

FAUNA OF INDIA CHECKLIST

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ARTHROPODA: ARACHNIDA: UROPYGI, Thorell, 1883

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

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Introduction: Uropygi is an arachnid order consisting of invertebrates commonly known as vinegaroons (also spelled vinegarroons and vinegarones) or whip scorpions. The most prominent character of Order Uropygi is that prosoma is longer than broad and is covered by an undivided carapace comprising 8 or 12 eyes (Pocock, 1900). They can easily be separated from true scorpions by the presence of poison gland, a deep constriction between cephalothorax and abdomen and by the absence of pectines on the sternal area. The individuals of this order possess robust pedipalps and a whip like long flagellum. They use their large pedipalps to hold its prey prior to killing and ingestion. The whip scorpions are able to spray a noxious fluid consisting of mainly acetic acid from their abdominal gland in order to deter potential predators (Haupt et al., 1988).

Global diversity: Globally, the order Uropygi encompasses 126 species of whip scorpions under 16 genera and placed in a single family Thelyphonidae. However, 16 fossil species under 07 genera have also been described (World Uropygi Catalog, 2022).

Diversity in India: 05 species belonging to 04 genera have been described so far from India.

Diversity in States

Sl.No.	State/Union Territory	No. of Species
	INDIA Total	05
1	Andhra Pradesh	1
2	Arunachal Pradesh	1
3	Assam	2
4	Bihar	0
5	Chhattisgarh	1
6	Gujarat	0
7	Goa	1
8	Haryana	0
9	Himachal Pradesh	0
10	Jharkhand	0
11	Karnataka	3
12	Kerala	0
13	Madhya Pradesh	1
14	Maharashtra	4
15	Manipur	0
16	Meghalaya	1

Sl.No.	State/Union Territory	No. of Species
17	Mizoram	0
18	Nagaland	0
19	Odisha	1
20	Punjab	0
21	Rajasthan	0
22	Sikkim	0
23	Tamil Nadu	1
24	Telangana	0
25	Tripura	0
26	Uttar Pradesh	0
27	Uttarakhand	0
28	West Bengal	2
29	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0
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: Among the 05 species known from the country 03 are endemic to India.

Habitat: Whip scorpions are found in tropical and subtropical areas, excluding Europe and Australia. They are generally found in damp places beneath stones or pieces of wood, in the crannies of rocks or of termites' nests, or other crevices where shelter from light and protection from the rays of the sun are obtainable. Some of the species excavate burrows for the protection of themselves and their young (Pocock, 1900).

Ecological Significance: Whip-Scorpions are active predators and feeding upon small insects and even large scrub millipedes. Being predatory in nature, whip scorpions help in maintenance of ecological balance by reducing richness of its prey (Carrel & Britt, 2009).

Human Significance: The whip scorpions spray a secretion consisting primarily of acetic acid (up to 84 percent), water and caprylic acid as a part of its defence mechanism. However, this secretion is not harmful to humans, but it may cause burning sensation when comes in contact with human skin.

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 WPA (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 scorpions are nocturnal in habit and live in extreme environments, detailed study of this group is yet to be performed. Only a few scientists are working on this group now in India as well as in the world. Much study of this predatory animal is required to understand its role in the ecosystem.

Systematic list of Uropygi of India: (*Endemic species marked with **)

Order Uropygi

Family Thelyphonidae Blanchard, 1852

1. *Hypoctonus stoliczkae* Gravely, 1912 *
2. *Labochirus cervinus* Pocock, 1899 *
3. *Labochirus tauricornis* Pocock, 1900 *
4. *Thelyphonus sepiaris* Butler, 1873
5. *Uroproctus assamensis* (Stoliczka, 1869)

References:

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