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First record of Indian Black Turtle Kanger Valley National Park, India

The Indian Black Turtle *Melanochelys trijuga* (Schweigger, 1812) is found in South Asia and it is very common and widespread in India. It is a medium-sized turtle mainly inhabiting still-waters (Das & Bhupathy 2009).

The species is distributed in Bangladesh, China, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand (Das & Bhupathy 2009). In India it has been recorded from Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Meghalaya (Daniel 2002).

The Chhattisgarh State accounts with seven species of turtles till date (Ahmed et al. 2021). They are: Indian Flapshell Turtle *Lissemys punctata*, Indian Softshell



Melanochelys tricarinata, Indian Roofed Turtle *Pangshura tecta*, and Indian Tent Turtle *Pangshura tentoria*.

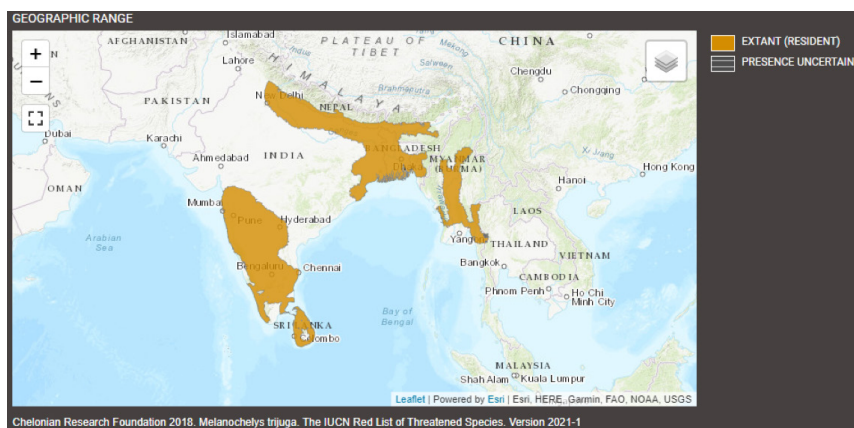
We recorded *M. trijuga* from the Kanger Valley National

Dorsal (Carapace).
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Turtle *Nilssonina gangetica*, Leith's Softshell Turtle *Nilssonina leithii*, Narrow-headed Softshell Turtle *Chitra indica*, Tricarinate Hill Turtle

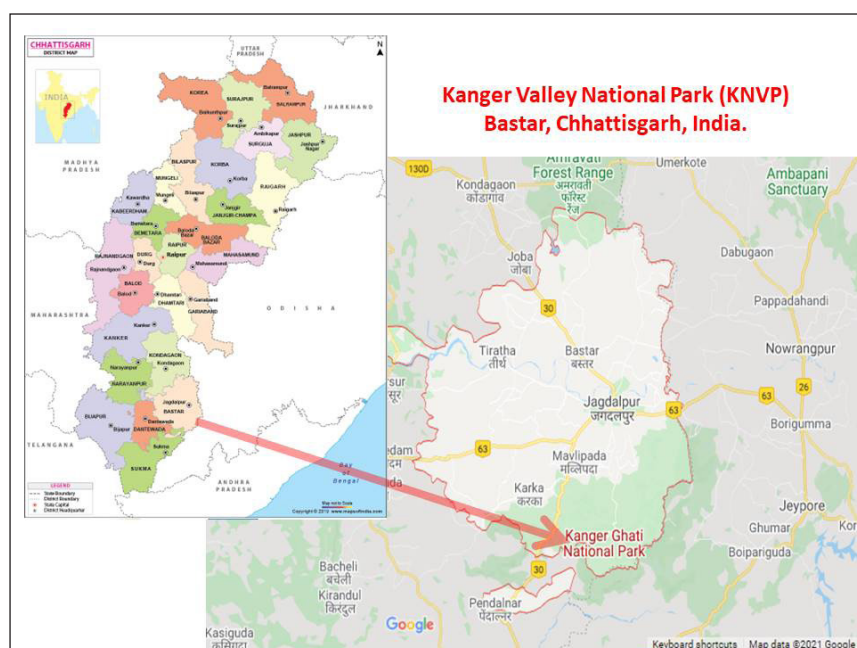
Ventral (Plastron).
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Known distribution of Indian Black Turtle.

<https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/13039/511745#geographic-range>,
Downloaded on 30 August 2021.



Site of observation, Kanger Valley National Park (KVNP) Chhattisgarh.

Park, Bastar Chhattisgarh in the mixed forest of Sal *Shorea robusta* and Teak *Tectona grandis*.

The species was considered as Near Threatened in IUCN 2009 Red List (Das & Bhupathy 2009) and now it was considered Least Concern (Ahmed et al. 2020).

The specimen reported here was rescued near Manjipal, Bastar (18.8834 & 81.9081) from being attacked by stray dogs while crossing the road. Manjipal is located on the borders of Kanger Valley National Park. The Kanger River and whole National Park (KNVP) is the

catchment of Godavari River that originates in the Western Ghats near Nasikh in Maharashtra and empties into the Bay of Bengal. As per the bio-geographic classification of India (Rodgers & Panwar 1988), KVNP and MFR lie in Zone 6C Deccan peninsula-

Eastern Highlands designated by Eastern province, which forms the boundary with the Eastern Ghats. The known distribution in India was reported only in the northeastern, northern region, and southwestern Indian states. The present observation also reveals the distribution of *M. trijuga* in Chhattisgarh state which is first record for the state.

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Rajneesh Panikar¹, H.N. Tandan², Ravi Naidu³ & Ameet Mandavia⁴

^{1,3&4} C.R.O.W. Foundation, Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh 494001, India.

² Department of Zoology, S.G.G. Govt. P.G. College, Kurud, Chhattisgarh 493663, India.

Emails: ¹rajneeshpanikar@gmail.com, ²tandanhn79@gmail.com (corresponding author), ³ravinaidu0001@gmail.com, ⁴ameet85@gmail.com

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