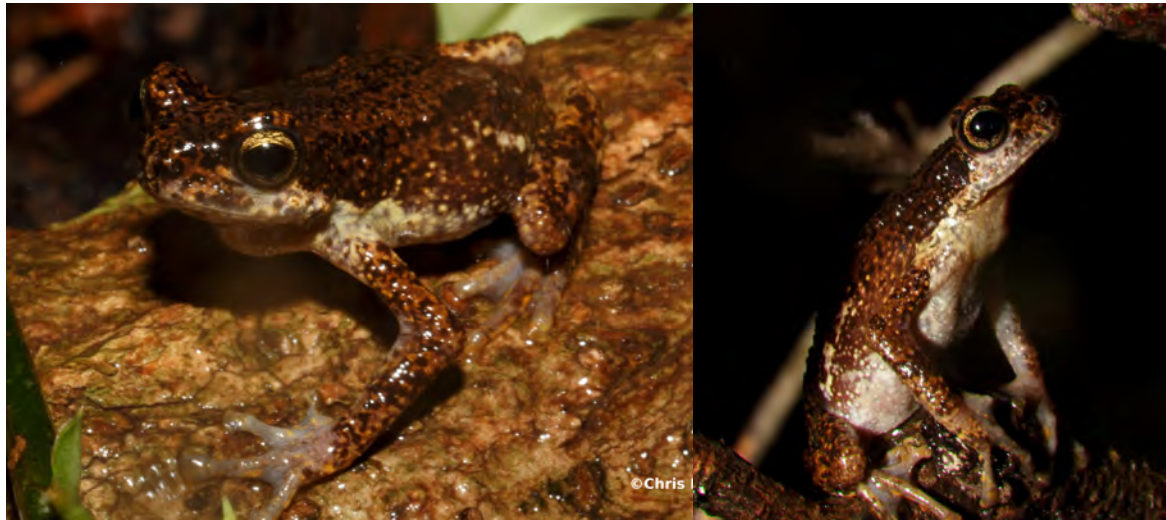




MALABAR TREE TOAD

Occurrence of *Pedostibes tuberculosus* from the Tillari, northern Western Ghats, Maharashtra, India



Malabar Tree Toad from Tillari region

IUCN Red List:
Endangered
(Biju et al. 2004)

Amphibia
[Class of Amphibians]

Anura
[Order of frogs]

Bufo
[Family of true toads]

Pedostibes tuberculosus
[Malabar Tree Toad]

Species described by
Günther in 1876

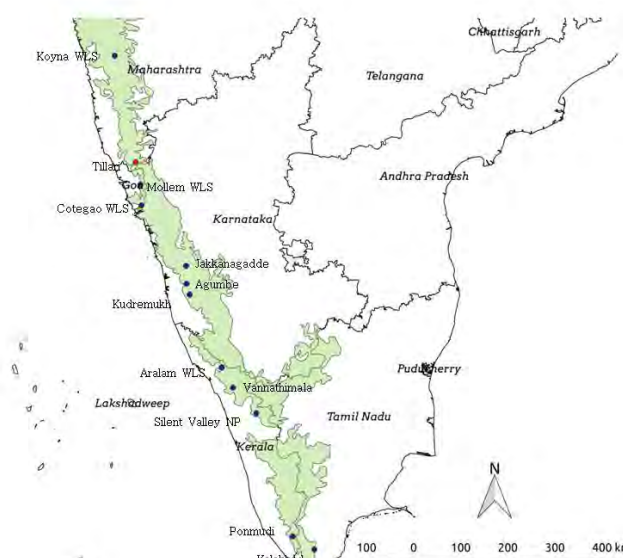
The Malabar Tree Toad (*Pedostibes tuberculosus*) is endemic to the Western Ghats and is mainly found in evergreen pockets. The species is rare and listed as Endangered in the IUCN Red List (Biju et al. 2004). It was first described by Günther in 1876 and it remained unseen until its rediscovery in 1980 from Kerala (Pillai 1986). Since then, it has been recorded from Goa (Das & Whitaker 1996; Dahanukar et al. 2004), Kerala (Inger et al. 1984; Pillai 1986), Tamil Nadu (Biju 2001) and Karnataka (Gururaja & Ramachandra 2006). It has also been reported from Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary in Maharashtra (Sayyed & Nale 2017).

We recorded the presence of the Malabar Tree Toad *Pedostibes tuberculosus* from Tillari in the Dodamarg Taluk, Sindhudurg district in the state of Maharashtra (15.7843°N & 74.1107°E). The current observation and the previous known records of distribution of the species. We observed this toad



on a tree adjoining a shallow, seasonal fast-flowing stream during our surveys to study the herpetofauna in the Tillari region. We also heard two other individuals of the same species calling from the same area. The advertisement calls of males matched that of the description of calls of males described by Gururaja & Ramachandra (2006). The location of the sighting was inside a small forest patch dominated by the semi-evergreen and moist deciduous patches, in a sacred grove, close to paddy fields and cashew plantations. The time of observation was in the month of June, which coincided with earlier records.

Global Distribution :
India - Endemic to Western Ghats (Biju et al. 2004)



Map showing the distribution of Malabar Tree Toad in Western Ghats.

Note: WLS= Wildlife Sanctuary. NP= National Park. Western Ghats boundary data source: India Biodiversity Portal

We confirmed the identification of Malabar Tree Toad using the diagnostic features listed in scientific literature available for the species (Daniel 1963) with the following key characters: A slender, small toad with the tips of fingers and toes dilated into truncated discs; tympanum distinct, 1/3 diameter of eye; parotids present; fingers webbed at base, first finger half the length of the second; toes almost fully webbed; skin

of back tubercular with the largest tubercles in two rows on the sides of back; colour brownish-grey above with darker sides; a white band from below the eye to the shoulder and another on the flank; below whitish spotted with black.

This location, where the species was recorded, lies at an elevation of 113m. This species has previously been recorded at elevations ranging from 300–1800 m. The Tillari region is approximately 360km from the Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, which is the known northern-most range for the species. Cotegao (Khotigao) Wildlife sanctuary, its closest nearby known location, is 150km away. This is the new record for the range of this species and the elevation at which it is found.



This observation is a part of project that aims to generate baseline qualitative and quantitative data of various taxa across Sahyadri-Konkan corridor, which will help for long term monitoring and management of the wildlife.

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