

Long-snouted Vine Snake

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Long-snouted Vine Snake (Ahaetulla longirostris) Latest News

Recently, a rare long-snouted vine snake (*Ahaetulla longirostris*) was rediscovered in the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, Uttar Pradesh, during a rhino release operation in the Palia Kheri division.

Why in the News?

- This marks the **first recorded sighting in Uttar Pradesh** and **only the second documented instance in India**.
- The species was previously seen only in the **Valmiki Tiger Reserve**, Bihar, and **some parts of Odisha**, with its natural range usually in **Southeast Asia**.

About Long-snouted Vine Snake (*Ahaetulla longirostris*)

- It belongs to the **Colubridae family**, which includes mostly non-venomous snakes.
- It has a **long, slender body** that is typically **bright green or brown**, helping it to camouflage in foliage.
- A **distinctive elongated snout (rostral extension)** differentiates it from other vine snakes.

- It is an **arboreal species**, living on trees, and **easily blends with leaves and branches**.
- It is **mildly venomous** but **not dangerous to humans**.

About Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

- **Located on the Indo-Nepal border** in the **Lakhimpur Kheri district**, Uttar Pradesh.
- The reserve includes **Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary, Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary**, and forest areas of **North Kheri, South Kheri, and Shahjahanpur**.
- It lies within the **Tarai-Bhabar zone** of the **Upper Gangetic Plains Biogeographic Province**.
- **Major Rivers in the Region:**
 - **Sharda River** near Kishanpur Sanctuary
 - **Geruwa River** through Katarniaghat Sanctuary
 - **Suheli and Mohana Rivers** in Dudhwa National Park
 - All are tributaries of the **Ghaghara River**
- **Vegetation and Flora: Features North Indian Moist Deciduous Forests, dominated by Sal trees (*Shorea robusta*). Other important trees include:**
 - *Terminalia alata* (Asna)
 - *Lagerstroemia parviflora* (Asidha)
 - *Adina cordifolia* (Haldu)
 - *Mitragyna parviflora* (Faldu)
 - *Gmelina arborea* (Ghamhar)
 - *Holoptelea integrifolia* (Kanju)
- **Major Mammals:** Tiger, Leopard (Guldar), Fishing cat, Langur, Jackal, Civet, Mongoose
- **Birds:** Dabchick, Spot-billed Pelican, Large and Little Cormorants, Grey Heron, White and Black Stork, White Ibis
- **Reptiles:** Gharial, Mugger crocodile, Python, Banded krait, Russell's viper, Sand boa, Rat snake

Long-snouted Vine Snake FAQs

Q1. What is the Long-snouted Vine Snake?

Ans. It is a newly discovered snake species from the Western Ghats, India, under the genus *Ahaetulla*.

Q2. Where was it discovered?

Ans. In the Western Ghats of Maharashtra and Goa, known for rich endemic biodiversity.

Q3. What is unique about this species?

Ans. It has an exceptionally long snout, distinguishing it from other vine snakes.

Q4. What is its conservation status?

Ans. As a newly described species, its IUCN status is yet to be assessed.

Source: TH