



A New Distribution Record of the Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) in Chhattisgarh, India

Aakash Bhushan¹ and Atul Kumar²

¹Central India Landscape, WWF-India, New Delhi, India (aakashbhushan2728@gmail.com; abhushan@wwfindia.net [corresponding author])

²Guru Ghasidas University, Koni, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, India (atulkumar.21sanctuary@gmail.com)

The recently described Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) usually occurs in dry and moist tropical deciduous forests and has been recorded inside limestone caves and under boulders (Mohapatra et al. 2016). The species has been recorded previously from Madhya Pradesh (Edake 2011; Kumbhar et al. 2011), parts of Odisha (Mohapatra et al. 2016), Andhra Pradesh (Kantimahanti et al. 2015), Jharkhand (Lampe and Lindholm 1902; Srivastava et al. 2013), Maharashtra (Schulz 2013; Ashaharraza and Bibekar 2019), West Bengal (Chowdhury et al. 2018), Rajasthan (Singh et al. 2020), and Chhattisgarh

(Mohapatra et al. 2016) (Table 1). However, the snake recorded from southern Chhattisgarh was a personal communication (Mohapatra et al. 2016) and lacks photographic evidence and a precise location.

We herein report a record of *Coelognathus helena nigriangularis* from Churcha, Koriya District of Chhattisgarh, India (Fig. 1). This individual was rescued from the South Eastern Coal Limited (SECL) Regional Hospital in Churcha (23°20'14.32"N, 82°31'58.09"E) on 4 August 2020 and was released approximately 50 m from the site of rescue. This second locality record for this subspecies in Chhattisgarh and the

Table 1. Records of the Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) in India.

State	Locality	Reference
Madhya Pradesh	Bandhavgarh National Park (23°42'N, 80°57'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Pachmarhi range, Saptura Tiger Reserve (22°27'N, 78°22'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
Odisha	Gupteswar, Koraput District (18°49'N, 82°10'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Kapilas, Dhenkanal District (20°41'N, 85°46'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Hadagarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Keonjhar District (21°14'N, 86°15'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Humma, Ganjam District (19°26'N, 85°03'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Mahendragiri, Gajapati District (18°58'N, 84°21'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Tumba, Gajapati District (19°01'N, 84°28'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Deomali, Koraput District (18°40'N, 82°58'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Andhra Pradesh	Sunkarametta, Visakhapatnam District (18°16'N, 82°58'E)
	Simhachalam Range, Visakhapatnam District (17°47'N, 83°13'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
Jharkhand	West Singhbhum District (22°28'N, 85°30'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
Maharashtra	Tadoba National Park (20°10'N, 79°24'E)	Mohapatra et al. 2016
	Melghat Tiger Reserve (21°22'N, 77°20'E)	Ashaharraza and Bibekar 2019
West Bengal	Susunia Hills Region, northwestern Bankura District (23° 23'N, 86°59'E)	Chowdhury et al. 2018
Rajasthan	Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Sawai Madhopur District (26°00'N, 76°25'E)	Singh et al. 2020
Chhattisgarh	Kanger Valley National Park, Bastar District (18°45'N, 82°10'E)	Mohapatra, pers. comm.
	Churcha, Koriya District (23°20'N, 82°31'E)	This study



Fig. 1. An Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) from Churcha, Koriya, Chhattisgarh, India. Photographs by Atul Kumar.

first for the Koriya District is 494 km north of the previous record in southern Chhattisgarh and 166 km from the nearest known locality in Madhya Pradesh (Fig. 2). A photographic voucher has been deposited in the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM VZP 1007). The identity of the species was confirmed by Pratyush Mohapatra, Zoological Survey of India, CZRC, Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, India.

Other species of snakes rescued from the site are the Spectacled Cobra (*Naja naja*), Indian Rock Python (*Python molurus*), Common Krait (*Bungarus caeruleus*), Common Wolfsnake (*Lycodon aulicus*), Checkered Keelback (*Fowlea piscator*), Duméril's Black-headed Snake (*Sibynophis subpunctatus*), Indian Ratsnake (*Ptyas mucosa*), Banded Krait (*Bungarus fasciatus*), and Russell's Viper (*Daboia russelii*). The Common Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena helena*) also occurs in this area.

Acknowledgements

We thank Pratyush Mohapatra and Vivek Sharma for identifying the snake, and Abhijit Das, Aniruddha Dhamorikar, and Soumen Dey for help in reviewing the manuscript and providing valuable suggestions.

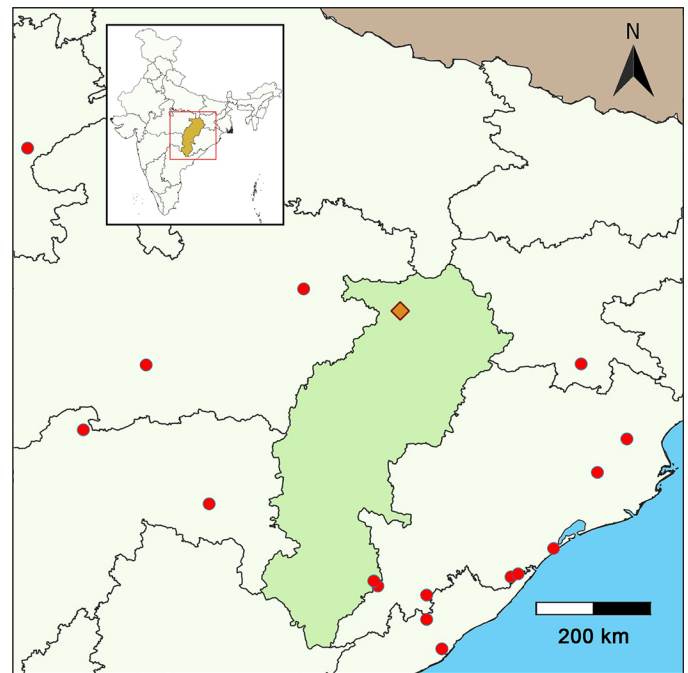


Fig. 2. A map of India depicting previously published locality records (red dots) and a second locality record (orange diamond) for the Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) in Chhattisgarh.

Literature Cited

- Ashaharaza, K. and A. Bibekar. 2019. Occurrence of the Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) in the Melghat Tiger Reserve: A second locality record for Maharashtra State, India. *Reptiles & Amphibians* 26: 113–114.
- Chowdhury, S., R. Sengupta, S. Mitra, and A. Chaudhuri. 2018. Extension of the known range of the Trinket Snake, *Coelognathus helena nigriangularis* (Reptilia: Squamata: Colubridae), in India. *Reptiles & Amphibians* 25: 129–131.
- Edake, S. 2011. Serpents of Bandhavgarh. *Trustees of the Corbett Foundation Newsletter*, October–December 2010 & January–March 2011: 1–8.
- Kantimahanti, M., K.D. Schulz, and V. Sharma. 2015. New locality records of *Coelognathus helena* cf. *monticollaris* (Schulz, 1992) from Andhra Pradesh, India. *Sauria* 37(4): 71–74.
- Kumbhar A.S., G.C Patwardhan, A.K Pradhan, and N.S Dungiya. 2011. New locality record of *Coelognathus helena monticollaris* (Schulz, 1992) from central India. *Cobra* 5(2): 31–35.
- Lampe, E. and W.A. Lindholm. 1902. Catalog der Reptilien- und Amphibien-Sammlung (Schlangen; Frosch-, Schwanz- und Schleichenlurche) des Naturhistorischen Museums zu Wiesbaden mit Bemerkungen. *Jahrbücher des Nassauischen Vereins für Naturkunde* 55: 1–66.
- Mohapatra, P.P., K.D. Schulz, N. Helfenberger, S. Hofmann, and S.K. Dutta. 2016. A contribution to the Indian Trinket Snake, *Coelognathus helena* (Daudin, 1803), with the description of a new subspecies. *Russian Journal of Herpetology* 23: 115–144.
- Schulz, K.D. 2013. An annotated and illustrated checklist of Old World ratsnakes, pp. 17–268. In: K.D. Schulz (ed.), *Old World Ratsnakes. A Collection of Papers*. Bushmaster Publications, Berg, Switzerland.
- Singh, G., A. Moun, and V. Mistry. 2020. Record of the Arrow-headed Trinket Snake (*Coelognathus helena nigriangularis*) from Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, India. *Reptiles & Amphibians* 27: 308–309. <https://doi.org/10.17161/randa.v27i2>.
- Srivastava D.S., P.S Easa, and J.B Jauher. 2013. Integrated Wildlife Management Plan for Singhbhum, Jharkhand. Unpublished Report submitted to the Department of Forest and Environment, Government of Jharkhand, Ranchi, Jharkhand, India.