

**ODONATA FROM COURTALLAM,
TAMIL NADU, SOUTHERN INDIA****Muhammed Jafer Palot and V.P. Soniya***Zoological Survey of India, Freshwater Biological Station, 1-1-300/B,
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During our field trip on mosquito fauna survey to southern Tamil Nadu, we made a collection of odonates from Courtallam and its adjoining areas from 4-8 February 2000.

Courtallam (Kuttralam) is a small town situated in the foothills of Western Ghats (8°50' and 9°0' N. and 77°10' and 77°20' E.), at an elevation of about 120 m., in Tenkasi Taluk of Thirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu State. It is a spur on the eastern side of the Western Ghats facing the Aryankavu Pass (Senkottai Pass) and is bounded by Kulathupuzha Reserve Forests of Kerala State on the western side. The area is traversed by three small rivers - Chittar, Aindalai Aruvi, Pazhayamkuttalam Aruvi and their tributaries. In the course of their descent from the mountain ranges these rivers present several cascades and waterfalls adding to the natural beauty few kilometers northeast of Thirunelveli Town and enter the Gulf of Mannar near Tuticorin.

The Courtallam area gets the benefit of both the south-west and north-east monsoon, hence the vegetation is rich and varying with tropical wet evergreen forests in the upper reaches of the surrounding hills and scrub jungles interspersed with degraded patches of deciduous forests in the lower foot hills.

A total of 14 species of Odonata under four families and 12 genera were collected and identified during the survey. A detailed species account along with field notes and distributional records (Mitra, 1999) is given below. The classification followed is of Fraser (1933-36; 1957), and Prasad and Varshney (1995).

Species Account

Sub Order: Zygoptera
Super Family: Coenagrionoidea
Family: Coenagrionidae
Sub Family: Pseudagrioninae.

1. *Ceriagrion coromandelianum* (Fabr.)

Remarks: Very common along the grassy banks of Gundar Dam.
Distribution: Extensively found through out India, in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Himachal

Pradesh, Kerala, Meghalaya, Punjab, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal.

Sub Family: Ischnurinae.

2. *Ischnura delicata* (Hagen)

Material Examined: 1 male and 1 female, 7.ii.2000, Courtallam Falls; 2 male and 4 females, 5.ii.2000, Gundar Dam.

Remarks: Very Common in the grasslands along with *Agriocnemis pygmae*.

Distribution: Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh

Sub Family: Agriocnemidinae.

3. *Agriocnemis pygmae* (Ramb.)

Material Examined: 2 males, 5.ii.2000, Gundar Dam.

Remarks: Abundant along the grasslands adjacent to the small stream flowing in to the Gundar Dam.

Distribution: This most extensively distributed Odonata occurs in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Family: Platycnemididae

Sub Family: Platycnemidinae

4. *Copera vittata deccanensis* Laidlaw.

Material Examined: 1 male and 1 female, 7.ii.2000, Courtallam Falls.

Remarks: Rare. The pair was caught very near to Courtallam Falls from a dampy area.

Distribution: Endemic to Western Ghats.

Super Family: Lestoidae

Family: Lestidae

Sub Family: Lestinae.

5. *Lestes elata* Hagen.

Material Examined: 1 female, 7.ii.2000, Courtallam Falls.

Remarks: Rarely observed down below the Courtallam Falls.

Distribution: Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Orissa.

Sub Order: Anisoptera

Super Family: Libelluloidea

Family: Libellulidae

Sub Family Libellulinae.

6. *Orthetrum glaucum* (Brauer)

Material Examined: 2 males, 7.ii.2000, Five Falls.

Remarks: Observed over the rocky streams near Five Falls.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

7. *Orthetrum sabina sabina* (Drury)

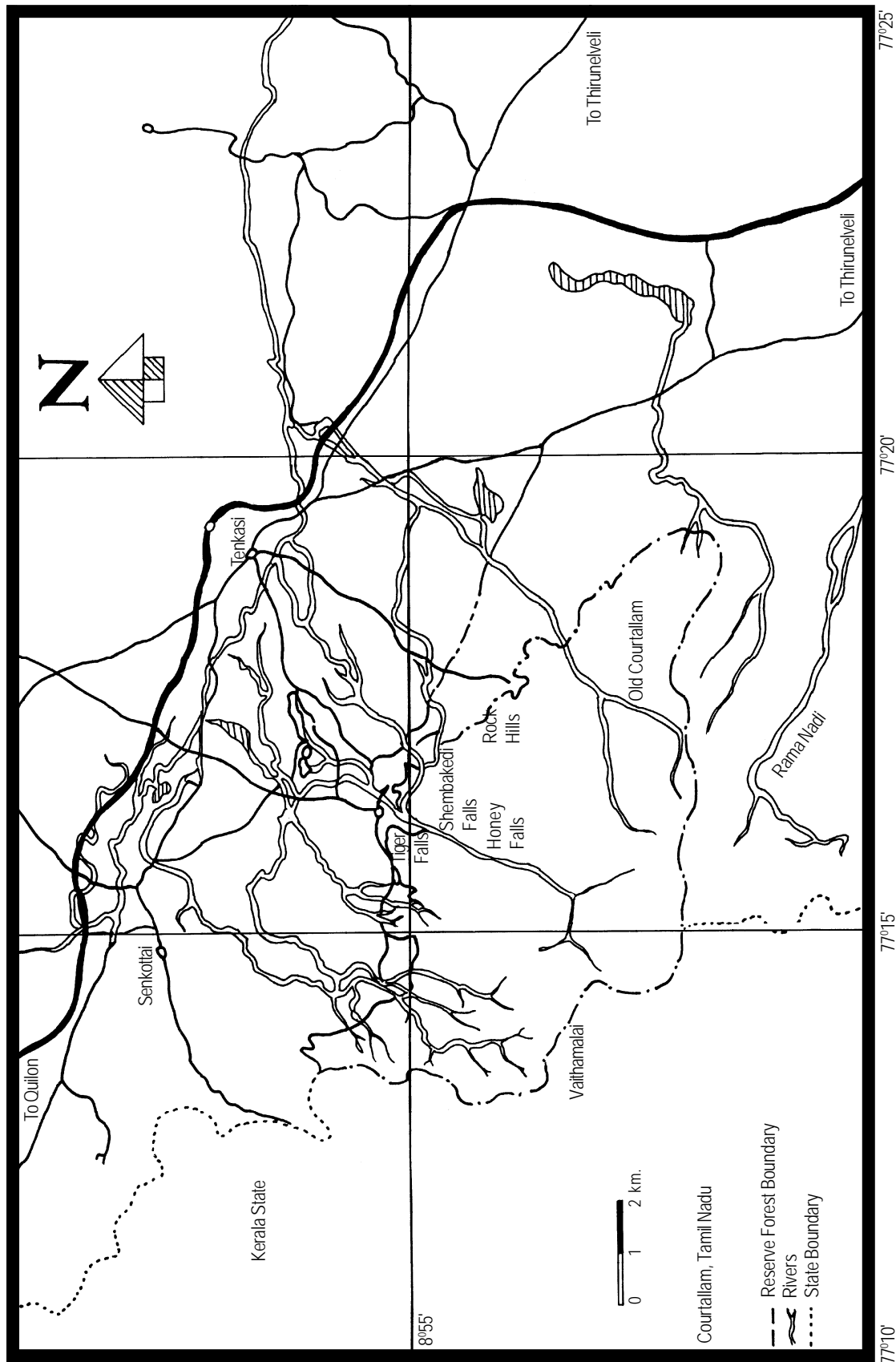
Material Examined: 1 male and 1 female, 6.ii.2000, Gundar Dam; 1 male and 1 female, 5.ii.2000, Vallam.

Remarks: Common throughout the survey.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar,

Received on 6 March 2000

Accepted on 10 June 2000



Map of Courtallam, Tamil Nadu

Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Sub Family: Sympetrinae.

8. *Brachythemis contaminata* (Fabr.)

Remarks: Common. Found along the banks of a weed infested canal near Courtallam Town.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

9. *Bradinopyga geminata* (Ramb.)

Remarks: Common. Many observed near the rocky pools at Gundar Dam and one pair was seen frequenting the cemented tank just behind the P.W.D. Guest House, Courtallam.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands

10. *Crocothemis servilia servilia* (Drury)

Material Examined: 1 female, 5.ii.2000, Gundar Dam.

Remarks: Common. Fairly distributed over the study area.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

11. *Diplacoides trivialis* (Ramb.)

Material Examined: 1 male, 6.ii.2000, Courtallam.

Remarks: Fairly common

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

12. *Trithemis aurora* (Burmeister)

Material Examined: 1 male, 6.ii.2000, Courtallam Falls.

Remarks: Rare. The species was caught from the top of the falls, perched on a rock.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

13. *Trithemis festiva* (Ramb.)

Material Examined: 1 male, 7.ii.2000, Five Falls.

Remarks: Rare. Territorial fights with *Orthetrum glaucum* observed near the rocky boulders of the falls.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Sub Family: Trameinae

14. *Pantala flavescens* (Fabr.)

Remarks: Very common. Swarms of these insects observed near Courtallam guest house and other open spaces.

Distribution: Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to Director, Zoological Survey of India and Officer-in-Charge, Zoological Survey of India Freshwater Biological Station, for various facilities. Thanks are also due to Dr. K. Ilango, leader of the survey party for the help rendered.

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