



# A New Distributional Record for Diard’s Blindsnake, *Argyrophis diardii* (Schlegel 1839), from the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, India

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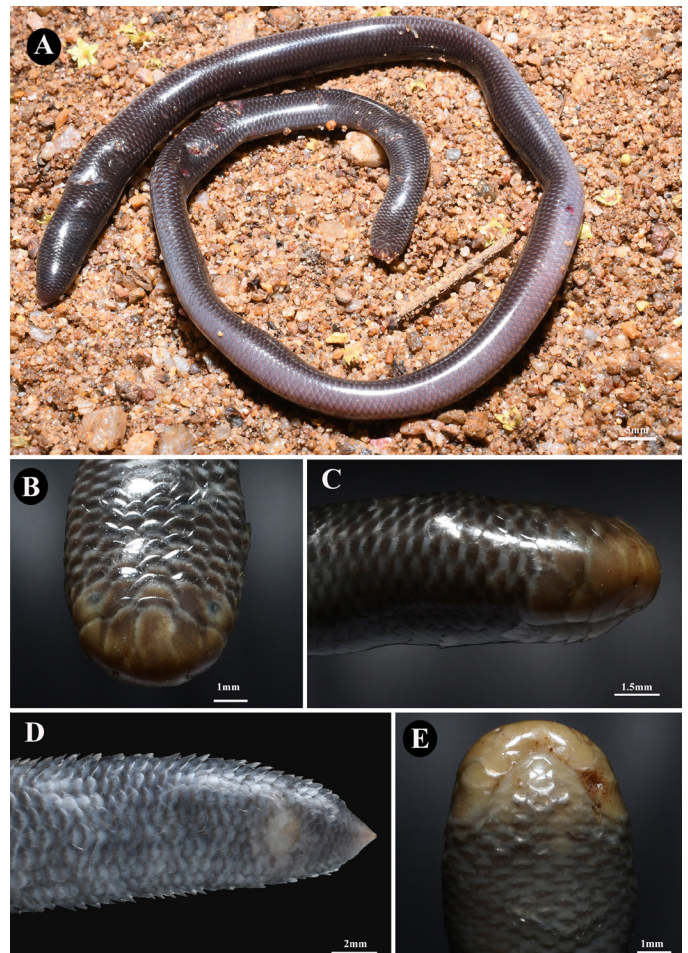
Diard’s Blindsnake (*Argyrophis diardii*), which ranges throughout Indochina (Wallach et al. 2014), was initially described from Java, Indonesia (Schlegel 1839). In India, its distribution comprises the states of Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Bihar, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Tripura. Other countries where *A. diardii* is known to occur are Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Myanmar (Wallach et al. 2014; Uetz et al. 2022; Vivek 2017). In part due to its extensive distribution, *A. diardii* has been assessed as being of Least Concern on the IUCN Red List (Limbu et al. 2022). However, it is listed under Schedule II in the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 (Ministry of Law and Justice 2022).

We collected a dead specimen of *A. diardii* on 8 September 2022 (Fig. 1), from the Rampa Waterfall, Papikonda National Park, Andhra Pradesh, Eastern Ghats, India (17.4672 N, 81.7858 E). The specimen was preserved in 70% alcohol and deposited in the National Zoological Collections, Zoological Survey of India, Freshwater Biology Regional Centre, Hyderabad, Telangana (FBRC/ZSI/VER/111). Measurements and counts were: snout-vent-length = 265.9 mm, tail length = 4.1 mm, head width = 5.0 mm, midbody diameter = 7.0 mm, snout tip to eye = 3.0 mm, eye diameter = 0.8 mm, scale rows = 350 with 25 scales around = midbody, and subcaudals = 13.

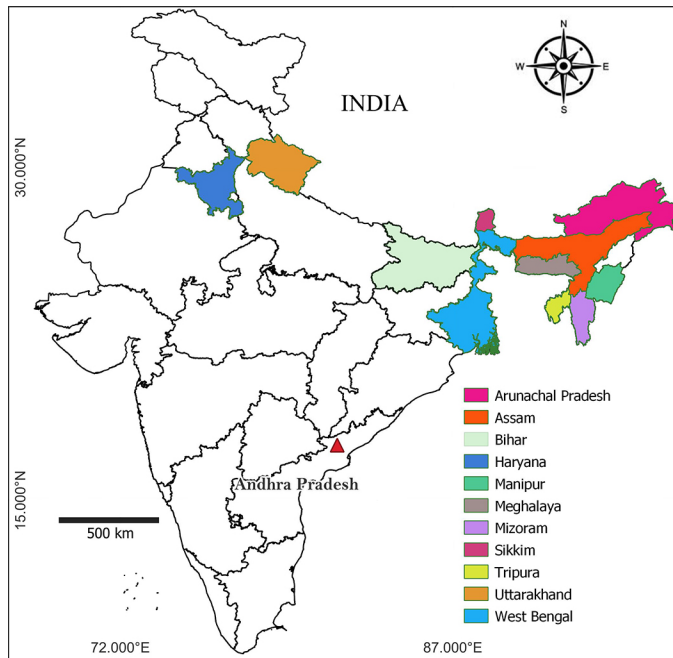
Based on the morphological characters, this snake was identified as *A. diardii* by consulting Smith (1943), Khan (1998), Sharma (2003), Whitaker and Captain (2008), Wallach et al. (2014), Pyron et al. 2014, Lalrinhlua (2018), and Uetz et al. (2022). The identity of the specimen was independently verified by Dr. Pratyush P. Mohapatra.

This is the first report of *A. diardii* from the Eastern Ghats and the state of Andhra Pradesh, India (Fig. 2). The previously recorded distribution of *A. diardii* was limited to

northeastern India’s Indo-Gangetic and Eastern Himalayan



**Figure 1.** Diard’s Blindsnake (*Argyrophis diardii*) from the Rampa Waterfall, Papikonda National Park, Andhra Pradesh, Eastern Ghats, India. Note the stout, cylindrical body with smooth, shiny scales (A), head in dorsal (B) and right lateral views (C), short tail with a terminal spike (D), and head in ventral view (E). Photographs by B. Bharath.



**Figure 2.** A map indicating the distribution of Diard's Blindsnake (*Argyrophis diardii*) in India. The red triangle indicates the new record. Previously published reports of this species in Indian states are indicated by the key.

Regions. Reviews of the literature addressing the herpetofauna of the Eastern Ghats (Rao et al. 2005; Srinivasulu et al. 2008; Ganesh et al. 2016; Pandi et al. 2018; Ganesh et al. 2018; Surya and Raju 2020; Ganesh and Guptha 2021) revealed no prior reports of *A. diardii*.

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