

birds there from time to time.¹ On 13 April, 1972, I saw a hen Crested Bunting in the early morning in my Forest-cum-Wildlife Research enclosure. It was solitary but near a group of Greynecked Buntings (*Emberiza buchanani* Blyth), and it seemed that it had been caught up with this small group. The birds were coming to water; after drinking, they disappeared. This is the first record of this species in Bhavnagar.

DIL BAHAR,

BHAVNAGAR-2,

April 14, 1972.

R. S. DHARMAKUMARSINHJI

12. FIRST RECORD WITH NOTES ON THE TUCKTOO *GEKKO GEKKO* (LINNAEUS) FROM THE ASSAM REGION

The last lap of an investigation of the reported occurrence of the Golden Langur in Garo Hills took us on 10th April to the Darugiri Reserve Forest where we camped at the Forest Bungalow. At 6 p.m. a startlingly loud noise from one of the rooms sent us scuttling inside where we discovered a very large spotted lizard hiding in a crevice between the large wooden pillar and the wall, about 12 ft from the floor. Light from our petromax did not seem to scare it visibly; it pressed its body more close to the pillar. The call was again repeated which when syllablised would sound like 'To-khoe', repeated 5 or 6 times. The exertion involved in calling must have been considerable; each time the body lurched forward and the head was raised and lowered. The call gradually decreased in loudness ending in a deep drawn-out guttural. Similar calls were heard from the adjoining forest at intervals. In a bid to make it emerge we removed the petromax and left the lizard in darkness. At 8 p.m. it was seen sitting over the wall of the room but on being disturbed it retreated into the hide-out. The movements were not too agile and much less faster than those of the House Gekko. It took us one hour to capture it alive.

The specimen was identified as *Gekko gekko* (Linnaeus), variously known in literature as Touktai, Tokay, Tucktoo and Taukte lizard. It was a large male. According to Mertens (1960) only males of this

¹ See Shivraj Kumar JBNHS 52 : 598—Eds.

species give the familiar call. It measured 310 mm from tip of snout to tip of tail.

Blue slaty grey above, profusely spotted with brick-red and whitish blue spots. Tail with broad, bluish and whitish bands, the blue bands broader than white bands. Lower surface ashy white variegated with grey.

Gut contents were heads and appendages of hymenopterous and lepidopterous insects, elytra and wings of beetles, moths and wasps, and cuticular parts of cephalothorax of arachnids.

The range of this species is North-Eastern India (Bengal, Bihar), Andaman Islands, Indochina, Southern China, Malay Peninsula and East Indian Archipelago (Smith 1935). Annandale (1907) suggested that the occurrence in West Bengal of this species, is by accidental introduction. Such is likely to be the case with the bordering State of Bihar also. We are inclined to believe that its occurrence in the Garo Hills is not fortuitous. We have seen or heard it in many parts of Garo Hills. This Lizard is familiar to Garos by the local name of *To-khoe* and according to them occurs all over the length and breadth of Garo Hills where normally it is a resident in holes in tree trunks in the forested areas. According to folklore *To-khoe* is the monarch of all snakes and is dreaded by Garos who believe that it is extremely venomous and if it bites, no one on earth can save the victim. Apparently the warning coloration may be responsible for this belief.

There are several references in literature about the snake- and bird-eating habits of this gecko. Instances of mortal combat between this lizard and snakes are available particularly from Burma where it is fairly common. Gut contents of our specimen show that it is insectivorous, no vertebrate remains having been discovered. It is likely that like other geckos, *To-khoe* feeds, generally on arthropods and occasionally on vertebrates.

Although it is common inside houses in Bangkok and parts of Burma, it is essentially a denizen of trees in the rest of its range of distribution including India. The fact that our example came from inside the Forest Bungalow is perhaps due to the long period of non-occupation of the building and to its location right inside the Reserve Forest.

The present record extends the known range of distribution of *Gekko gekko* to the north-easternmost part of India and thereby bridges the gulf between the Burma-Malayan countries and India. From the pattern of distribution it is clear that this species is an

inhabitant of plains or areas of moderate elevation which explains its absence from the adjoining Khasi Hills where it has not so far been heard or seen.

The home of this lizard appears to be Garo Hills, Burma and Thailand. Insular distribution in Taiwan, Lan Tao, Cebu, Sumba, Jarak and Andaman Islands are all probably due to their accidental introduction probably on ships as it is so in Singapore and Calcutta.

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ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,
EASTERN REGIONAL STATION,
SHILLONG-3,
April 6, 1972.

R. S. PILLAI
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[Since the preparation of this manuscript another example of *Gekko gekko* has been collected from Lakhipur, caught from a crevice on the stem of a banyan tree. Lakhipur is about 30 km from Darugiri (Garo Hills) and is in the Goalpara District very near to its boundary with Garo Hills District. This specimen is smaller (total length 216 mm) and exhibits a few variations in minor details (upper labials 14 on the right and 15 on the left, lower labials 12 on the right and 13 on the left; 18 lamellae under the fourth toe). This example which was not heard calling turned out to be a female on dissection. The stomach contents did not add any new items to the food of this lizard. On enquiry it was gathered that *To-khoe* is not as common as it is in the Garo Hills.]

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13. ON A NEW SPECIES OF THE GENUS *GATERIN* FORSKÅL, 1775 (PISCES: GATERINIDAE) FROM THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS

(With a text-figure)

In a collection of fishes from Port Blair (Andaman Islands) collected by Dr. H. C. Ray during 1952, a specimen of an undescribed species of the genus *Gaterin* Forskal, 1775, was discovered. This



Pillai, R S and Talukdar, S. K. 1972. "First Record with Notes on the Tucktoo Gekko Gecko (Linnaeus) from the Assam Region." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 69, 656–658.

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