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NOTES ON NATURAL HISTORY

A First record from Amrabad Tiger Reserve, India: The Brahminy Blind Snake (*Indotyphlops braminus* Daudin, 1803) in the diet of the Asian Palm Civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus* Pallas, 1777)

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Study Area: Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Telangana, India
Coordinated: 78.48951 N, 16.215721 E to 79.403094 N, 16.703926 E

Key words: Carnivores; Viverridae; Scat analysis; Trophic interactions; Telangana; Dry deciduous forest

The Common Palm Civet *Paradoxurus hermaphroditus* (Pallas, 1777) is a small carnivore belonging to the family Viverridae. It occurs across a wide range of habitats, including tropical forests, plantations, and human-modified landscapes. Although primarily frugivorous, it is considered an opportunistic omnivore consuming insects and small vertebrates depending on seasonal food availability (Corlett, 1998; Krishnakumar & Balakrishnan, 2003; Jothish, 2011). Reports of reptilian prey in its diet are scarce, with only occasional records from stomach content analyses (Singh, 1973; Khan *et al.*, 2019).

The Brahminy Blind Snake *Indotyphlops braminus* (Daudin, 1803) is a fossorial typhlopid snake widely distributed in tropical and subtropical regions. It inhabits loose soil, leaf litter, and areas beneath stones and logs. Despite its widespread occurrence, documentation of its predators remains limited.

Here, we report the first evidence of *I.braminus* in the diet of *P.hermaphroditus* from Amrabad Tiger Reserve, Telangana, India.

Our Survey

On 25 January 2026, a fresh scat of *P.hermaphroditus* was encountered along a forest trail in the dry deciduous forests of Amrabad Tiger Reserve. The scat was identified based on its cylindrical shape with tapered ends, characteristic odour, size (8–12 cm in length), and associated pugmarks. The sample was collected in a sterile zip-lock bag containing silica gel, and geographic coordinates were recorded.

The net biomass of the scat was 0.0027 kg. The sample was sun-dried for 48 hours and processed following standard scat analysis procedures (Korschgen, 1980; Ackerman *et al.*, 1984; Reynolds & Aebischer, 1991). It was washed through a 0.5 mm mesh sieve under running water to separate undigested remains. Recovered materials were air-dried and examined under a stereomicroscope for identification using available taxonomic keys and regional floristic references.

We observed

Four dietary components were identified: seeds of *Ziziphus oenophila*, seeds of *Grewia hirsuta*, unidentified grass fragments, and reptilian remains attributable to Indotyphlops braminus. The snake remains consisted of smooth, glossy cycloid scales and minute vertebral elements characteristic of typhlopid snakes (Plate-1).

The predominance of fruit remains is consistent with previous reports indicating that the Asian Palm Civet is among the more frugivorous viverrids (Corlett, 1998). However, the presence of reptilian remains supports earlier observations of opportunistic feeding behaviour (Singh 1973; Khan *et al.*, 2019). The fossorial and small-bodied nature of *I.braminus* suggests that predation may have occurred during surface activity or while the civet was foraging in leaf litter.

This record expands the known dietary breadth of *P.hermaphroditus* in peninsular India and provides additional evidence of its trophic flexibility in dry deciduous forest ecosystems. Such flexibility may enhance resilience to seasonal fluctuations in fruit availability and underscores the ecological adaptability of the species.
Further seasonal sampling is recommended to determine the frequency and ecological significance of vertebrate prey in the diet of this species within Amrabad Tiger Reserve.

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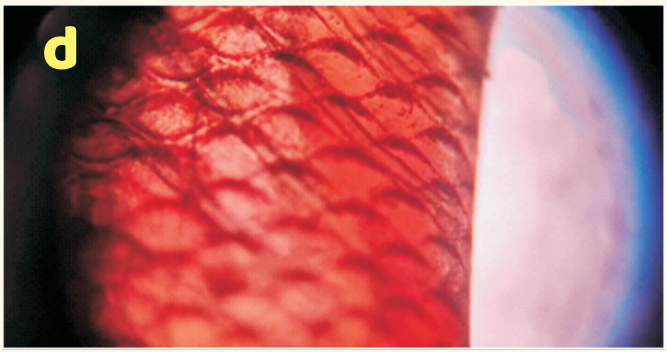
a: Sample in the forest

b: Collection of biological samples from a forest habitat during fieldwork. Samples were carefully gathered from the natural environment under sterile conditions for further laboratory analysis

c: Snake sample after isolation from scat



d: Microscopic image of the Brahminy blind snake (*Indotyphlops braminus*) after isolation

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