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Woodmason’s Earth Snake: photographic evidence in Nilgiris, India

Uropeltis woodmasoni, commonly known as Woodmason’s Earth Snake is a species of snake in the family Uropeltidae. It is endemic to the Western Ghats of India and it has been recorded in the Anaimalai, Palani, Meghamalai, Nilgiri, and Ashambu Hills. This fossorial species inhabits moist soils and was primarily reported to be found in montane shola forests. Known from the Palani hills of India, in the Anaimalai-Palani hill complexes, south of the Palghat Gap, c. 1860–2100 m (Wall 1923; Wallach et al. 2014; Ganesh 2015). This note represented the occurrence of Woodmason’s Earth Snake *Uropeltis woodmasoni* in Nilgiris with photographic evidence.

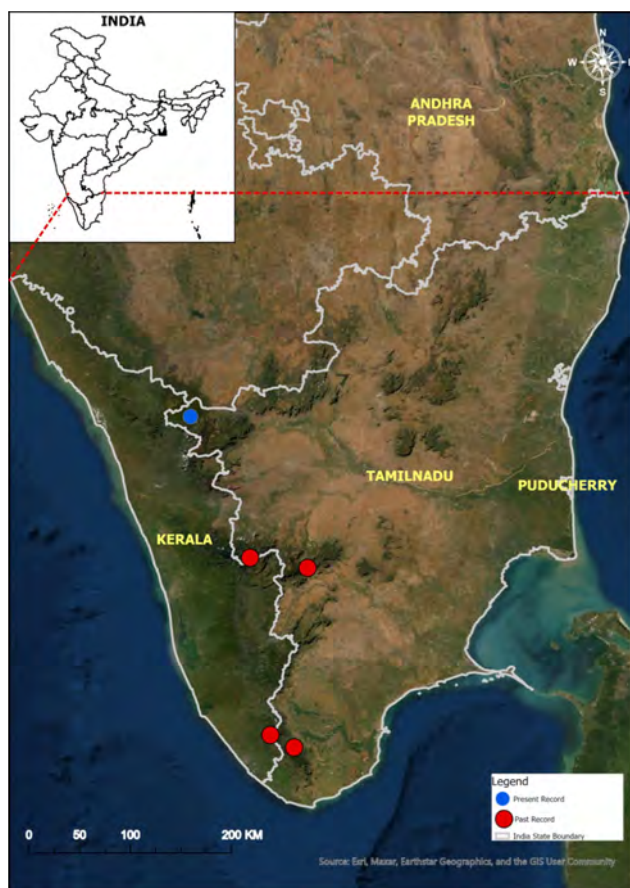
On 24 May 2022 at 1030 h, we recorded the Woodmason’s



Woodmason’s Earth Snake *Uropeltis woodmasoni* in Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India. © G. Rajesh Kumar Jain.

Earth Snake in the human habitation surrounded by tea estate from Gudalur areas (11.54917 N & 76.41446 E, elevation 1,125 m) of Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India.

We photographed the snake species for identification purpose and did not collect the snake. Later, based on the physical characteristics of the snake, such as dorsum



Distribution records of Woodmason's Earth Snake *Uropeltis woodmasoni* in southern India.

blackish, with transverse series of small round yellow spots. A lateral series of large yellow spots and ventrum blackish are confirmed to Woodmason's Earth Snake. The total length of the snake was 26.5 cm (SVL 26 cm & TL 0.5 cm).

Woodmason's Earth Snake is a very common snake species in Palani Hills, Tamil Nadu (Rajendran 1985; Smith 1943; Ganesh 2015). Rather than Palani hills, Woodmason's Earth Snake was reported in Anaimalai Hills, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu (Smith 1943), and Travancore Hills, Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala (Wall 1923). There is some unauthenticated information that shows Woodmason's Earth Snake distribution in

Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu. The present record showed the authenticated photographic evidence of Woodmason's Earth Snake in Nilgiris region. Further studies are warranted to understand the distribution of the Woodmason's Earth Snake in Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, India.

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