

Bugs R All

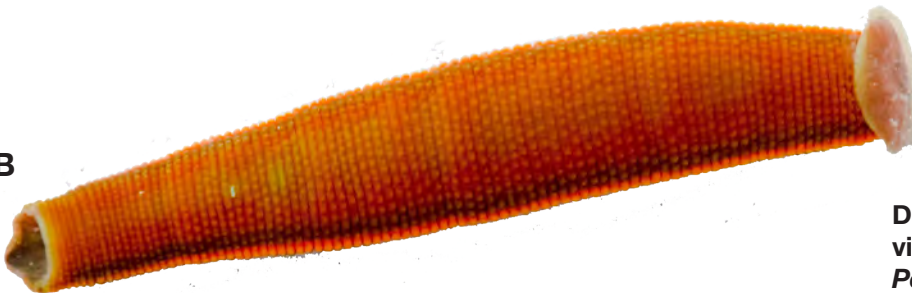
Newsletter of the
Invertebrate Conservation & Information Network of South Asia (ICINSA)

Record of the aquatic leech *Poecelobdella manilensis* from Porur Lake, Chennai

A



B



Dorsal (A) and Ventral (B) view of an adult individual of *Poecelobdella manilensis*

Leeches belonging to the class Hirudinea are parasitic annelids that suck blood from cattle and aquatic vertebrates. These leeches inhabit rice fields, swamps, ponds, tanks, streams, and springs. Currently, these are reported as threatened due to anthropogenic activities and environmental pollution (Mandal et al. 2013). Altitude distribution pattern of these leech species reveals that only two (*P. granulosa* & *P. manillensis*) out of the 12 species of freshwater leeches were collected from

higher elevation (mountainous regions) of Tamil Nadu in India (Mandal and Nandi, 2008). During our survey, we found buffaloes parasitized by these freshwater leeches and they were collected. This record could be a new distribution range for this leech species.

Poecelobdella manilensis (Poecilobdellidae) was obtained from Porur Lake, Chennai, Tamil Nadu (13.034°N & 80.150°E; average elevation 6.7m). The species belongs to phylum: Annelida, family: Metazoa,



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class: Hirudinea, order: Hirudiniformes. *Poecilobdella manillensis* is reported for the first time from Chennai. The distribution range of this leech is extended from Suchindram in Tamil Nadu (Mandal and Nandi, 2008). The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources has categorized this species as Endangered (Groombridge, 1994; IUCN, 2006). It has been observed from our study, that *P. manillensis* population drastically reduced due to the lack of suitable host, habitat changes, heavy water pollution and ecological imbalances. Due to the above said reasons, the Porur Lake has to be restored in order to avoid the extinction of this species from the ecosystem.

Reference

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