

HERPETOFAUNA OF HINGOLGADH NATURE EDUCATION SANCTUARY, GUJARAT

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The Gujarat State is rich in habitat and biodiversity. A total 16,902.38 sq.km. of the state is declared under National Parks and Sanctuary. Nevertheless, non-of them have been studied well regarding herpetofaunal diversity, except Gir forests.

Hingolghadh Nature Education Sanctuary (HNES) is located between 70°18'-71°21' E and 22°7'-22°10' N, in Jasdan Tehsil of Rajkot district in Saurashtra peninsula, Gujarat, India (Rodger & Panwar, 1988). It falls under semi-arid bioclimatic zone. Average rainfall is 425 mm., which is erratic and for a short period. Temperature varies from average minimum of 10°C to average maximum 40°C. Currently, the Sanctuary is managed by the Gujarat Ecological Education Research (GEER) Foundation, Gandhinagar.

Only a limited information is available on the herpetofauna of HNES (Jasdan Raja, 1953; Rao & Choudhury, 1996; Das, 1997; Vyas, 1998). To inventory the herpetofauna of HNES, the entire Sanctuary (654.07 ha.) was surveyed for 20 days from August to November 1998. Methods included random survey in various habitats and contacting local people for information on reptiles and amphibians. All specimens were examined and identified using the keys given by Smith (1935; 1943) and Daniels (1997a; 1997b; 1997c). Nomenclature adopted here in are of Das (1994) and Dutta (1997) for reptiles and amphibians, respectively.

The status of each species assessed barring snakes is as follows: abundant (Number of sightings >100), common (75-51), less common (50-26), intermediate (25-6) and rare (<5). The herpetofauna of the HNES consist eight species of amphibians and 33 species of reptiles. Information on their habits and Status are given in Table 1. Among the 19 species of snakes, 15 were non-venomous. *Python molurus* earlier reported by Jasdan Raja (1953) from the area was not found during the present study.

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Family/Common name (Species)	Habit	Status
AMPHIBIANS		
<u>Bufonidae</u>		
1 Common Asian Toad (<i>Bufo melanostictus</i>)	Terrestrial	Abundance
2 Marbled Toad (<i>Bufo stomaticus</i>)	Terrestrial	Less common
<u>Microhylidae</u>		
3 Ornate Narrow-mouthed Frog (<i>Microhyla ornata</i>)	Fossorial	Abundance
<u>Ranidae</u>		
4 Indian Skipping Frog (<i>Euphyctis cyanophlyctis</i>)	Aquatic	Abundance
5 Indian Green Frog (<i>Euphyctis hexadactylus</i>)	Aquatic	Common
6 Indian Bull Frog (<i>Hoplobatrachus tigerinus</i>)	Aquatic	Less common
7 Cricket Frog (<i>Limnonectes limnocharis</i>)	Semiaquatic	Less common
8 Short-headed Burrowing Frog (<i>Tomopterna breviceps</i>)	Fossorial	Common
REPTILES		
<u>Testudinidae</u>		
1 Indian Star Tortoise (<i>Geochelone elegans</i>)	Terrestrial	Not assessed
<u>Trionychidae</u>		
2 Indian Flapshell Turtle (<i>Lissemys punctata</i>)	Aquatic	Common
<u>Eublepharidae</u>		
3 Fat-tailed Gecko (<i>Eublepharis fuscus</i>)	Terrestrial	Not assessed
<u>Gekkonidae</u>		
4 Brook's House Gecko (<i>Hemidactylus brookii</i>)	Terrestrial	Abundance
5 Yellow-green House Gecko (<i>Hemidactylus flaviviridis</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
6 Indian Termite Gecko (<i>Hemidactylus triedrus</i>)	Terrestrial	Abundance
<u>Agamidae</u>		
7 Indian Garden Lizard (<i>Calotes versicolor</i>)	Arboreal	Abundance
8 Fan-throated Lizard (<i>Sitana ponticeriana</i>)	Terrestrial	Abundance
<u>Scincidae</u>		
9 Spotted Supple Skink (<i>Lygosoma punctatus</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
10 Keeled Grass Skink (<i>Mabuya carinata</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
11 Bronze Grass Skink (<i>Mabuya macularia</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
<u>Lacertidae</u>		
12 Jordon's Snake Eye Lacerta (<i>Ophisops jerdonii</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
13 Small-scaled Lacerta (<i>Ophisops microlepis</i>)	Terrestrial	Common

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Family/Common name (Species)	Habits	Status
<u>Varanidae</u>		
14 Bengal Monitor Lizard (<i>Varanus bengalensis</i>)	Terrestrial	Common
<u>Typhlopidae</u>		
15 Brahminy Worm Snake (<i>Ramphotyphlops braminus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
<u>Boidae</u>		
16 Common Sand Boa (<i>Eryx conicus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
17 Red Sand Boa (<i>Eryx johnii</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
<u>Colubridae</u>		
18 Buff-striped Keelback (<i>Amphiesma stolata</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
19 Banded Racer (<i>Argyrogena fasciolata</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
20 Common Cat Snake (<i>Boiga trigonata</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
21 Common Bronze-back Tree Snake (<i>Dendrelaphis tristis</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
22 Indian Trinket Snake (<i>Elaphe helena</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
23 Common Wolf Snake (<i>Lycodon aulicus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
24 Barred Wolf Snake (<i>Lycodon striatus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
25 Banded Kukri Snake (<i>Oligodon arnensis</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
26 Streaked Kukari Snake (<i>Oligodon taeniolatus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
27 Pakistani Ribbon Snake (<i>Psammophis leithii</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
28 Rat Snake (<i>Ptyas mucosus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
29 Checkered Keelback Water Snake (<i>Xenochrophis piscator</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
<u>Elapidae</u>		
30 Common Indian Krait (<i>Bungarus caeruleus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
31 Slender Coral Snake (<i>Calliophis melanurus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
32 Indian Spectacled Cobra (<i>Naja naja</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed
<u>Viperidae</u>		
33 Saw-scaled Viper (<i>Echis carinatus</i>)	Not assessed	Not assessed

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