

A new species of *Gegeneophis* Peters (Amphibia: Gymnophiona: Caeciliidae) from the surroundings of Mookambika Wildlife Sanctuary, Karnataka, India

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Abstract

A new species of Indian caecilian, *Gegeneophis madhavai* (Amphibia: Gymnophiona: Caeciliidae) is described from two specimens collected from the Western Ghats of southern Karnataka. This species is distinguished from all other species of the genus in having visible eyes, fewer than 100 primary annuli and more than 25 secondary annuli confined to the posterior of the body.

Key words: caecilians, herpetology, Western Ghats, South Asia, systematics

Introduction

The endemic Indian genus *Gegeneophis* Peters of the family Caeciliidae was represented by only four species until 1999 (Pillai & Ravichandran 1999), *G. carnosus* (Beddome), *G. fulleri* (Alcock), *G. krishni* Pillai & Ravichandran, and *G. ramaswamii* Taylor. Recently two new species from India were added to the genus. Ravichandran *et al.* (2003) described *G. seshachari* from central western Maharashtra and Giri *et al.* (2003) described *G. danieli* from southern Maharashtra. More recently Bhatta and Prashanth (2004) described *G. nadekarnii* from Goa. In August 2001 we collected two specimens resembling each other from the Western Ghats part of Karnataka, India, which fit the generic diagnosis given by Giri *et al.* (2003) for *Gegeneophis*, but differ from all known species of the genus in having visible eyes, fewer than 100 primary annuli and more than 25 secondary annuli that are confined to the posterior of the body.