



Micrixalus fuscus (Anura: Ranidae) in Sharavathi River basin, Karnataka.



Key words : Western Ghats, Sharavathi River Basin, amphibians, *Micrixalus fuscus*, range extension.



Micrixalus fuscus (Boulenger, 1882) is endemic to the Western Ghats (Chanda, 2002). Inger et al., (1984) recorded this species from Ponmudi hill range in Kerala, (9°55'N and 77°05'E), whereas Vasudevan et al., (2001) observed them in Kalakkad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu (8°25' – 8°53'N and 77°10' – 77°35'E).

Eight individuals of *M. fuscus* are recorded from Niluvase (13°44'18"N; 75°06'30"E, and 692 m above msl) during ecological status assessment studies at Sharavathi River Basin on 6 November 2003. This species is found in the small rocky crevices amidst the flowing perennial streamlet covered with leaf litter in evergreen forest (Water depth: 78.33±10.41 mm; water temperature: 22°C; air temperature: 23°C). It was observed to jump quickly from one rocky surface to other on disturbance, and hid in the crevices. The vegetation includes *Mastixia arborea*, *Ventilago madraspatana*, *Aglaia* sp. and *Agrostistachys indica*. Specimen has been deposited at National Zoological Collections of Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata (Reg. No. A9865).

Micrixalus fuscus (Figure 1) is a small, brown torrent frog (Snout vent length: 19.34±2.3 mm). Finger and toe tips are dilated into small discs. Webbing in foot is more than ¾. Distinct features of this species are tibio-tarsal articulation reaching between eye and snout, indistinct tympanum and strongly overlapping hindlimbs (when folded at right angles to body). The specimens are dark reddish brown on entire dorsum. Blackish inverted 'V' on the mid-dorsum and also between eyes is observed in two specimens. Dorsolateral fold is with dark brown or with white dots. Lateral band is black and extends up to groin. Limbs are cross-barred. Brown reticulation is noticed on the ventral side up to the abdomen and a light white strip from anus to knee joint.

Other species found in the region during the field survey are *Nyctibatrachus major*, *Indirana semipalmatus*, *Euphlyctis cyanophlyctis*, *Sphaerotheca rufescens* as well as species of unidentified

Philautus and *Sylvirana*.

The record of *M. fuscus* from Sharavathi River Basin is the first record from Karnataka with an extended range of 13-14° N in the Western Ghats, as there was no record from Karnataka.

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