

SRI LANKA SIGHTINGS & SPECIES LIST

30TH JANUARY - 20TH FEBRUARY 2022



INDIAN PANGOLIN *Manis crassicaudata*, Sigiriya region. 5/2/2022 02.30

NOTES:

- In early 2022 my wife and I spent just short of 3 weeks in Sri Lanka.
- We were guided throughout by Uditha Hettige of the Bird and Wildlife Team, without doubt one of the best wildlife guides on the planet.
- Unfortunately, a covid related issue meant we didn't spend as much time in the wet zone as we would have liked, hence one of our main target species a Rusty-spotted Cat ssp. *phillipsi* was not observed, however the dry zone ssp. *koladivius* was observed in the buffer zone around Wilpattu N.P.
- Mirissa, proved less than fertile in our search for cetaceans mainly as a result of an oil spillage further up the coast several months earlier.
- We visited just as covid restrictions had been eased, Yala N. P. was relatively quiet, we enjoyed our time there very much, free from the chaos around sightings often associated with this park.
- 62 different species of mammals were recorded, 67 including primate ssp. 225 species of Birds (19 endemic) and 18 species of reptiles.
- All 4 species of Cats were recorded, all 3 ssp. of Toque Macaque and all 4 ssp. of Purple-faced Leaf Monkey.

- We will certainly return to Sri Lanka at some time in the near future to hopefully record the few wet zone species we missed.
- Sri Lank is a great wildlife viewing location, with a good guide it is possible to record lots of species either on a short or long stay expedition. Night drives are essential to maximise sightings.



FISHING CAT nominate ssp. Genetically sound. Sigiriya region. 4/2/2022 01.45

- Felid enthusiasts beware there are lots of domestic cat hybrids about crossed with the smaller cats, Fishing, Jungle and Rusty-spotted.



SRI LANKA LEOPARD ssp. kotiya Yala N.P. up to 16 individuals seen on this trip

MAMMAL SPECIES RECORDED IN SRI LANKA 31st JANUARY TO 19TH FEBRUARY 2022

TABLE 1.

Species listed in order observed.

* Validity of species in Sri Lanka doubtful, some morphological similarities to those observed in Kaziranga (2020) which are genetically sound, noted. Must be doubtful, but is usually included in species list for the island.

Night drive sightings highlighted in **red** under LOCATION OBSERVED.

Key to locations: W Wilpattu N.P., WB Wilpattu Buffer Zone, SI area around Sigiriya Moat, H Habarana Eco Park, K Kandy suburbs, P Pussallawa (Highlands), NE Nuwara Eliya, HP Horton Plains N.P., UW Udawalawe N.P., T Tissa, RY Ruhunu (Yala) N. P. Blocks 1,5 & buffer zone BZ, MG Mirissa garden, OC Outskirts of Colombo.

E Endemic species

COMMON NAME	SPECIES	SUBSPECIES	LOCATION OBSERVED	BEHAVIOUR / SIGHTING FREQUENCY	NOTES
Indian Palm Squirrel	Funambulus palmarum		W, WB , NE, RY1,	Common throughout the island.	ssp range not clear, so ssp not used.
Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)	Muntiacus muntjak	malabaricus	W, RY5,	Shy. Not common	
Grey (Tufted) Langur	Semnopithecus priam	thersites	W, SI, RY5, RY1,	Common	
Spotted Deer (Chital)	Axis axis		W, WB , UW, RY5, RY1	Common	
Wild Water Buffalo	Bubalus arnee		W, RY1,		*
Ruddy Mongoose	Urva smithii	zeylanicus?	W, UW, RY1,	Common	
Toque Macaque E	Macaca sinica		W, SI, K, P, NE, HP, RY5, RY1,	Common	All 3 ssp observed during the trip. See Table 2.
Pygmy Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus tenuis		WB , SI,		SI dusk.
Indian Gerbil	Tatera indica	ceylonica?	WB ,	Common	
Small Indian Civet	Viverricula indica		WB , SI,	Relatively common	
Fulvous Fruit Bat	Rousettus leschenaulti		WB ,		
Brown Bat	Myotis hasseltii		WB ,		
Asiatic Long-tailed Climbing Mouse	Vandeleuria oleracea		WB ,		
Indian Black-naped Hare	Lepus nigricollis	singhala	WB , SI, UW, RY5,	Common	
Little Indian Field Mouse	Mus booduga		WB ,		

Long-armed Sheath-tailed Bat	Taphozous longimanus		WB, SI		Dusk
Indian Roundleaf Bat	Hipposideros lankadiva		WB, SI,		
Grizzled Giant Squirrel	Ratufa macroura	dandolena	W, WB, SI, RY1,	Not common.	Dry zone ssp.
Sri Lankan Leopard	Panthera pardus	kotiya	W, RY5, RY1, RYBZ,	Several outstanding sightings, 13 individuals recorded. RYBZ mating pair.	Largest ssp markings outstanding.
Indian Wild Boar	Sus scrofa	cristatus	W, NE, RY1,	Common.	
Sri Lankan Elephant	Elephas maximus	maximus	W, H, UW, RY5, RY1,	Only reliable N.P. for sightings is Uda Walawa.	Largest Asian ssp. Those at UW appeared small?
Sri Lankan Jackal	Canis aureus	naria	W, SI, SI, NE, UW,	Seen in most locations, diurnal.	
Sambar	Cervus unicolor		W, HP, RY5, RY1,	Not common until later locations.	
Dusky Roundleaf Bat	Hipposideros ater		WB,		Observed in derelict house.
Cantor's Roundleaf Bat	Hipposideros galeritus		WB, SI,		Ditto.
Schneider's Leaf-nosed Bat	Hipposideros speoris		WB, SI,		Ditto.
Eastern House Mouse	Mus musculus		WB,		
Indian Crested Porcupine	Hystrix indica		WB, SI,		
Eurasian Otter	Lutra lutra		WB,	Single animal observed.	
Purple-faced Leaf Monkey (Langur) E	Semnopithecus (Trachypithecus) vetulus		W, NE, HP, MG, OC,		All 4 ssp. observed during the trip see Table 2.
White-striped Mouse Deer (Chevrotain) E	Moschiola meminna		WB, SI,	Quite common.	Dry Zone.
Rusty-spotted Cat	Prionailurus rubiginosus	koladivius	WB,	Observed hunting in a fallow field. A good sighting but from distance. The	Dry Zone ssp. Several dom. cat hybrids observed

				only sighting of this species.	
Greater Short-nosed Fruit Bat	Cynopterus sphinx		WB,		
Indian Grey Mongoose	Urva edwardsii	lanka	WB,	Single animal observed on main road.	
Lesser False Vampire Bat	Megaderma spasma		SI,		
Grey Slender Loris	Loris lydekkerianus	nordicus	SI,		Dry Zone.
Lesser Woolly Horseshoe Bat	Rhinolophus beddomei		SI,		
Fishing Cat	Prionailurus viverrinus	viverrinus	SI,	An excellent sighting, only sighting of this species.	Larger than anticipated, an impressive cat. Hybrids observed.
Pouch Bearing Tomb Bat	Saccolaimus saccolaimus		SI,		Dusk
Short-nosed Fruit Bat	Cynopterus brachyotis		SI,		Dusk
Indian Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus coromandra		SI,		Dusk
Eastern Bent-winged Bat	Miniopterus fuliginosus		SI,		Dusk
Tickell's Bat	Hesperoptenus tickelli		SI,		Dusk
Rufous Horseshoe Bat	Rhinolophus rouxii		SI,		
Indian Pangolin	Manis crassicaudata		SI,	Rarely observed. An outstanding sighting.	An unexpected highlight of the trip.
Asian (Common) Palm Civet	Paradoxurus hermaphroditus	hermaphroditus	SI,		
Black-bearded Tomb Bat	Taphozous melanopogon		SI,		Dusk
Sri Lankan Brown Palm Civet E	Paradoxurus montanus		SI,		Not usually seen during the day
Jungle Cat	Felis chaus	keelarti (disputed)	SI,	Good sighting, only sighting of this species.	Hunting in field. Many hybrids observed.
Golden Palm Civet (Dry Zone) E	Paradoxurus stenocephalus		SI,	Good sighting	On the ground in secondary forest.
Indian Giant Flying Squirrel	Ptaurista philippensis	lanka?	SI, K,		Actually, seen flying at K.

Dusky Striped Squirrel E	Funambulus obscurus		NE,	Single animal observed.	Wet Zone.
Stripe-necked Mongoose	Urva vitticollis	Vitticollis?	HP,		A surprisingly large mammal.
House Rat	Rattus rattus	kelaarti?	NE,		Highland form seen at dusk.
Lesser Bandicoot Rat	Bandicota bengalensis		NE,		Seen at dusk in close proximity to House Rat.
Kelaart's Pipistrelle	Pipistrellus ceylonicus		NE,		Dusk in Victoria Park.
Feral Water Buffalo	Bubalus bubalus		UW, RY1,		Possibly more acceptable than 'arnee'.
Indian Flying Fox	Pteropus medius		T,		Huge colony on the outskirts of Tissa. 400+
Soft-furred Rat	Millardia meltada		RYBZ,		
Sloth Bear	Melursus ursinus	inornatus	RY1,		Smaller than Indian ssp.
Indian Brown Mongoose	Urva fuscus	rubidor	MG,		
Long-snouted Spinner Dolphin	Stenella longirostris		MIB,		Mirissa Bay very quiet during this visit.

62 MAMMAL SPECIES RECORDED.

TOQUE MACAQUE & PURPLE-FACED LANGUR (MONKEY) SUBSPECIES OBSERVED

Table 2

COMMON NAME (ALL ENDEMIC)	SPECIES	SUBSPECIES	LOCATION OBSERVED	NOTES
Dry Zone Toque Macaque	Macaca sinica	sinica	W, SI, UW, RY5, RY1,	The 3 ssp. are distinctly different with regard to pelage and cap colouration. Nominate form possibly smaller and tends to have a pinker face.

Wet Zone Toque Macaque	Macaca sinica	aurifrons	K,	All 3-ssp. relatively common within their own zone.
Hill Zone Toque Macaque	Macaca sinica	opisthomelas	P, NE, HP,	All 3 classified as endangered.
Dry Zone Purple-faced Leaf Monkey (Langur)	Semnopithecus (Trachypithecus) vetulus	philbricki	W, SI,	All 4 ssp.classified as endangered. Morphological differences noted.
Montane Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	Semnopithecus vetulus	monticola	NE, HP,	Good numbers at both locations.
Southern Lowland Wet Zone Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	Semnopithecus vetulus	vetulus	MG,	Small troop including young in garden on the outskirts of Melissa.
Western Purple-faced Leaf Monkey	Semnopithecus vetulus	nestor	OC,	20km SE of Colombo in secondary palm forest. This is possibly the most endangered ssp.

67 MAMMAL SPECIES/SUBSPECIES RECORDED WHEN INCLUDING THE ABOVE PRIMATES.

Taxonomy taken from a variety of contemporary sources it should however be viewed with some caution as some of the species are currently under review.

John Weir 3rd March 2022, revised October 2022.

This was our first trip when we have been in a position to accurately record Bat species, Uditha (guide) was very skilled in this area. His capacity to locate mammal species throughout the trip was unbelievable.

The above table is a copy of my notes I make after a location visit, the notes column reflects my own experiences / thoughts.

For a more detailed narrative and lots of images on the trip please visit safariatalk.net, under Trip reports. Worldwide. 'The Pearl of the Indian Ocean'.

JOHN WEIR OCTOBER 2022. john.weir51@gmail.com

**Additional images:
HORTON PLAINS N.P.**



STRIPE-NECKED MONGOOSE *Herpestes vitticollis*



PURPLE-FACED LEAF MONKEY (MONTANE) *Trachypithecus vetulus monticola*