

## SECOND RECORD OF *RHINOLOPHUS BEDDOMEI* IN EASTERN GHATS, INDIA

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with web supplement

Nallamala Hills (14°26'-16°31'N & 78°30'-80°10'E) is an unbroken chain of rugged hills running in north-south direction and encompassing an area of about 7,640 km<sup>2</sup>. Two protected areas, namely the Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve (3,568 km<sup>2</sup>) and the Gundla Brahmeswaram Metta Wildlife Sanctuary (1,194 km<sup>2</sup>) located in the Nallamala Hills are home to diverse fauna (Srinivasulu & Nagulu, 2002) including some rare taxon like Rusty-spotted Cat, Yellow-browed Bulbul, Little Pied Flycatcher and Yellow-throated Bulbul (Rao *et al.*, 1999; Srinivasulu & Rao, 2000; Srinivasulu, 2002, 2003). During one survey we collected one rare bat of the Eastern Ghats.

On 9 May 2002, around 1530h, we observed a bat hanging from the chain of the bell hung in the dome of an ancient Shiva temple (15°39'N & 78°43'E) on the Metta (=Plateau) (alt. 775m) in Gundla Brahmeswaram Metta Wildlife Sanctuary. The bat, a gravid female, was collected (Image 1<sup>w</sup>) for identification and measurements (head and body length: 75.0mm; forearm length: 63.5mm; tail length: 44.0mm; hindfoot length: 16.0mm; and ear length: 29.0mm) during which it succumbed.

The specimen had conspicuous long and woolly pelage. Basing only on the external morphology, sella type (Image 2<sup>w</sup>) and measurements, this species was identified to be the Lesser Woolly Horseshoe Bat, *Rhinolophus beddomei* (Chiroptera: Rhinolophidae). Cranial measurements were not taken because of lack of confidence in dissecting the single specimen. The specimen is wet preserved and deposited (Coll. No: ERM/MC21) in the Field Museum of Andhra Pradesh Forest Department in the headquarters of Nagarjunasagar Srisailem Tiger Reserve at Sunnipenta, Kurnool District.

The ease of capture of this gravid female (by hand) could be because of her condition nearing parturition which indicates a later date than that reported by Brosset (1962) in March and April from Maharashtra. In Sri Lanka a gravid female was collected in January (Phillips, 1924) indicating a much earlier birthing season.

There is only one known locality, namely Thummalabailu (14°11'N & 79°09'E) Rajampeta Range, South Cuddapah, Andhra Pradesh in the Eastern Ghats from where this species was collected earlier in September 1929 (Paula Jenkins, *in litt.*, 03

February 2003). The present collection is the second recorded occurrence of this species from the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh which increases its distribution range further north by about 160km.

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Mr. S.K. Das, IFS, PCCF, Mr. Hitesh Malhotra, IFS, Addl. PCCF (Wildlife) and Mr. A.V. Joseph, IFS, CCF (Wildlife) of Andhra Pradesh Forest Department for permission and encouragement. CS acknowledges Research Associateship grant by CSIR, New Delhi.

\* See Images 1 & 2 at [www.zoosprint.org](http://www.zoosprint.org).

