



New site records of Smooth-coated Otter in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu



Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata* predating on Indian Flapshell Turtle in Arunagiri Park Pond, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu.

In Indian Subcontinent, three species of Otters are recorded, Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra*, Oriental Small-clawed Otter *Aonyx cinera* and Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata*. The Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Mustelidae) distribution is continuous from Indonesia, through southeast Asia, and westwards from southern China to India and Pakistan, with an isolated subpopulation in Iraq (de Silva et al. 2015).

Generally, it uses large rivers and lakes, peat swamp forests, mangroves and estuaries, and it even uses the rice fields for foraging (Foster-Turly 1992). In this paper we added new site records of Smooth-Coated Otter

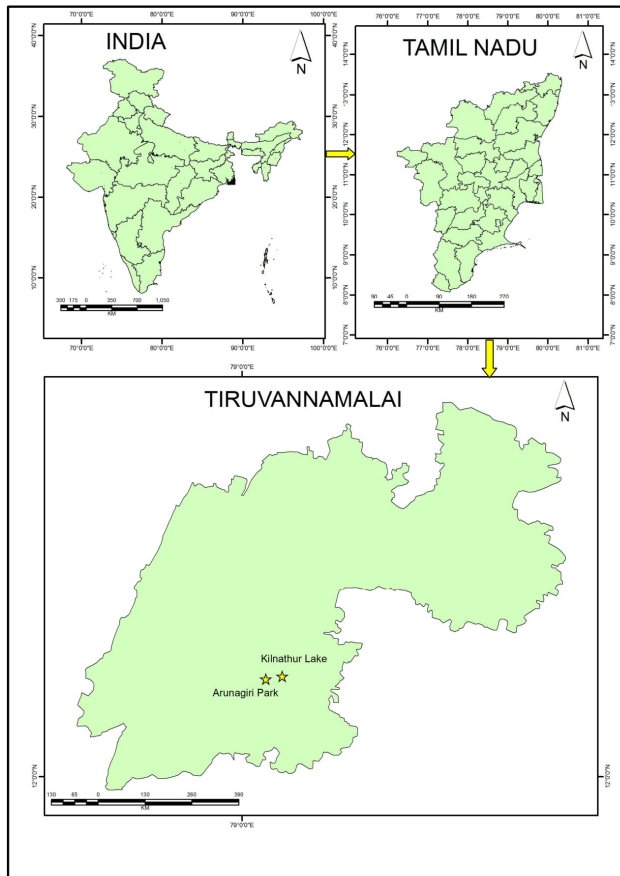
Lutrogale perspicillata in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu. During our regular bird watching in Tiruvannamalai and surrounding locations we sighted a Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata* for the first time at Kilnathur Lake actively diving and it was identified by its grey brown coat with light grey under parts (Menon 2014).

Second time we sighted at Arunagiri Park Pond and photographed when predating Indian Flapshell Turtle *Lissemys punctata*. All the sighting locations are uncommon to this species (Table 1).

These locations are surrounded by human settlements, farmlands and scrub jungle.

Table 1. Locations of Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata* in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu.

Place	GPS location	No. of individuals	Date	Time	Habitat type
Kilnathur Lake	12.224N 79.053E	1	27/viii/2018	16:54	Farmlands
Arunagiri Park Pond	12.230N 79.092E	1	02/xii/2019	12:10	Scrub jungle



Location of Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata* in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu.

The Smooth-coated Otter is listed on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List as Vulnerable since 1996. It is also listed on the CITES Appendix II, and classified as an endangered species under the Indian Wildlife Protection Act. It is a protected species in almost all the range countries which prohibits its killing (de Silva et al. 2015). Detailed studies are needed to understand the population status and habitat quality to conserve the species in India.

References

de Silva, P., W.A. Khan, B. Kanchanasaka, I. Reza Lubis, M.M. Feeroz & O.F. Al-Sheikhly (2015). *Lutrogale perspicillata*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015: e.T12427A21934884. Downloaded on 25 September 2020. <https://doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-2.RLTS.T12427A21934884.en>

Foster-Turley, P. (1992). Conservation ecology of sympatric Asian otters *Aonyx cinerea* and *Lutra perspicillata*. PhD thesis, University of Florida. 172 pp.

Menon, V. (2014). *Indian Mammals - A Field Guide*. Hachette Book Publishing India Pvt. Ltd., 528pp.

Acknowledgements: We thank Department of Zoology and Wildlife Biology, A.V.C. College (Autonomous), Mannampandal, Mayiladuthurai for support to the survey and additionally we thank Ashok, Arun and Brawin Kumar for their help during field survey. We are thankful to Idea Wild for the equipment support.

A. Kalaimani¹, R. Nagarajan², Siva Kumar³ & M. Salman⁴

^{1,2} Department of Zoology and Wildlife Biology, A.V.C College (Autonomous), Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu 609305, India.

³ The Forest Way, Arunagiri Childrens Park, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu 606603, India.

⁴ Muhalpura Islamic School, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Emails: ¹ manikalai16@yahoo.com (corresponding author),

² oystercatcher@rediffmail.com, ³ kumarart8@gmail.com,

⁴ sallumn19@gmail.com.

Citation: Kalaimani, A., R. Nagarajan, S. Kumar & M. Salman (2021). New site records of Smooth-coated Otter in Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu. *Small Mammal Mail* #432, In: *Zoo's Print* 36(1): 05–06.