

REFERENCES

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- ROBERTS, T.J. (1997): The Mammals of Pakistan. Oxford University Press, Karachi, Pakistan. Pp. 131.

*It must be noted that these are measurements of skins and not of live animals or measurements taken before skinning.
— Eds

3. SCAVENGING BY STRIPENECKED MONGOOSE *HERPESTES VITTICOLLIS* ON A TIGER KILL IN PERIYAR TIGER RESERVE, KERALA

On October 17, 2000, around 1730 hrs, we were observing a three-day old sambar (*Cervus unicolor*) stag carcass, partially eaten by tiger, by the lake at Manakavala area of the Periyar Tiger Reserve. First an osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) was seen feeding on the kill. Later, a wild pig (*Sus scrofa*) approached the kill, fed on it for about 10 minutes and then suddenly bolted. After about half an hour, a stripenecked mongoose (*Herpestes vitticollis*) came to the kill and started eating. It entered the open belly and remained inside for about five minutes. Then it withdrew into the bushes, but returned after half an hour with another stripenecked mongoose.

They came near the kill, but immediately turned around and ran into the bushes. Stripenecked mongoose is frequently seen in Periyar Tiger Reserve. However, scavenging by the species is being reported for the first time. In fact, nothing much is known about the feeding habits of the species, even though it is frequently seen in other areas of the Western Ghats.

February 20, 2001

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4. NOTES ON THE FOOD HABITS OF STRIPED HYENA *HYAENA HYAENA* LINN.1758 IN SARISKA TIGER RESERVE, RAJASTHAN

Though the striped hyena *Hyaena hyaena* is widely distributed in India (Prater 1980), information on its status, distribution and ecology is meagre. Hyenas are known to be scavengers, but occasionally they carry off live sheep and goats, and quite often stray dogs (Prater 1980). Between July 1988 and December 1990, 26 hyena scats were collected from Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan (76° 17'-76° 34' N; 27° 5'-27° 33' E). The scats were washed in a sieve and oven dried at 60 °C. At least 20 hairs were taken from each scat (Mukherjee *et al.* 1994) and examined under a microscope. Identification of prey species was based on medullary pattern of hair as described by Moore *et al.* (1974). Except one, all the scats contained single prey species. Chital (*Axis axis*)

remains were found in 35% of the scats, followed by domestic cattle *Bos indicus* (17%), goat (14%), nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus* (14%) and rufoustailed hare *Lepus nigricollis ruficaudatus* (7%). The remains of an unidentified bird, an unidentified rodent and fruit of *Zizyphus mauritiana* were found in 13% of hyena scats. Chital, nilgai and domestic cattle remains found in hyena scats are likely to come from predation or scavenging.

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