



Recent Sightings of the Malabar Toad, *Duttaphrynus hololius* (Günther 1876), from Tamil Nadu, India

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The Malabar Toad, *Duttaphrynus hololius* (Günther 1876), also known as Günther's Toad (Fig. 1), is a rare Indian endemic (Biju et al. 2004). Recent studies (Satyamurthi 1967; Thurston 1888; Pillai and Ravichandran 1991; Daniels 1992; Chandramouli et al. 2011; Adimallaiah et al. 2012; Kalaimani et al. 2012; Srinivasulu et al. 2013) cited records from Vishakhapatnam, Nellore, and Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh; from Nalgonda, Telangana, Krishnagiri, Villupuram, and two sites at Vellore in Tamil Nadu; and from Bannerghatta and Ramanagara in Karnataka; all are in the Eastern Ghats. Herein, we document a new southernmost locality in Tamil Nadu (Fig. 2).

On 24 October 2013, MR visited the historic Chithannavasal (10°27'59.53"N, 78°44'0.42"E; elev. 127 m), Pudukkottai District, Tamil Nadu. At about 1810 h, he encountered seven toads on rock boulders near the stairs and on the rock wall near naturally flowing water. Considerable rain had fallen two days prior to this sighting. Subsequently, at 1800 h on 14 February 2014, a return to the site revealed no toads. The surrounding grassy area had burned. Again, on 12 September 2017, both authors visited the site and encountered four toads at about 1830 h near puddles and in grassy patches. The toads were examined (not collected) and identified as *Duttaphrynus hololius*. We also saw Common



Fig. 1. A Malabar Toad (*Duttaphrynus hololius*) encountered at Chithannavasal, Pudukkottai District, Tamil Nadu. Photograph by M. Rameshwaran.

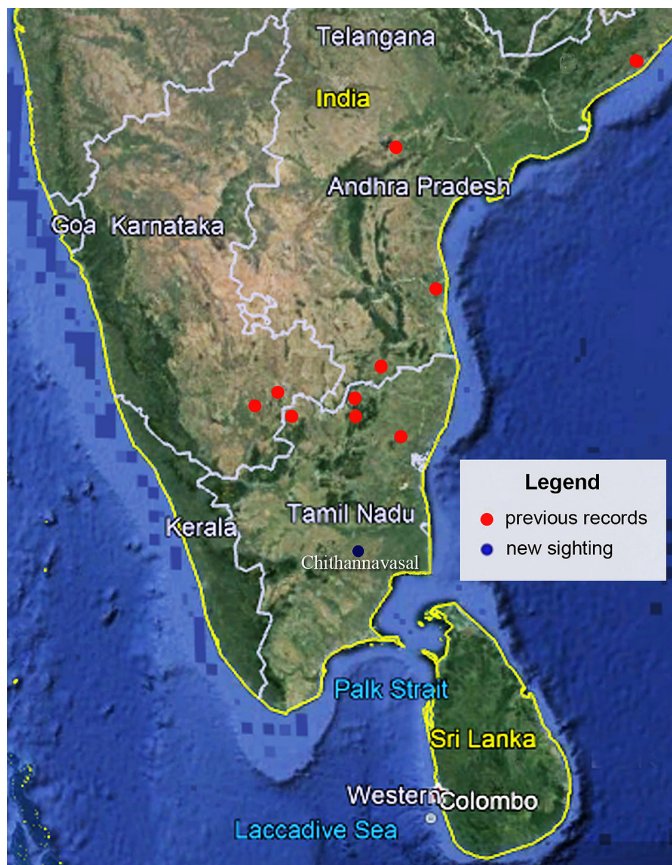


Fig. 2. Map of peninsular India showing the distribution of the Malabar Toad (*Duttaphrynus hololius*).

Indian Treefrogs (*Polypedates maculatus*) and Five-fingered Frogs (*Euphlyctis* sp.). Habitat in the area (Fig. 3) is a boulder-strewn mountain slope with thorny scrub, small to medium-sized trees, grassy patches, and shallow puddles. Uncontrolled tourism and fires started inadvertently (or intentionally) likely pose substantive threats to this population.

Acknowledgements

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Fig. 3. Habitat at Chithannavasal, Pudukkottai District, Tamil Nadu where Malabar Toads (*Duttaphrynus hololius*) were encountered. Photograph by M. Rameshwaran.

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