



# Scavenging of the Sharavathy Vinesnake *Ahaetulla farnsworthi* (Mallik et al. 2020) by a Land Snail (*Ariophanta* sp.)

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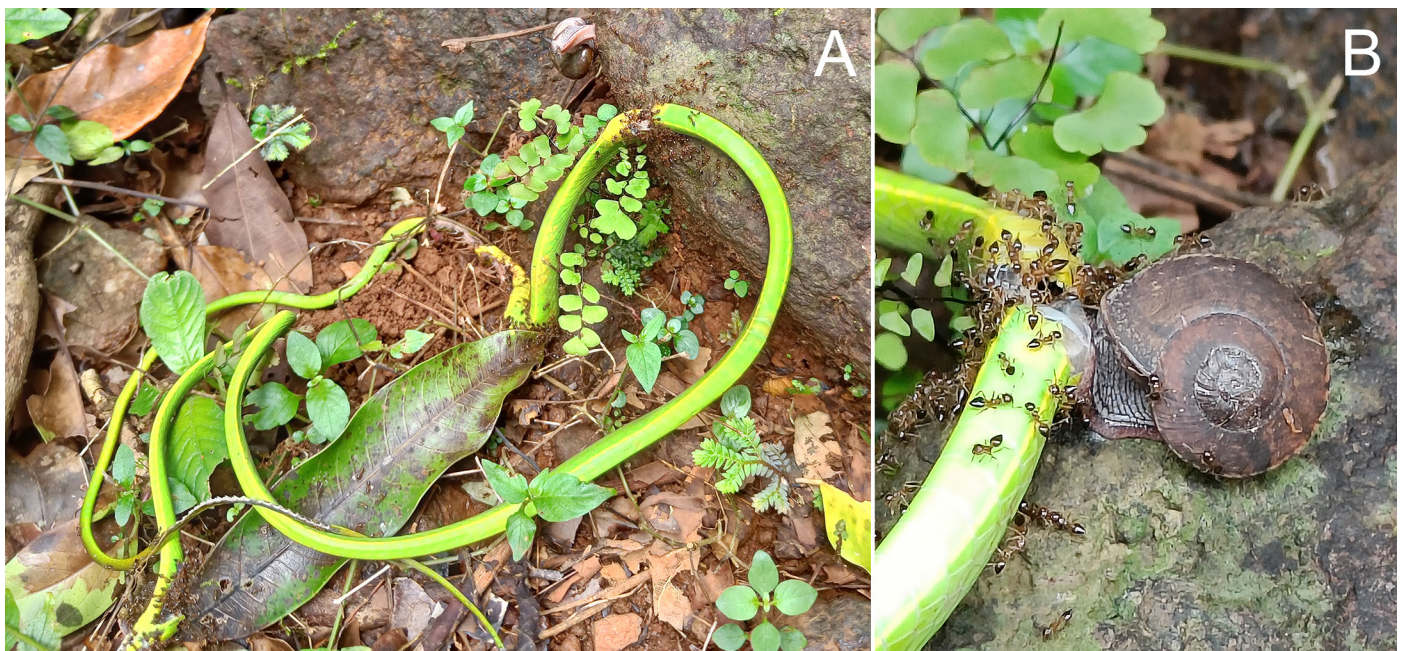
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Terrestrial molluscs are generally omnivores, known to feed on a variety of organic materials including green and dead herbaceous plants, fungi, fecal matter, and dead animals, including other snails (Narayanan and Aravind 2022). Natural history observations pertaining to terrestrial snails within India are scattered, and are known from only a few Indian molluscs (Oli 1999; Narayanan and Aravind 2022). In this work, I report an observation of an ariophantid snail (*Ariophanta* sp.) scavenging a dead Sharavathy Vinesnake (*Ahaetulla farnsworthi* Mallik et al. 2020).

At 1552 h on 30 July 2022, I observed a land snail (*Ariophanta* sp.) scavenging the dead carcass of a Sharavathy Vinesnake on a dirt road in Guddekeri, Shivamogga, Karnataka (13.570275 N, 75.109994 E). The snake had

been found dead the previous day at approximately the same site, with the observation of the snail scavenging the carcass recorded the next day. When first observed, the dead snake was already being scavenged by ants, although the snail was present in the vicinity (Fig. 1A). After about ten minutes, the snail started to feed on the snake for approximately 30 minutes, after which the snail ceased feeding and left. The snail had been feeding on the same exposed part of the snake where ants also had been feeding (Fig. 1B).

Scavenging behavior in molluscs and slugs is not new, with multiple reports from all over the world (e.g., Toledo 2005; Kiat et al. 2015; Pustilnik 2020; Guillén and López-Silvero 2021; Yadav et al. 2021; Ayres 2022). This first known report of a snail feeding on the carcass of a snake adds to the



**Figure 1.** A Land Snail (*Ariophanta* sp.) scavenging a Sharavathy Vinesnake (*Ahaetulla farnsworthi*): The snail approaching the dead snake (A) and the snail scavenging exposed parts of the dead snake (B). Photographs by Ryan Satish.

existing knowledge of scavenging behavior in molluscs; however, detailed observations and systematic studies are necessary to understand the dietary breadths of these lesser-known snails.

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