



Research Article

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A New Record of Termite Hill Gecko, *Hemidactylus triedrus* (Daudin, 1802) From Tamilnadu, India

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Abstract: *Hemidactylus* is the second most species rich genus in geckos which are widely spread to the tropical regions of the world. *Hemidactylus*, a genus of reptiles that includes the house geckos, is a diverse one with about 150 species spread over a wide geographic range. The *Hemidactylus triedrus* is also known as Termite hill gecko, Dakota's leaf-toed gecko & blotched house gecko, which belongs to the family Gekkonidae. A new record for *Hemidactylus triedrus* (Daudin, 1802), Ariyalur district, tamilnadustate, india with distribution and their notes.

Keywords: New record, Reptile, *Hemidactylus* Genus, Tamilnadu..

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INTRODUCTION

Termite hill gecko (*Hemidactylustriedrus*) is endemic to Southern Asia basically found in Srilanka and India (Allen & Richard, 1996). The species was described by Daudin (1802) based on species collected from Southern India. *Hemidactylus* is one of the richest genus in geckos which are mostly found to the tropical regions of the world. The *Hemidactylus triedrus*, known as Termite hill gecko, Dakota's leaf-toed gecko & blotched house gecko, belongs to the family Gekkonidae. This species is found in Southern regions of Asia (Samal *et al.*, 2020).

The remaining *Hemidactylus* geckos of India belong to two other geographical clades representing the Southeast Asian and West-Asian arid zone species (Bansal *et al.*, 2010). Prior work done involves the discovery of ten *Hemidactylus* species from Andhra Pradesh, viz., *H. brookii*, *H. frenatus*, *H. giganteus*, *H. gracilis*, *H. leschenaultii*, *H. reticulatus*, *H. subtriedrus*, *H. triedrus*, *H. treutleri*, *H. flaviviridis* (Javed *et al.*, 2011), two *Hemidactylus* species from near Madras, viz., *H. maculatushunae* and *H. scabriceps* (Mahony, 2009). *H. maculates* has also has been reported from localities across the Western Ghats of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu (Javed *et al.*, 2011).

H. triedrus comprises of a group of closely related species found in a wide geographical area including parts of Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka. Many species were considered to represent *Hemidactylus*

triedrus leading to taxonomic confusion, which has now been effectively resolved. The gekkonid lizard genus *Hemidactylus* is one of the most specious genus in the family, with at least 124 species described. Of these, at least 26 species found in India (Utez & Hosek 2013; & Mirza & Sanap, 2014). Herpeto faunal surveys carried out in the recent past have resulted in the detection of *Hemidactylus* species hitherto unknown from the country, and have extended the distribution ranges of several taxa on the mainland (Srinivasulu & Das, 2008; Ganesh & Chandramouli, 2009; Agarwal *et al.*, 2011; & Mirza & Sanap, 2014).

Recently, the species has been reported from Pench Tiger Reserve on 13th December 2019 (TOI 2019). India represents about twenty five recognized *Hemidactylus* species (Venu, 2016) and about five *Hemidactylus* species are reported from Odisha as *Hemidactylus fleviviridis*, *Hemidactylus frenatus*, *Hemidactylus brookii*, *Hemidactylus leschenaultia* and *Hemidactylus* sp. (Pradhan *et al.*, 2014; & Dutta *et al.*, 2009). In the current note, we focus on the distribution of *Hemidactylustriedrus*. So far, this species has been recorded from Ariyalur district, Tamilnadu state, india. In this paper based on the distribution of *Hemidactylus* species and extensive field surveys conducted.

STUDY AREA

Termite hill gecko found from Vettriyur village (10°58'57.2"N 79°05'49.8"E) in Thirumanur Block in Ariyalur District of Tamil Nadu State, India. It is located 19 KM towards South from District head

quarters Ariyalur. Near to 5 km reached famous longest river in Thirumanur. In this village temples are Srimahamariamman, Lord Murugan, Sivantemple has celebrated every month Mahasivarathripoojas. Figure 1. showing study area vetriyur village, Ariyalurdistrict,

tamilnadu state, India. In This Place is in the border of the ariyalur district and Thanjavur District. In this species identified based on the photographs and captured on 13/06/2021 at 8.00 PM.



Figure 1. A map showing study area at vetriyur village, Ariyalur district, Tamilnadu state, India



Figure 2. Termite hill gecko *Hemidactylus triedrus* sp.

DISCUSSIONS

Phylogenetic relationships within *Hemidactylus* unveil a major endemic radiation in

SouthAsia and largely concentrated in India and Sri Lanka (Bauer *et al.*, 2010). *H. triedrus* was considered to be extensive across India and Sri Lanka and parts of

Pakistan in spite of that there were three distinct and diagnosable populations based on morphology alone. This taxonomic flux generally arose likely from the fact that most researcher who revised this taxon did not examine the type specimen of *H. triedrus* and/or specimens that were used for molecular work, which lead to details of *H. subtriedrus* and *H.lankae* as well as an unsupported rise to a species rank from its sub-specific status of the latter two species by Bauer *et.al.* (2010).

Recently, herpetological surveys in northern Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh yielded sightings of Jerdon's Gecko *Hemidactylus subtriedrus* Jerdon, 1853. Little is known about its taxonomic status and distribution. This species closely resembles the Termite Hill Gecko *Hemidactylus triedrus* and it has often been taxonomically confused with it (Javed *et al.*, 2009).

Hemidactylus triedrus being reported for the first time from Bulajhar reserve forest of Angul, Odisha. This find of *Hemidactylus triedrus* in Bulajhar reserve forest confirms its occurrence and establishes new locality record in state Odisha and the range extension of this species. *Hemidactylus triedrus* was recorded previously from localities of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharastra, Pondicherry & Tamil Nadu (Khandekar *et al.*, 2020). In this paper reported first time record of figure 2. *Hemidactylus triedrus* species from vetriyur village, Ariyalur district, Tamilnadu state, india.

CONCLUSION

A common practice for environmentalist and even taxonomists during biodiversity surveys is to ignore subtle difference in commonly distributed species and attribute them to a readily accessible name when the species in question might not be what it has been considered (Zug *et.al.*, 2006). Further monitoring will be required to determine if *Hemidactylus triedrus* will expand out of the limited areas it currently occupies in this region and also to assess the nature of its ecological interactions with native geckos.

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