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NOTE

RECENT RECORDS AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDIAN BROWN MONGOOSE *HERPESITES FUSCUS* GRAY, 1837 (MAMMALIA: CARNIVORA: HERPESTIDAE) FROM THE SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS, INDIA

R. Sreehari, Sandeep Das, M. Gnanakumar, K.P. Rajkumar, K.A. Sreejith, Navaneeth Kishor, Dhaneesh Bhaskar, P.S. Easa & P.O. Nameer

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RECENT RECORDS AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE INDIAN BROWN MONGOOSE *HERPESTES FUSCUS* GRAY, 1837 (MAMMALIA: CARNIVORA: HERPESTIDAE) FROM THE SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS, INDIA

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The family Herpestidae comprises 34 species in the world of which seven species are known from India and four from the Western Ghats (Mudappa 2013; Nameer 2015). The Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* is a species with restricted distribution and is seen in the southern Western Ghats and Sri Lanka. Four subspecies of the Brown Mongoose have been recognised by Corbet & Hill (1992). They are *H.f. fuscus*, *H.f. phillipsi*, *H.f. siccatus* and *H.f. rubidor*, of which the one seen in the

Western Ghats is *H.f. fuscus*, while the remaining three subspecies are confined to Sri Lanka (Gilchrist et al. 2009).

The primary habitat of *H.f. fuscus* is the evergreen forests, high altitude grasslands-shola forests, and adjoining tea and coffee plantations (Mudappa 2002; Mudappa et al. 2008). In the Western Ghats the Brown Mongoose is seen within the altitude range 492m to 2,032m (Mudappa et al. 2008; Sreehari et al. 2013). Until 03 March 2015, the conservation status of the Brown Mongoose was Vulnerable (Mudappa et al. 2008). However, the recent IUCN Red List revision has down listed the species as Least Concern because of additional sight records of the Brown Mongoose from the Western Ghats, India (Mudappa & Jathanna 2015). We summarize our recent sight records of Brown Mongoose in the southern Western Ghats.

Five independent sightings of the Brown Mongoose were made from the evergreen forest near Pandipath camp shed and Athirumala base camp, in Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary, Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala (Fig. 1, Table 1, Images 1 & 2). One pair was observed frequenting the premises of the camp shed during the day and night feeding from the litter.

A Brown Mongoose was sighted and also camera trapped (Bushnell Trophy Cam infrared camera trap) inside the reed patches of Pandimotta, in Shendurney



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Image 1. Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* from Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala (6 April 2013)

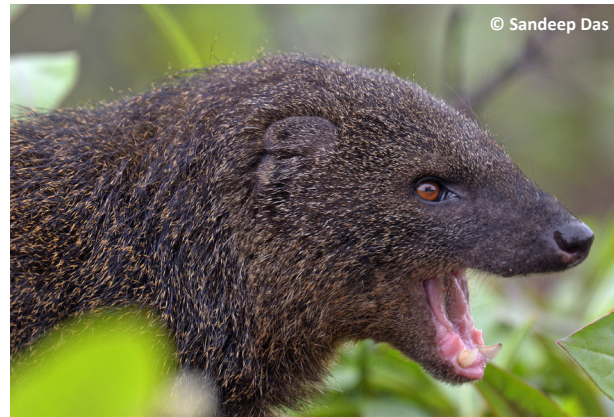


Image 2. Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* from Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala (9 April 2013)

Table 1. Current records of Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* from Kerala, India.

Date	Time	Record	Lat. (N)	Log. (E)	Alt. (m)	Vegetation type
Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary, Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala						
06.iv.2013	22:00	Direct sighting	8.67°N	77.18°E	1,330m	Evergreen
09.iv.2013	10:50	Direct sighting	8.67°N	77.18°E	1,330m	Evergreen
09.iv.2013	21:05	Direct sighting	8.67°N	77.18°E	1,330m	Evergreen
07.x.2013	20:30	Direct sighting	8.61°N	77.23°E	1,010m	Evergreen
13.i.2014	23:00	Direct sighting	8.67°N	77.18°E	1,330m	Evergreen
Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary, Kollam District, Kerala						
22.xi.2013	23:20	Direct sighting	8.82°N	77.22°E	1,230m	Reeds
23.xi.2013	01:43	Camera trap	8.82°N	77.22°E	1,240m	Evergreen
Pambaran Tea Estate, Peermade, Idukki District, Kerala						
08.ii.2015	09:46	Direct sighting	9.57°N	77.03°E	1,103m	Tea plantation
Periyar Tiger Reserve, Idukki District, Kerala						
09.x.2015	09:10	Direct sighting	9.49°N	77.13°E	1,069m	Grassland-shola
Pampadum Shola National Park, Idukki District, Kerala						
12.x.2013	10:13	Direct sighting	9.70°N	77.40°E	1,970m	Shola
29.vi.2014	07:51	Direct sighting	9.70°N	77.40°E	1,940m	Shola
Eravikulam National Park, Idukki District, Kerala						
15.i.2015	21:00	Direct sighting	10.27°N	77.08°E	2,033m	Grassland-Shola

Wildlife Sanctuary, Kollam District, Kerala (Fig. 1, Table 1, Image 3).

The Brown Mongoose was also sighted from different parts of Idukki District in Kerala. That includes, one record near the log house on the old Kodaikanal road inside the Pampadum Shola National Park, two adults with a young at shola forest within Pampadum Shola National Park, one adult with two pups on the forest road near the Uppupaara camp shed of Periyar Tiger Reserve,

and one in Pambaran tea plantation near Peermade and one on the Kottayam-Kumily State Highway (Fig.1, Table 1). Mudappa et al. (2008) also reported the sighting of the Brown Mongoose from Peermade.

A Brown Mongoose was sighted from Eravikulam National Park near Poovar camp shed (Fig. 1, Table 1). The Brown Mongoose was earlier camera trapped on 9 December 2012, from the Eravikulam Hut region of the National Park (Sreehari et al. 2013).



Image 3. Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* from Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala (22 November 2013)

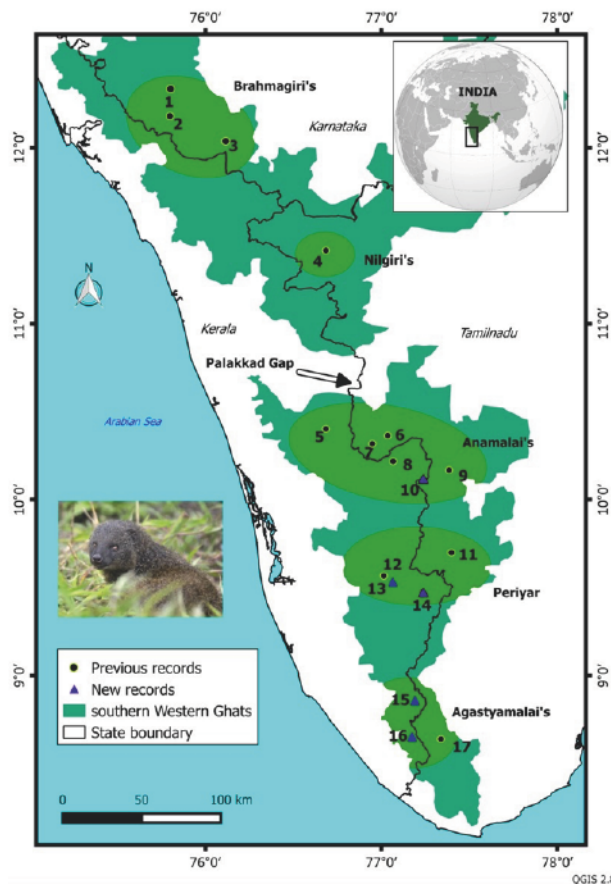


Figure 1. Distribution map of Indian Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* in Western Ghats

Apart from these six recent confirmed records of the Brown Mongoose, there are 11 published reports on the Brown Mongoose from the Western Ghats (Table 2, Fig. 1). We also estimated the area of occupancy for the Brown Mongoose in the Western Ghats using the QGIS

Table 2. Records of Brown Mongoose *Herpestes fuscus* from the Western Ghats

# in map	Location *	Lat (N)	Log (E)	Reference
1	Kodagu, Karnataka	12.33°N	75.80°E	Prater 1971
2	Virajpete, Karnataka	12.18°N	75.80°E	Pocock 1939
3	Nagarahole, Karnataka	12.03°N	76.12°E	Karanth 1986
4	Ooty, Tamil Nadu	11.42°N	76.68°E	Prater 1971
5	Parambikulam Tiger Reserve, Kerala	10.40°N	76.68°E	Sreehari et al. 2013
6	Anamalai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu	10.35°N	77.02°E	Mudappa et al. 2007
7	Valparai, Tamil Nadu	10.32°N	76.95°E	Mudappa et al. 2007; Navya et al. 2014
8	Eravikulam National Park, Kerala	10.22°N	77.07°E	Sreehari et al. 2013; Present study
9	Tiger Shola, Palni Hills, Tamil Nadu	10.17°N	77.38°E	Corbet & Hill 1992
10	Pambadum Shola National Park, Kerala	10.13°N	77.25°E	Present study
11	High Wavy Mountains, Tamil Nadu	9.70°N	77.40°E	Srinivas et al. 2013
12	Pambanar, Idukki, Kerala	9.57°N	77.03°E	Present study
13	Peerumedu, Idukki, Kerala	9.55°N	77.01°E	Mudappa et al. 2008
14	Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala	9.49°N	77.13°E	Present study
15	Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala	8.82°N	77.22°E	Present Study
16	Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala	8.67°N	77.18°E	Present study
17	Kalakkad-Mundunthurai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu	8.58°N	77.39°E	Johnsingh 2001; Mudappa 1998

(* some additional records, particularly those not formally published, from within or near these sites are not shown)

(ver. 2.8.1) as 18,612km².

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