



First Record of the Arrowback Tree Snake, *Boiga gocoool* (Gray 1835) (Reptilia: Squamata: Colubridae), from Uttar Pradesh, India

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The colubrid genus *Boiga* Fitzinger, 1826 is currently comprised of 35 species (Uetz et al. 2020; Giri et al. 2019). Aengals et al. (2018) reported 16 species from India, of which *Boiga trigonata* and *Boiga forsteni* are known to occur in Uttar Pradesh (Kanaujia et al. 2017). The Arrowback Tree Snake, *Boiga gocoool* is endemic to southern Asia and known with certainty from India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh (Wallach et al. 2014; Das 2016), with the center of radiation in Assam and outer distributional records in Darjeeling (West Bengal) to the west, Sadiya (Assam) to the north, Manipur to the east, and Jessore (Bangladesh) to the south (Das et al. 2010). In eastern India, the species was thought to occur largely in the plains and low hills north and south of the Brahmaputra Valley (Das et al. 2010). Recently, Mohalik et al. (2020) reported the occurrence of the species in Odisha and their updated distributional map included Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, and West Bengal, excluding Mizoram, although Lalremsanga and Lalronunga (2017) had recorded the species in Mizoram.

At 1107 h on 14 July 2020, Mr Amitosh Jaiswal captured a snake after one of his gardeners was bitten on the hand while watering a flower pot in the Tiger Rhino Resort (Fig. 1) at Palia Kalan adjacent to the Chaman Chouraha Road near Dudhwa



Fig. 1. Collection site of a juvenile Arrowback Tree Snake (*Boiga gocoool*) at Palia Kalan, Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh, India.



Fig. 2. A juvenile Arrowback Tree Snake (*Boiga gocoool*) collected at Palia Kalan, Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh, India.



Fig. 3. An updated range map of the Arrowback Tree Snake (*Boiga gocoool*) showing previously known localities (yellow dots) in India and Bangladesh, including the southernmost record from Dagara, Odisha (orange dot) (Mohalik et al. 2020). The new record from Palia Kalan, Uttar Pradesh, India, reported herein is indicated by a red dot and recent records from Umiam, Meghalaya, and West Phaileng, Mizoram, by blue dots.

National Park, Lakhimpur Kheri District, Uttar Pradesh, India (28°46'77.78"N, 80°62'26.55"E; 190 m asl). This site is about 180 km north of Lucknow, the state capital, and 700 km west of the nearest previously recorded locality for the species in Jaipalguri District, Assam. The snake was examined and identified as a juvenile *Boiga gocoool* measuring 25 cm in total length (Fig. 2). The snake was released into nearby forest.

Although we cannot rule out the possibility that this snake arrived at the site through human mediation, we believe that this first record of the species from the state of Uttar Pradesh is the westernmost record for this species (Fig. 3). If true, the range extension from West Bengal to Uttar Pradesh suggests that *Boiga gocoool* might also occur in the intervening areas of Bihar and Nepal. The updated range map of *Boiga gocoool* provided herein also includes new records in Umiam, Meghalaya (based on photographs by Col. Yash Singh) and West Phaileng near the Dampa Tiger Reserve, Mamit District, Mizoram (photograph by Vanlalhrima) (Lalremsanga and Lalronunga 2017).

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