



First photographic record of Reeve's ground skink (*Scincella reevesii* Gray, 1838) (Reptilia: Sauria: Scincidae) from India

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Abstract

This is the first record of the Reeve's Ground Skink (*Scincella reevesii*) from India with a photographic record from Tripura State. Diagnostic features and colour of the specimen added for recognition.

Keywords: Diagnostic Features, First Record, Reeves's Ground Skink, Tripura

Introduction

The Reeve's Ground Skink (*Scincella reevesii* Gray, 1838) is a small, slender, diurnal and terrestrial ground-dwelling skink found in Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and north-eastern and south-eastern Bangladesh (Hasan, Khan and Feeroz, 2014) where it is particularly seen in mixed evergreen forests. It hides among shrubs and boulders on low undulating hills often near small hill-streams. Breeding starts in April and juveniles are seen in June-July. There was so far no record of this species from India (Venugopal, 2010; Deuti *et al.*, 2016). This is the first report from north-eastern India and adds one more skink species in the faunal list of Indian reptiles.

Material and Methods

While conducting herpetofaunal surveys in Tripura State of North-eastern India from 15.07.2017 to 21.07.2017, we visited Paharpur village (23°29.596' N, 23°29.596' E and altitude 243 ft) of Gomati district in South Tripura on 19.07.2017, where among other lizards we encountered one breeding male of the Reeve's Ground Skink (*Scincella reevesii* Gray, 1838) at 8:25 hrs. The individual was first photographed, then caught and examined with

a magnifying glass, measured with a Mitutoyo digital caliper and then released in its original habitat.

Results

The landscape of Paharpur consists of evergreen forests on low undulating hills. This skink was seen on wet soil among boulders near a small stream. Some other lizards seen in the same habitat are: *Calotes versicolor*, *Eutropis multifasciata*, *Eutropis macularia* and *Takydromus khasiensis*. This skink species was identified by observing the following characters:

Diagnostic Features

A small skink with a prominent ear-hole and a transparent disk in the lower eyelid. Body elongated and cylindrical with short limbs. Scales smooth without any keels. Post nasal and supra-nasals absent. Pre-frontals large and in contact with each other. Parietals completely separated by an inter-parietal. No nuchals. No lobules in the large ear-hole.

Colouration

Dorsum dark greenish-brown with some small black

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spots. Flanks blackish-brown with several small yellowish spots. Ventrums creamish. Eyes black. Ear-hole pinkish. In this breeding male the belly was yellowish and chin and throat deep orange.

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Table 1. Measurement of the specimen (in mm)

	<i>Scincella reevesii</i> from Paharpur, South Tripura
No of Para-Vertebral Scales	71
No of Ventral Scales	68
No of Mid-body Scale Rows	30
No of Lamellae on 4th toe	14
Snout-vent Length	41.75
Tail Length	63.89
Head Length	6.37
Head Width	5.52
Snout Length	2.81
Eye Diameter	2.33
Tympanum Diameter	1.18
Eye-Tympanum Distance	3.48
Fore arm Length	3.19
Axilla-Groin Distance	20.62
Thigh Length	4.80
Shank Length	5.15

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