



Distribution of the Sri Lankan Flying Snake, *Chrysopelea taprobanica* Smith 1943, in Southern India

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The genus *Chrysopelea* comprises five species (Uetz et al. 2022), of which two (*C. ornata* and *C. taprobanica*) occur in India. The Golden Flying Snake (*C. ornata*) is distributed in India, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka (Nguyen et al. 2021). The Sri Lankan Flying Snake (*C. taprobanica*) has been recorded in both India and Sri Lanka (Somaweera et al. 2015). In India, *C. taprobanica* is known from the Jawadi Hills and Kalampalayam in Tamil Nadu (Ganesh and Arumugam 2016; Narayanan et al. 2017) and from the Rishi Valley and Seshachalam Hills in Andhra Pradesh (Guptha et al. 2015; Somaweera et al. 2015; Narayanan et al. 2017). Herein we compile new locality records and iNaturalist observations of *C. taprobanica* across southern India (Fig. 1).

iNaturalist is a joint initiative of the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society (2021) that provides spatio-temporal data on observations of organisms or evidence of their existence (e.g., footprints, nests, or sloughed skin) by means of registered application users uploading photographs from the field. The user community of the application reviews the uploaded photos and makes suggestions for identifying organisms to the lowest taxonomic rank. iNaturalist considers observations ‘verifiable’ if they are dated, georeferenced, contain photographs or audio recordings, and are free-living organisms (not captive animals or cultivated plants

or fungi). Verified observations attain ‘research grade’ status when a majority of at least three application users agree on the species identity.

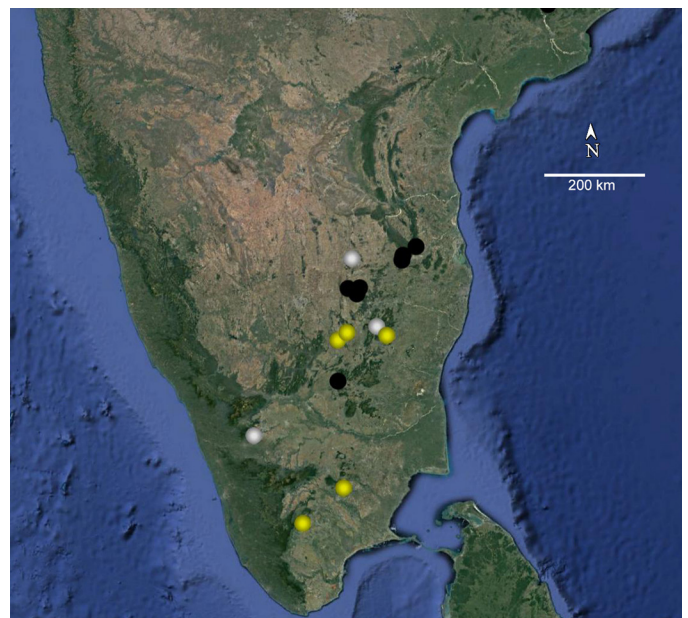


Fig. 1. Google Earth® map showing the distribution of the Sri Lankan Flying Snake (*Chrysopelea taprobanica*) in southern India. White dots represent published records, black dots are iNaturalist observations, and yellow dots indicate new localities.

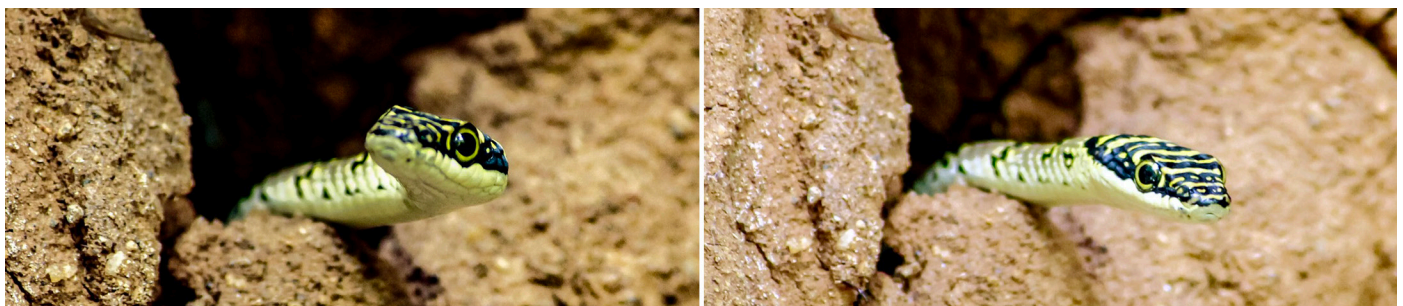


Fig. 2. A Sri Lankan Flying Snake (*Chrysopelea taprobanica*) recorded on Parvathamalai Hill, Thiruvannamalai, India. Photographs by S. Kumaran.

Table 1. The distribution of the Sri Lankan Flying Snake (*Chrysopelea taprobanica*) in southern India. Elevation is listed in m asl.

Location	State	GPS	Elevation	Source
Chamla, Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve	Andhra Pradesh	13.590000 79.257778	331	Gupta et al.2015
Rishi Valley School Campus, Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	13.635374 78.453862	710	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/83229329
Near T.Kurubarahalli, Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	13.17756 78.56797	744	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/35564957
Near Theertham, Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	13.08451 78.52104	715	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/35637157
Near Kalyani Dam, Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	13.64506 79.22012	497	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/78435961
Near Mammanduru, Chittoor	Andhra Pradesh	13.78505 79.48009	402	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/79777124
Near Geddada, Ramannavalasa, East Godavari	Andhra Pradesh	17.480326 81.72786	250	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/123697128
Yercaud Ghat Road, Salem	Tamil Nadu	11.746601 78.184127	569	https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/57333471
Jawadi Hills	Tamil Nadu	12.581463 78.861228	675	Ganesh and Arumugam 2016
Kalampalayam, Coimbatore	Tamil Nadu	10.928512 76.82129	502	Narayanan et al. 2017
Nagamalai Hill, Krishnagiri	Tamil Nadu	12.498044 78.348877	580	This study
Muniyappan Hill, Krishnagiri	Tamil Nadu	12.38213 78.20088	490	This study
Parvathamalai Hill, Thiruvannamalai	Tamil Nadu	12.424809 78.968296	585	This study
Shenbagathoppu, Srivilliputhur	Tamil Nadu	9.546014 77.554188	199	This study
Alagarkovil Hill, Madurai	Tamil Nadu	10.076526 78.212172	284	This study

From 2018 to 2022, we observed *C. taprobanica* in five new locations in Tamil Nadu: Parvathamalai Hill, Nagamalai Hill, Muniyappan Hill, Alagarkovil Hills, and Shenbagathoppu (Fig. 2). We also added seven iNaturalist observations from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu to our compiled dataset (Table 1). The identity of the species was confirmed from photographs by Dr. S.R. Ganesh, Chennai Snake Park Trust, and photographic vouchers were deposited in the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum at the National University of Singapore (ZRC(IMG) 2.577a & 2.577b). These records show that *C. taprobanica* is present across a wide range of the Western and Eastern Ghats in southern India.

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