



First Record of the Variable Colored Vinesnake, *Ahaetulla anomala* (Annandale 1906), from Bihar, India

Souradeepa Kundu, Soumya Bhattacharyya, Sudipta Debnath, Sumidh Ray, Sudheer Kumar Jena, and Pratyush P. Mohapatra
Reptilia Section, Zoological Survey of India, FPS Building, Indian Museum Campus, KYD Street, Kolkata–700016, West Bengal, India (pratyush.m@zsi.gov.in)

Vinesnakes of the genus *Ahaetulla* (Link 1807) are characterized by a slender body, a long whip-like tail, key-hole-shaped pupils, and some species having an elongated rostral appendage (Mohapatra et al. 2017). Presently this genus comprises 20 species widely distributed throughout southern and southeastern Asia, twelve of which are known to occur

in India (Uetz et al. 2024). During physical verification of specimens in the National Zoological Collection at the Reptilia Section, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, we came across a specimen (ZSI-R-26319) that had been collected from Kaawri, Kosi, Bihar, India, on 1 April 1930 by an unknown collector. Based on diagnostic morphological characters, the specimen

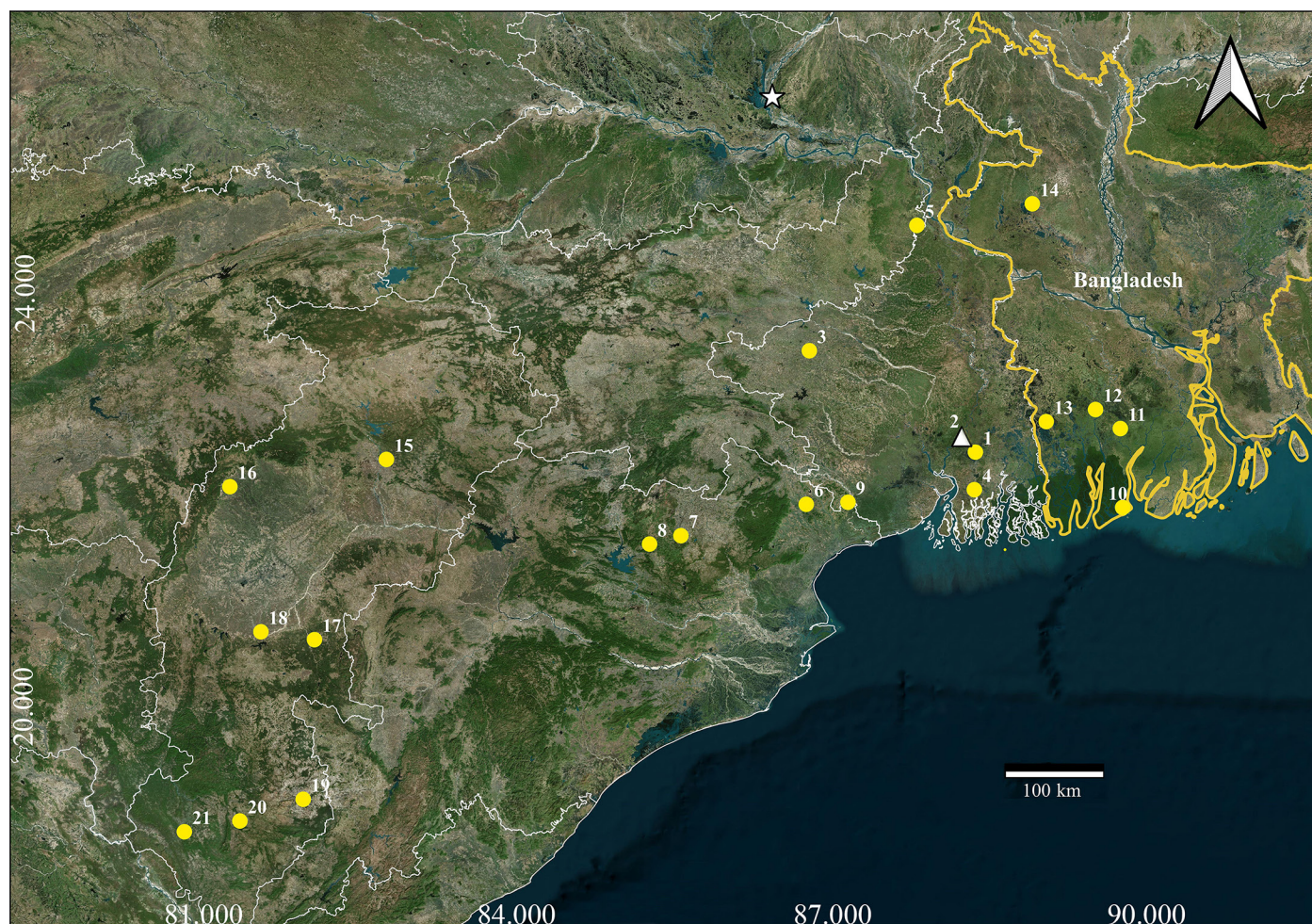


Figure 1. Localities of the Variable Colored Vinesnake (*Ahaetulla anomala*) in India and Bangladesh (Table 1). The type locality is marked by the white triangle, other distribution records by yellow dots, and the new record by the white star.

Table 1. Updated localities of the Variable Colored Vinesnake, *Ahaetulla anomala* (Annandale 1906) in India and Bangladesh (see also Fig. 1).

No.	Locality (coordinates)	Source
1	Chintamani Kar Bird Sanctuary, Narendrapur, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal, India (22.43, 88.39)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
2	Howrah, West Bengal, India (22.59, 88.31)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
3	Manbhum, Purulia District, West Bengal, India (23.4, 86.8)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
4	South 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India (22.07, 88.38)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
5	Malpahari, Pakur District, Jharkhand, India (24.6, 87.83)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
6	Baripada, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha, India (21.93, 86.77)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
7	Keonjhar Sadar, Keonjhar District, Odisha, India (21.63, 85.57)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
8	Nagira GP, Pallahara Block, Angul District, Odisha, India (21.55, 85.27)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
9	Chainbasa, Baleswar district, Odisha, India (21.95, 87.17)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
10	Sundarbans East Sanctuary, Bangladesh (21.9, 89.8)	Mohapatra et al. 2017
11	Bagerhat, Bangladesh (22.6552, 89.778)	Khan 2018
12	Khulna, Bangladesh (22.8373, 89.54)	Khan 2018
13	Satkhira, Bangladesh (22.7217, 89.0682)	Khan 2018
14	Naogaon, Bangladesh (24.8062, 88.9347)	Khan 2018
15	Korba, Chhattisgarh, India (22.3595, 82.7501)	Ahmed et al. 2021
16	Kabirdham, Chhattisgarh, India (22.0991, 81.2519)	Ahmed et al. 2021
17	Gariaband, Chhattisgarh, India (20.6348, 82.0615)	Ahmed et al. 2021
18	Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh, India (20.7101, 81.5489)	Ahmed et al. 2021
19	Bastar, Chhattisgarh, India (19.1071, 81.9535)	Ahmed et al. 2021
20	Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, India (18.8998, 81.3474)	Ahmed et al. 2021
21	Bijapur, Chhattisgarh, India (18.7963, 80.8156)	Ahmed et al. 2021

**Figure 2.** The Variable Colored Vinesnake (*Ahaetulla anomala*) from Kaawri, Kosi, Bihar, India (ZSI-R-26319). Photographs by Pratyush P. Mohapatra.

was identified as *Ahaetulla anomala* (Annandale 1906) and the identity of the species was confirmed by Kaushik Deuti.

The Variable Colored Vinesnake (*A. anomala*), first described as a variety of *Dryophis mycterizans* from Santragachi, West Bengal, was resurrected as a valid species by Mohapatra et al. (2017). This species is readily distinguished from its sister taxon, *A. oxyrhyncha* (previously referred to *A. nasuta*) based on the dermal appendage covered with many small scales and shorter than the horizontal eye diameter. This species was previously recorded from Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, and Jharkhand in India, and Bagherhat, Khulna, and Satkhira Districts in Sundarbans and northwestern Naogaon in Bangladesh (Mohapatra et al. 2017; Khan 2018; Ahmed et al. 2021) (Table 1; Fig. 1).

We herein report *A. anomala* for the first time from Bihar, India, based on the specimen (ZSI-R-26319) collected from Kaawri, Kosi, Bihar (Fig. 2). Meristic and morphological characters are: SVL 72.0 mm; tail length 42.5 mm; dorsal scale rows 15:15:11; ventrals 183; subcaudals 157; supralabials 8 (5th touching the eye); infralabials 8; one preocular; postoculars 2; presuboculars 2; horizontal eye diameter 3.9 mm; vertical eye diameter 2.0 mm; temporals 2+3; cloacal scale divided, chin shields 2/2 (anterior/posterior); head length 25.0 mm; head width 7.1 mm; head depth 7.5 mm; dermal appendage length 2.1 mm; dermal appendage dorsal length 1.5 mm; frontal length 6.1 mm; maximum width of frontal 2.9 mm; maximum length of prefrontal 4.2 mm; maximum length of parietal 5.4 mm; maximum width of parietal 4.2 mm; maximum length of supraocular 5.1 mm; internasal 1.3 mm; length of nasal 3.0 mm; maximum width of the nasal 0.9 mm.

Seven specimens of *Ahaetulla anomala* were previously recorded from (undivided) Bihar and misidentified as *A. pulverulenta* (Duméril, Bibron, and Duméril 1854), six of which are from Manbhum (now in West Bengal) and one from Santal Pargana (now in Jharkhand) (Dasgupta and Raha 2004). After the separation of Jharkhand from Bihar in 2000, all previous historical records mentioned by Dasgupta and Raha (2004) are in Jharkhand or West Bengal (see Mohapatra et al. 2017). Hence, this record from Kosi is the first authentic report of the species from Bihar. The new locality is ~150 km northwest of the record from Malpahari, Pakur District, Jharkhand.

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