

Research Article

A new species of the genus *Cnemaspis* Strauch, 1887 (Squamata: Gekkonidae) from the higher elevations of Tamil Nadu, India

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ABSTRACT

In this study, we present the description of a previously undocumented species of *Cnemaspis* found in the region of Tamil Nadu, India. Molecular analysis of the species reveals its placement within the *Cnemaspis beddomei* Theobald, 1876 clade, with a range of genetic divergence on the ND2 gene, spanning from 9.5% to 30.2% in comparison to its congeners. Although bearing a resemblance to the well-known *Cnemaspis ornata* Beddome, 1870, the new species exhibits a distinct set of non-overlapping morphological characteristics that set it apart. These findings are supported by molecular data, solidifying the distinction between the newly described species and its close relatives.

Key words: *Cnemaspis beddomei* clade, phylogeny, systematics, taxonomy, ND2.

