

New Species of *Polypedates* (Anura: Rhacophoridae) from the Western Ghats, Southwest India

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ABSTRACT.—A new species of rhacophorid of the genus *Polypedates* is described on the basis of three adult males and a metamorph from Kerala State, southwestern India. The new species is related to *Polypedates cruciger* from Sri Lanka, *Polypedates pseudocruciger* from the Western Ghats of India and *Polypedates maculatus* from northern Sri Lanka and mainland south Asia. It is diagnosed by the following characters: adult male SVL to 55.1mm; unpigmented nuptial pads on dorsal surfaces of Fingers I and II; vomerine teeth set obliquely between choanae; fingers with rudimentary webbing; no dermal fold along forearm; webbing on Toe III reaching disks at tip of digit; absence of a conical lingual papilla; skin of forehead free; snout lacking a dermal flap; heel lacking a cutaneous spur; and a dark hour-glass-shaped pattern on dorsum.

The genus *Polypedates* Tschudi, 1838 (Rhacophoridae) includes 18 nominal species (Glaw et al., 2000; Manamendra-Arachchi and Pethiyagoda, 2001; Das, 2005), distributed eastwards from India and Sri Lanka, to southern China and southeastwards to the Sundas and the Philippines (D. R. Frost, Amphibian Species of the World, 2nd internet ed., www.research.amnh.org/herpetology/amphibia/index/html, 2005). The genus includes six species from India (Inger and Dutta, 1986; Das, 1995a; Das and Ravichandran, 1998; Dutta, 1997) and four from Sri Lanka (Dutta and Manamendra-Arachchi, 1996; Manamendra-Arachchi and Pethiyagoda, 2001). The identity of the *Polypedates maculatus*–*cruciger*–*leucomystax* lineage has confounded early workers, including Nevill (1888) and Boulenger (1882, 1889). Dubois (1986) considered *Polypedates* congeneric with *Rhacophorus* Kuhl and Van Hasselt, 1822, although several subsequent workers (e.g., Channing, 1989; Duellman, 1993; Dutta and Manamendra-Arachchi, 1996; Inger and Stuebing, 1989; Wilkinson and Drewes, 2000; Wilkinson et al., 2002) continued to recognize *Polypedates* as a distinct taxon.

The new species from southwest India described herein has been compared with members of the genera *Polypedates* and *Rhacophorus* from peninsular India and Sri Lanka. It is placed in the genus *Polypedates* (sensu Liem, 1970) on the basis of following characters: presence of a short parietal-squamosal arch; presence of vomerine teeth; absence of dermal tarsal and anal folds; absence of webbing between the fingers; absence of a dermal fold along the forearm and tarsus;

and dull coloration. Although virtually none of the characters supposedly separating these two genera are exclusive, allocation of the new species to the genus *Polypedates* is based on its apparently close affinities to *Polypedates cruciger* Blyth, 1852 and other rhacophorids that recent workers have retained in the genus *Polypedates*. Indeed, as mentioned by Biju (2001), the classification adopted for Indian rhacophorids in contemporary works is largely provisional.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Measurements were taken with a Mitutoyo™ dial caliper (to the nearest 0.1 mm) from specimens preserved in ethanol. The following measurements were taken: snout–vent length, SVL (from tip of snout to vent); tibia length, TBL (distance between surface of knee to surface of heel, with both tibia and tarsus flexed); axilla to groin, A–G (distance between posterior edge of forelimb at its insertion to body to anterior edge of hind limb at its insertion to body); HL (distance between angle of jaws and snout-tip); head width, HW (measured at angle of jaws); head depth, HD (greatest transverse depth of the head, taken posterior to orbital region); eye diameter, ED (diameter of the orbit); eye to tympanum distance, E–T (distance between posteriormost point of orbit and anteriormost edge of tympanum); upper eyelid width, UE (greatest width of upper eyelid); interorbital width, IO (least distance between upper eyelids); internarial distance, IN (distance between nostrils); eye to snout-tip distance, E–S (distance between anterior-most point of orbit to tip of snout); eye to nostril distance, E–N (distance between anterior-most point of orbit and nostril);

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