

DECCAN GROUND GECKO

An unusual body pattern of *Cyrtodactylus deccanensis* (Günther, 1864) from Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, northern Western Ghats, India



Cyrtodactylus deccanensis

IUCN Red List:
Least Concern
(Srinivasulu &
Srinivasulu, 2018)

Reptilia
[Class of Reptiles]

Squamata
[Order of Scaled reptiles]

Gekkonidae
[Family of Geckos]

Cyrtodactylus deccanensis
[Deccan Ground Gecko]

Species described by
Günther in 1864

Geckos are among the most species-rich and geographically widespread of terrestrial vertebrate lineages, with ~1763 described species till date, and comprise 25% of all described lizard species (Uetz et al. 2018). Gekkonid species biological and natural history is poorly known (Mirza et al. 2011 and Agarwal 2016). India represented 11 species of geckoella, the genus *Geckoella* (now *Cyrdodactylus*) are true terrestrial geckos or call it as bend-toed geckos and which is endemic to India and Sri Lanka (Smith 1935; Agarwal & Karanth 2015; Agarwal 2016; Agarwal et al. 2016).

The present herpetofauna survey has been carried out in Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, (17°04'00"–17°19'54"N & 73°40'43"–73°53'09"E, northern Western Ghats (Imam et al. 2009), the field work was conducted on 11 June 2017 at 20:30hr. Following visual encounter method (Heyer et al. 1994), we searched for herpetofauna species on several



habitats, by looking all possible ground covers such as stone piles, tree logs, rock crevices, at night hours. During our survey we have come across an unusual body pattern (has 'X' mark on his trunk region) of adult *Cyrtodactylus deccanensis* (Species was identified by using standard manuals Gunther 1864; Daniel 2002 & Bauer & Giri 2004). This is rarely occurred in genus *Geckoella* and also there has been no documentation after (Vyas & Prjapati 2012). The *C. deccanensis* (SVL 77mm & TL 66mm) having series of dorsal white bands and was yellow in premature (single band on across neck, trunk 4–5 & tail 6–8 respectively); Dorso scales having flattened tubercles and dispersed uniformly; intermixed pholidosis; Absence of lamellae; Strong folded eyelids; bend toes and latroventral has series of yellow pholidosis especially in juvenile form. The dorsum of *C. deccanensis* is reddish-brown in life with four to five yellow bands on the back and six to eight bands on the tail, all of which have dark brown edges or sometime dark black edges. The juvenile always brighter than adult in terms of dorso profile. The portion of the dorsum between scapular band and anterior trunk band, just behind the forelimbs, is often lighter than the rest of the body and the lateral aspect of the same region may even be whitish. The nape band is also yellow (Tikader & Sharma 1992; Bauer & Giri 2004). Figure (red circle) shows owing all respective distinct characters, but the trunk region last two bands are interchanged ('X' mark) which is previously reported by Vyas & Prjapati 2012 on its nape region (juvenile *C. deccanensis*).

Global Distribution :
India (Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat (Srinivasulu & Srinivasulu, 2018))

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