



Camera-trap record of a Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* in the Neora Valley National Park, India

Sangay W. BHUTIA, Asim GIRI, Pranita GUPTA & Basavaraj HOLEYACHI

Abstract

This short note describes the camera-trap record of a Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* in the Neora Valley National Park, Kalimpong, West Bengal, India.

Keywords: Darjeeling, mammals, Prionodontidae, small carnivore, West Bengal

Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* is a carnivorous mammal found in north-eastern India (Choudhury 1999), Nepal, Bhutan, southern China and much of non-Sundaic South-east Asia (Rompaey 1995, Holden & Neang 2009). In India the species has been recorded in the states of Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, North Bengal and Meghalaya (Khatonier & Lyngdoh 2021).

Neora Valley National Park (27°04'N, 88°42'E; Fig. 1) was established in 1881 and is one of the oldest forests reserves in India. Neora Valley comprises tropical, sub-tropical, temperate and sub-temperate forests (Mallick 2010).

As part of a study on Red Panda *Ailurus fulgens* ecology, 20 camera-traps were installed in the Neora Valley National Park by Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling. One of the camera-traps (RP-08: 27°05'43"N, 88°45'19"E) recorded a Spotted Linsang (Fig. 2).

The camera-trap was in a dense bamboo patch, tied to a branch facing an oak tree *Quercus lamellosa*.

The camera-trap was focused on the oak tree because it was being used by a Red Panda, as indicated by the panda faeces that had been found on the tree. The image of the Spotted Linsang was captured on 7 May 2022 at 02h18 (Fig. 2). Though the photograph is not clear, the species can be identified as Spotted Linsang by the distinct black spots on its coat and its long, fluffy tail, which has alternating black and pale rings. Enhancement of the original photograph using Adobe Photoshop enabled confirmation of the species.

Photographic evidence of the Spotted Linsang in the Neora Valley National Park was reported by the Government of West Bengal in 2018 (Government of West Bengal 2019) but is not readily available to the public. This note places a verifiable camera-trap record in the public domain.

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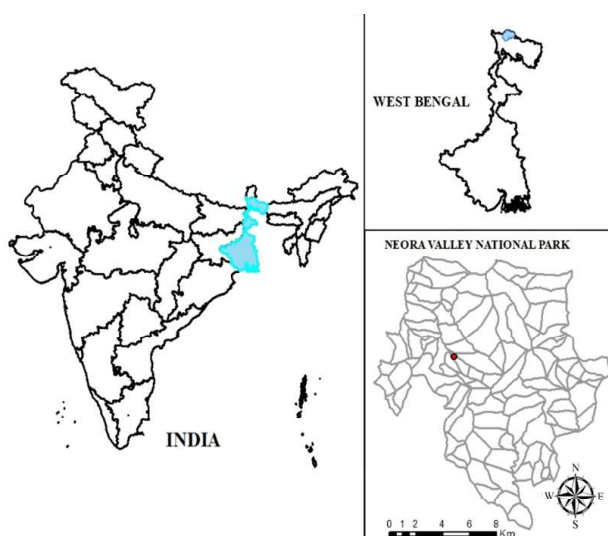


Fig. 1. The location of Neora Valley National Park in West Bengal, India. The red dot indicates the locations of the *Prionodon pardicolor* camera-trap record.



Fig. 2. Camera-trap photo of the Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* recorded on 7 May 2022 at 02h18. (Photo: Sangay Bhutia and Asim Giri.)



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Sangay W. Bhutia

Eden Compound, Darjeeling, West Bengal, India.

Email: bhutiasangay0017@gmail.com