

A preliminary survey on the snakes of Buldhana district, Maharashtra

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Abstract

An annotated checklist of snakes is prepared on basis of the collected information from survey during during Jan.2007- Dec.2009 on the basis of habitat structure and possibility of availability of the species. 22 species belonging six families were recorded. This includes. 18 Non Venomous species and 4 venomous in which 2 snakes from Typhlopidae, 2 snakes from Boidae, 1 snake from Pythonidae, 13 snakes from Colubridae, 2 snakes from Elapidae and 2 snakes are from Viperidae family. In non-venomous species of snakes, Ramphotyphlos braminus, Gongylophis (Eryx) conicus, Coelognathus helena helena, Ptyas mucosa, Xenochrophis piscator, Oligodon arnensis, Lycodon olicus, Argyrogena fasciolata, Boiga trigonata, are common snakes. While Grypotyphlos (Rhinotyphlos) acutus, Ahaetulla nasuta are uncommon with Eryx johnii, Dendrelaphis tristis, Macropisthodon plumbicolor, Sibynophis sp., Psammophis longitrons and Boiga forsteni are were shows their rare status. Regarding venomous snakes Naja naja and Daboia russelii are common with uncommon Bungarus caeruleus and Echis carinatus shows rare status. This information will helps to provide information, awareness and conservation of the fauna in Buldhana district of maharashtra state about snakes of Buldhana district, Maharashtra.

Key Words: Abundance, Buldhana District, Snake friends, snakes

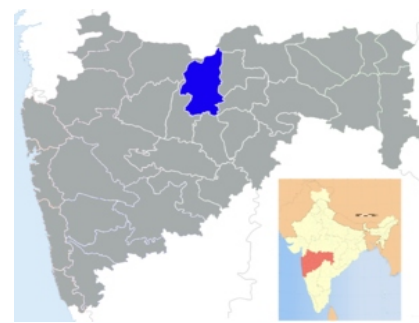
Introduction

Buldhana district is a district in the [Amravati division](#) of [Maharashtra](#) state in western [India](#). It is situated at the westernmost border of [Vidarbha](#) region of Maharashtra and is 500 km from the state capital, [Mumbai](#). It is bounded by [Madhya Pradesh](#) on the north, [Akola](#), [Washim](#), and [Amravati](#) districts on the east, [Jalna](#) district on the south, and [Jalgaon](#) and [Aurangabad](#) districts on the west.. District covers nearly 9,640 sq.km. area. Buldhana district with rich environment forest and biodiversity. This paper was attempted to evaluate the proper information about snake's fauna of Buldhana district of Maharashtra on their occurrence abundance and richness. Living snakes are found on every continent except Antarctica and on most islands. Fifteen [families](#) are currently recognized, comprising 456 [genera](#) and over 2,900 [species](#). They range in size from the tiny, 10 cm-long [thread snake](#) to [pythons](#) and [anacondas](#) of up to 7.6 meters (25 ft) in length.

Material and Method

Buldhana district is with rich environment forest and biodiversity lies between latitude parallel 19°31'N and longitude parallel 75°34'E. a survey is made by team of four persons with the help of local snake friends of selected zones like Jalgaon (Jamod), Sangrampur, Nandura, Khamgaon. Shegaon, etc. Each zone was randomly explored during Jan.2007- Dec.2009 on the basis of habitat structure and possibility of availability of the species. As well a team

attended calls informing us about occurrence of snakes in residential area. In addition secondary information was collected on different species of snakes from native peoples by interviewing and showing colors photographs of the species to them. All collected specimens were examined and carefully identified by using keys given by Whitakar and captain (2004). An Annotated checklist of snakes is prepared on basis of the collected information from above mention sources.



Map of Buldhana District

Results and Discussion

Diverse habitats of the district are rapidly changing due to irrigation projects and industrialization. Forest areas are being denotified for implementing development projects such as mining, communication and tourism. This has resulted in shrinkage, fragmentation, degradation and destruction of natural habitats. (Gohil, 1983; Ufri, 1999; Vyas, 2000). From urban areas indicate that natural habitats of snakes are under severe anthropogenic pressure.

Table-1: Snakes of Buldhana district, Maharashtra

No.	Family and Common Name	Scientific Name*	Local Name S	Max. Length#	Status
01	Typhlopidae				
01	Common worm snake	<i>Ramphotyphlos braminus</i>	Waal	06	C
02	Beaked worm (Blind) snake	<i>Grypotyphlos (Rhinotyphlos) acutus</i>	-	14	U
	Boidae				
03	Common sand (Russell's Earth)boa	<i>Gongylophis (Eryx) conicus</i>	Dhurkya	38	C
04	Red sand (John's Earth) boa	<i>Eryx johnii</i>	Mandol	24	R
	Pythonidae				
05	Indian rock python	<i>Python molurus molurus</i>	Ajar	124	R
	Colubridae				
06	Trinket snake	<i>Coelognathus helena helena</i>	Taskar	48	C
07	Common rat snake	<i>Ptyas mucosa</i>	Dhaman	23	C
08	Common bronzeback tree snake	<i>Dendrelaphis tristis</i>		26	R

09	Checkered keelback	<i>Xenochrophis piscator</i>	Pan-divad	48	C
10	Green kelback	<i>Macropisthodon plumbicolor</i>	Gavya	19	R
11	Common kukri snake	<i>Oligodon arnensis</i>	Kukri	12	C
12	Common wolf snake	<i>Lycodon aulicus</i>	Kawadya	19	C
13	Domeril's black headed snake	<i>Sibynophis sp.</i>	-	18	R
14	Stout sand snakes	<i>Psammophis longitrons</i>	-	57	R
15	Common vine (whip) snake	<i>Ahaetulla nasuta</i>	Harantod	30	U
16	Banded racer	<i>Argyrogena fasciolata</i>	Dhulnagin	38	C
17	Common cat snake	<i>Boiga trigonata</i>	Manjarya	30	C
18	Forsten's cat snake	<i>Boiga forsteni</i>	Manjarya	60	R
Elapidae					
19	Indian cobra	<i>Naja naja</i>	Naag	72	C
20	Common Indian krait	<i>Bungarus caeruleus</i>	Manyar	60	U
Viperidae					
21	Russell's viper	<i>Daboia russelii</i>	Ghonas	51	C
22	Saw-scaled viper	<i>Echis carinatus</i>	Fursya	12	R

Status: C-Common U- Uncommon R-Rare

* Whittakar and captain (2004).

§ may vary from area to area.

In inches

Survey shows the abundance of total 22 snakes species belonging to 5 families are reported (Table 1). From the total identified species 18 are non-venomous and 4 are venomous. In non-venomous species of snakes, Ramphotyphlos braminus, Gongylophis (Eryx) conicus, Coelognathus helena helena, Ptyas mucosa, Xenochrophis piscator, Oligodon arnensis, Lycodon aulicus, Argyrogena fasciolata, Boiga trigonata, are common snakes. While Grypotyphlos (Rhinyotyphlos) acutus, Ahaetulla nasuta are uncommon with Eryx johnii, Dendrelaphis tristis, Macropisthodon plumbicolor, Sibynophis sp., Psammophis longitrons and Boiga forsteni are were shows their rare status. Regarding venomous snakes Naja naja and Daboia russelii are common with uncommon Bungarus caeruleus and Echis carinatus shows rare status.

From the above result, it can conclude that the Buldhana district shows the abundance of total 22 snake's species belonging to 5 families of which 18 are non-venomous and 4 are venomous. There are, in future, chance of more species being reported because of few pockets and habitats in the district required more extensive exploration. The anthropogenic activities are affecting the abundance of snake fauna. The present study will may help to develop awareness in people and to conserve the snakes fauna in Buldhana district of Indian state Maharashtra.

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