

# FAUNA OF INDIA CHECKLIST

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## ARTHROPODA: ARACHNIDA: AMBLYPYGI, Thorell, 1883

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**Comments on the checklist:**

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**ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA**  
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change

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**Introduction:** Amblypygi is an arachnid order commonly known as whip spiders or tailless whip scorpions. The term “amblypygid” refers to blunt tail i.e. this creature is lacking any kind of tail or flagellum like structure. Whip spiders are bizarre but spectacular animals. (Weygoldt, 2000). The individuals of this order have dorso-ventrally flattened body with strong, raptorial pedipalps and extremely elongated antenniform first pair of legs (Foelix & Hebets, 2001). The creatures of this group are devoid of spinnerets and poison glands. Their carapace is much wider than long, transversely reniform, with convex anterior and lateral sides and concave posterior border; a pair of median eyes is placed in front and a cluster of lateral eyes found on each side. (Pocock, 1900).

**Global diversity:** At present, a total of 275 known species of whip spiders or tail-less whip scorpions are divided among 18 genera under 05 families namely Charinidae, Charontidae, Paracharontidae, Phrynichidae and Phrynidae. However, 13 fossils species under 08 genera have also been described. (WorldAmblypygi Catalog, 2024)

**Diversity in India:** So far, only 08 species belonging to 03 genera under 02 families have been described from India. However, one fossil species namely *Paracharonopsis cambayensis* Engel and Grimaldi, 2014 under Family Paracharontidae has also been reported from India.

## Diversity in States:

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	No. of Species
	<b>INDIA Total</b>	<b>09</b>
1	Andhra Pradesh	2
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0
3	Assam	1
4	Bihar	0
5	Chhattisgarh	0
6	Gujarat	1
7	Goa	1
8	Haryana	0
9	Himachal Pradesh	0
10	Jharkhand	0
11	Karnataka	0
12	Kerala	3
13	Madhya Pradesh	0

Sl. No.	State/Union Territory	No. of Species
14	Maharashtra	1
15	Manipur	0
16	Meghalaya	0
17	Mizoram	0
18	Nagaland	0
19	Odisha	1
20	Punjab	0
21	Rajasthan	0
22	Sikkim	0
23	Tamil Nadu	4
24	Telangana	0
25	Tripura	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	0
27	Uttarakhand	0
28	West Bengal	1
29	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1
30	Chandigarh	0
31	Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu	0
32	Delhi	0
33	Jammu & Kashmir	0
34	Ladakh	0
35	Lakshadweep	0
36	Puducherry	0
37	State Unknown	0

**Endemism:** A total of 09 species (including one fossil species) of Order Amblypygi have been reported so far from India. Out of these, 08 species are endemic to India.

**Habitat:** Tail-less whip scorpions are most common in tropical and subtropical regions worldwide; they are mainly found in warm and humid environments and like to stay protected and hidden within leaf litter, caves, or underneath bark (Pocock, 1900).

**Ecological Significance:** Tail-less Whip-Scorpions are active predators and feeding upon small insects such as crickets, mealworms, and cockroaches. Sometimes, the whip spiders feed on moth, prawn, spiders, schizomids, opiliones, millipedes, scorpions, even on vertebrates like humming bird and anoline lizard (Owen & Cokendolpher, 2006). Being predatory in nature, whip spiders help in maintenance of ecological balance by reducing richness of its prey.

**Human Significance:** The whip spiders are now-a-days kept as pets to human. There is a demand in European market as pets.

**Threatened species:** None of the species is included in the list of threatened species as per IUCN.

**Protected Species as per WPA (2022):** None of the species is considered as protected species as per IWPA (2022).

**Species under CITES:** None of the species is considered under CITES.

**Invasive alien species:** None of the species is treated as invasive alien species.

**Gap areas:** As the whip spiders are nocturnal in habit and lives in extreme environments, detailed study of this group is yet to be performed. In India, whip spiders are very poorly documented and only few scientists in India are working on this group. Much study of this predatory animal is required to understand its role in ecosystem.

### Systematic list of Amblypygi of India (*Endemic species marked with \**)

#### Order Amblypygi

##### Family Charinidae Quintero, 1986

1. *Sarax bengalensis* (Gravely, 1911) \*
2. *Sarax cochinensis* (Gravely, 1915) \*
3. *Sarax cochinensis bispinosus* (Nair, 1934) \*
4. *Sarax cochinensis cochinensis* (Gravely, 1915) \*
5. *Sarax sarawakensis* (Thorell, 1888)

##### Family Paracharontidae Weygoldt, 1996

6. *Paracharonopsis cambayensis* Engel and Grimaldi, 2014 \*

##### Family Phrynichidae Simon, 1892

7. *Phrynichus andhraensis* Bastawade, Rao, Maqsood Javed and Krishna, 2005 \*
8. *Phrynichus nigrimanus* (C.L. Koch, 1847) \*
9. *Phrynichus phipsoni* Pocock, 1894 \*

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