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Witnessing the negative consequences of transportation networks inside protected forest areas in Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, India

MacClelland’s Coral Snake *Sinomicrurus macclellandi* (Reinhardt, 1844) is a poisonous snake primarily found in northeastern India, Nepal, China, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Japan. It inhabits temperate, mixed, evergreen tropical, and subtropical forests at elevations ranging 55–2,500 m (Ahmed et al. 2009). The Hollongapar Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in the Mariani forest range in the Jorhat District of Assam, which was upgraded from a reserve forest (1881) to a wildlife sanctuary (1997), with an elevation of 100–120 m (Sarkar & Devi 2014).



Dead MacClelland’s Coral Snake after the encounter with a vehicle.
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On 10 January 2022, we encountered a dead MacClelland’s Coral Snake while visiting Hollongapar

Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary during our college field trip. The observation was made alongside a popular hiking trail

inside the sanctuary that also serves as a road connecting an isolated community to Dhodar Ali Road, the main road.



Vehicle traffic was seen frequently on the route inside the protected forest area. A vehicle ran over the snake as the driver failed to recognize the juvenile snake amidst the foliage on the road. This is an illustration of the interaction between people and animals, as well as the harm that anthropogenic factors may cause to wildlife, even in protected forest regions. Anthropogenic pressure is a major risk to both wildlife and humans in India.

Due to a variety of factors, including an increase in human settlements, an upsurge in the popularity of outdoor recreation, and rising number of species adapted to survive in human settings, it is predicted that the present state of human-wildlife negative interaction in this developing world will worsen in the future (Manfredo 2015). Snakes are among the animals most at risk of being killed in traffic accidents as they fail to realize the hazards of crossing roads, may use roads as a means to regulate their internal temperatures, or become motionless as a car approaches (Wagner et al. 2021). Similar observations were made by Rattanawanawong et al. (2022) during surveys conducted along a 48-km long highway in Khao Yai National Park, Thailand from February 2018 to January 2019 where they reported the death of a MacClelland's Coral Snake.

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Monjul Hazarika¹ & Utpal Sarma²

^{1&2} Department of Zoology, Sibsagar College, Joysagar (Autonomous), Sivasagar, Assam 785665, India. Emails: ¹monjulhazarika4@gmail.com (corresponding author), ²utpalsarma42@gmail.com

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