



# A Blue-colored Green Keelback (*Rhabdophis plumbicolor*) from Dhule District, Maharashtra, India

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At approximately 1230 h on 24 November 2020, Mr. Santosh Gupta, a snake rescuer from Dhule, Maharashtra, received a call regarding a blue snake that was sighted near Satpuda High School in Nagaonbari. Upon

arrival, he located the snake under a pile of rubble (Fig. 1A). It was captured, photographed (Fig. 1B), and subsequently released in suitable habitat approximately 100 m from the school (Fig. 1C). Despite the atypical coloration, the snake



Fig. 1. A blue-colored Green Keelback (*Rhabdophis plumbicolor*) at the rescue site near Satpuda High School in Nagaonbari, Dhule District, Maharashtra, India (A), a close-up of the head (B), and at the release site (C). A typically colored Green Keelback (D). Photographs by Santosh Gupta (A) and Jash Solanki (B, C, D).

was identified as a Green Keelback (*Rhabdophis plumbicolor*) based on keys and descriptions in Daniel (2002), Whitaker and Captain (2008), and Khaire (2010).

Green Keelbacks are widely distributed in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. (Whitaker and Captain 2008). In India, the species occurs throughout the nation, except along the eastern coast, the Ganges Valley, and the extreme northeastern parts of the country; they are commonly encountered in parts of Maharashtra (Whitaker and Captain 2008; Deshmukh et al. 2015). These snakes are typically dull to bright green in color (Fig. 1D).

Although some color and pattern variants seem to facilitate crypsis in specific habitats (Carnin et al. 1954; Carnin and Ehrlich 1958; Ehrlich and Carnin 1960; King 1992), others appear to be random mutations (Luiselli et al. 1994; Capula and Luiselli 1995).

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