



Photographic record of Ruddy Mongoose from Melghat Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra



Ruddy Mongoose at Melghat Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra.
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The Ruddy Mongoose *Urva smithii* Gray, 1837 has wide distribution in India as well as in Nepal and Sri Lanka (Sreehari et al. 2013; Menon 2014; Subba et al. 2014; Samanta et al. 2020; Anver et al. 2023; Mudappa & Choudhury 2024). It's known from peninsular India as a forest dweller.

On 19 December 2025, during my visit to the Vulture Release Center at Somthana range, Melghat Tiger Reserve (21.406° N, 77.148° E), I came across a mongoose near a nullah. It was about 1630 h and we were passing by the nullah in a vehicle. The mongoose noticed the vehicle, yet sat in open boldly, staring at the vehicle for about five minutes. It was identified as the Ruddy Mongoose by characteristic dark

tail tip and dark brown legs. These characters are missing in the similar looking species, the Grey Mongoose *Urva edwardsii* (Menon 2014).

The Melghat Tiger Reserve is located in Amaravati, Akola and Buldhana districts of Maharashtra. It represents the typical central Indian landscape with tropical dry deciduous forest (Champion & Seth 1968). It boasts the presence of Tiger *Panthera tigris* the apex predator along with rich biodiversity in flora and fauna. During this visit, I witnessed grasslands with standing dried grasses and the deciduous trees had already started shedding leaves. The monsoon receded long time back and due to limited water sources available, the mongoose could be sighted.



The species was mentioned in the two decades of Melghat Tiger Reserve report (Gogate et al. 1992), yet missing from other publications on Melghat Tiger Reserve. Hence, it could be an important record of the Ruddy Mongoose with photographic evidence from the region.

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