Centenary Celebration of ZSI
“National Conference on Faunal Diversity in the Indian Land and Seascapes”

Organized by Zoological Survey of India at Prani Vigyan Bhawan, New Alipore, Kolkata - 53

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Eastern Ghats

- The ENVIS centre on Ecology of Eastern Ghats was established in 1994.

- Eastern Ghats spread in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and small parts in Telangana & Karnataka.

- Centre brings out quarterly Newsletters: “Eastern Ghats” in English and “Toorpukumanalu” in Telugu.
Significance of Eastern Ghats

- E.G. are low lying hill running from Orissa in the north to Tamil Nadu in the south through Andhra Pradesh, covering an area of 75000 sq.km.

- River Mahanadi, Godavari and Krishna provide drainage system

- Forests types ranging from evergreen to tropical semi-evergreen to moist deciduous forest extending into savannah and scrub jungle.

- There are twelve Wildlife Sanctuaries, three Tiger Reserves two Bird sanctuaries; two National Parks and one Biosphere Reserve were declared so far along the entire hill range of Eastern Ghats\(^1\).

- Tribal dominated areas in some parts of Eastern Ghats with rich traditional knowledge
The Eastern Ghats has a rich assemblage of floral, faunal wealth including many endangered and endemic species.

Harbors many species of fauna including 376 species of birds, 81 mammals, 59 reptiles and 14 amphibians.

They are unique in its biotic attributes, is home to some of the charismatic and endangered animals such as tigers, elephants, leopards, etc.

Eastern Ghats with 884 species constitutes 0.55 percentages of the total Indian fauna.
Jerdon's Courser (*Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*)

The rare and endemic Jerdon’s courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus*, till recently believed to be extinct, occurs in extremely small numbers on the foothill of the middle portion of Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh near Kadapa.
Calodactylodes aureus (Indian golden gecko)

The golden gecko had been previously known only from Seshachalam and Velikonda, ranges of the Southern Eastern Ghats and from Arcot district of Tamilnadu. The gecko has also been recently found in the Niyamgiri hills in the Northern Eastern Ghats of Odisha.
Gray slender loris - *Loris lydekkerianus*

The nocturnal gray slender loris could be common but is seldom seen.
Comparatively faunal diversity is abundant in Nallamalai Hills, recorded over 70 species of mammals, 302 species of birds, 64 species of reptiles, 20 amphibians, 55 fishes, 89 species of butter flies, 57 species of moths, 45 species of coleopteran, 30 species of Odonata and numerous other forms of insects have been inventoried in Nalamalai hills.
Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park
(Dr. M. Vani & Dr. P.S.Poornima, 2014)

The Zoo Harbors
- 22 species of 261 mammals
- 33 species of 249 birds and
- 5 species of 98 reptiles.

The endemic fauna as follows.
- Slender Loris
- Golden Gecko
- Indian giant Squirrel
- Mouse Deer
- Yellow browed Bulbul
- Starred Tortoise
In total, 262 species of birds recorded. Among them RET species were:

- Grey-headed fishing eagle - *Icthyophaga ichthyaetus*
- Lesser Fish eagle - *Icthyophago humilis*
- Egyptian vulture - *Neophron percnopterus*
- Nilgiri wood pigeon - *Columbia elphinstonii*
- Yellow throated bulbul - *Pycnonotus priocephalus*
- Great Hornbill - *Buceros bicornis*
- The Grey-headed Bulbul - *Pycnonotus pricephalus*
- Savanna Nightjar - *Caprimukgus affinis*
- Brown Hawk Owl - *Ninox scutulata* were recorded for the first time from region.
- Black bulbul - *Hypsipetes leucocephalus*,
- Asian Fairy Bluebird - *Irena puella* (in shevroys),
- Blue bearded Bee-eater *Nyctironis athertoni* (in Chitheri),
- Malabar whistling thrush *Myophonus horsfieldi* (Shevroys)

Abundant species were Red vented Bulbul, White browed Bulbul, Red whiskered Bulbul, Common lora and Purple rumped Sunbird.
Herpetological survey in Sirumalai hills
(S.R. Ganesh and M. Arumugam, 2016)

• Documented total 39 species, including seven species of amphibians, 15 species of lizards and 17 species of snakes.

• Some of the noteworthy findings include the litter frog, stream frog, the bush frog, the flying lizard, striped coral snake, tree snake, etc.
Fauna from Seshachalam Hills
(M. Bubesh Guptha, 2016)

Mammals:

- A total of 25 species of mammals belonging to 17 families were recorded. The nocturnal Slender Loris, Indian Giant squirrel, Ruddy mongoose, etc.

Herpetofauna:

- A total of 12 species of Amphibians belonging to four families and seven genera, 46 species of reptiles belonging to 36 genera, distributed in 12 families (33 species of snakes and 13 species of lizards) belonging to six families each.

- So far 33 snakes species were recorded, among which six species are venomous snakes and new records (Calliphis melanurus and Uropeltis ellioti), new locality records (Ahaetulla pulverulenta and Lycodon flavicolles), rediscovery (Coluber bholanathi) and one first record in India (Chrysipelea taprobanica).
Birds:

215 species of birds, which belong 45 families. Among which 172 species (80%) were resident, 30 (14%) were winter migrant, 8 (4%) were seasonal local migrant and 5 (2%) were local migrant. 88 species were found common (C); followed by 91 species uncommon (UC); 15 species rare (R); 14 species occasional (O) and 7 species were found very rare (VR).

As per IUCN status, out of 215 species, 97% species are Least Concern, 2% species are near threatened and 1% species Vulnerable (VU).

Butterflies:

- Total 96 species of butterflies were recorded under five families. The butterflies were categorized as Very Common (VC) 20 %, Common (C) 37%, Uncommon (UC) 16%, Occasional (O) 18% and Rare (R) 9%.
- Butterflies preferred open forest (36%), followed by scrub jungle (36%) dense forest (21%) grass land (5%) and mud puddle (1%).
- Out of 96 species, seven species namely Pachliopta hector, Hypolimnas bolina, Castalius rosimon, Euchrysops cnefus lampides boeticus, Cepora nerissa and Euploea core are Scheduled species.
Among **Ichthyofaunal Diversity**, Eastern Ghats have only 142 species of fresh water fishes belonging to 10 orders, 26 families and 75 genera. Cypriniformes (76 species), Siluriformes (29 species), Cyprinidae (70 species) followed by Bagridae (11 species).
Indian Crested Porcupine, *Hystrix indica*  
(Vikram Aditya and T. Ganesh, 2016)

The first camera trap records of the occurrence of the *Hystrix indica* from the Papikonda National Park, in the northern Eastern Ghats.
Rusty-spotted Cat *Prionailurus rubiginosus* and Leopard Cat *Prionailurus bengalensis* (Vikram Aditya & Thyagarajan Ganesh, 2015)
Raorchestes terebrans, a frog endemic to EG
(Krishna Pavan, 2016)
Oriental Dollarbird is found along the Himalayas from Himachal Pradesh east to Arunachal Pradesh and North-eastern Hills south of Brahmaputra. This was reported for the first time from Odisha.

New site record of Grizzled Giant Squirrel *Ratufa macroura* from Thiruvannamalai Forest Division, Eastern Ghats, Tamil Nadu

(S. Babu & A. Kalaimani, 2014)

(Source: www.biolib.cz)
**Sepsophis punctatus** Beddome - A long-lost relic from the Eastern Ghats


Rediscovered the species based on specimens from Odisha and Andhra Pradesh state, after a gap of 137 years in Peninsular India, Eastern Ghats.

(Source: reptile-database.reptarium.cz)
A new species of *Gegeneophis orientalis*  

This species differs from all other congeners in having only bicuspid teeth in the outer as well as inner rows.

(Source: www.filin.vn.ua)
Poecilotheria metallica found in Seshachalam (M. Bubesh Guptha, P.V. Chalapathi Rao and N.V. Sivaram Prasad)

Poecilotheria metallica is ranked by the IUCN as Critically Endangered.

(Source: territoriosselvagem.forumeiros.com)
A lizard, supposed extinct, rediscovered!

*Geckoella Jeyporensis* or Jeypore ground gecko is an enigmatic lizard from the **Eastern Ghats** which was considered extinct, has been rediscovered after 135 years, according to naturalists at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). This species was recently rediscovered in Andhra Pradesh and Orissa by Centre for Ecological Sciences (CES), Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai and Villanova University, USA.

(Source: [http://post.jagran.com/search/eastern-ghats](http://post.jagran.com/search/eastern-ghats), printrest.com)
Sri Lankan snake sighted in Seshachalam - *Chrysopelea taprobanica*

Earlier known as endemic to Sri Lanka, is now found in Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve

(Source: The Hindu, January 1, 2015)
More explorations needed

- Eastern Ghats has been much less explored than Western Ghats.

- A multi-disciplinary expedition mode research should be conducted in the little explored or ill-explored area of Eastern Ghats.

- There is no consolidating information on the total faunal wealth of Eastern Ghats. Information on the fauna of the Eastern Ghats is poor and scanty.
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• Dr. M. Vani & Dr. P.S.Poornima, 2014. National Conference on Conservation of Eastern Ghats, 2015 at Tirupati


• *Source: Sacon News Vol.12 (4): October – December 2015*
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