri et al. 2015). The Twin-spotted Wolfsnake (*Lycodon jara*) occurs in India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar (Mallik et al. 2014; Chaudhuri et al. 2015), where it inhabits both forested and open landscapes, including agricultural areas (Captain 2010). In India, the species has been reported to occur throughout most of the northern and northeastern states (Talukdar and Dasgupta 1977; Bahuguna and Bhutia 2010; Captain 2010; Das et al. 2012; Khan and Sharma 2018). Dasgupta and Raha (2004) listed 37 species of snakes from Bihar; however, we herein report the first records of the Twin-spotted Wolfsnake from the state.

While on routine patrol, forest staff of the Valmiki Tiger Reserve found snakes (Fig. 1) on 17 August 2019 in the Valmiki Nagar Range and on 6 October 2019 in the Manguraha Range that were subsequently identified as *Lycodon jara* based on descriptions in Mallik et al. (2014) and Chaudhuri et al. (2015). The closest published locality record for this species is in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand (Khan and Sharma 2018), which is 377 km from the Manguraha location.

The first sighting took place around 1415 h on the Bhalu Thapa Forest Road (27.43425°N, 83.94708°E; elev. 138 m asl) and the second at 0820 h near a perennial rivulet (27.32670°N, 84.52206°E; elev. 136 m asl). Both localities were in moist deciduous forest dominated by Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and Indian Laurel (*Terminalia elliptica*) trees. The



Fig. 1. Twin-spotted Wolfsnakes (*Lycodon jara*) from the Valmiki Tiger Reserve, Bihar, India: An individual found on 17 August 2019 in the Valmiki Nagar Range (left) and another found on 6 October 2019 in the Manguraha Range (right); note the absence of a light collar in both snakes. Photographs by Mundrika Prasad (left) and Abdur Rehman (right).

snake from the Valmiki Nagar Range was an adult (total length ~400 mm), whereas the individual from the Manguraha Range was a juvenile (total length ~220 mm). Neither snake had the light collar that is present in some young individuals (Whitaker and Captain 2004; Mallik et al. 2014; Chaudhuri et al. 2015), although Hussain and Roy (1993) and Shaw et al. (1999) also reported the snakes lacking collars.

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