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SHORT COMMUNICATION

NEW RECORDS OF SIX TERMITE (BLATTODEA: TERMITIDAE) SPECIES FROM KERALA, INDIA

Poovoli Amina & K. Rajmohana,

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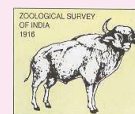
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are wood feeders.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the specimens were collected from the part of colonies, during field surveys undertaken in the Kerala part of the Western Ghats from 2013 to 2016. This southwestern state of India, has a very pleasant and equable climate throughout the year. The normal temperature of Kerala ranges from 28–32 °C on the plains, but in the highlands it drops to a low level. The average annual rainfall is 3,000mm, 70% of it is received during June to August (the period of the south-west monsoon), 20% during October to December (the north-east monsoon) and 10% during pre-monsoon period, i.e., April and May. The mean relative humidity value ranges from 60–90 % and the maximum being during the rainy season (June–September).

The specimens were preserved in 80% alcohol. Measurements were made in 80% alcohol under a stereozoom microscope, Leica EZ4HD, at magnifications between 8–35×. Images were taken using Leica 205-A stereomicroscope fitted with a DFC 500 camera, and processed with the help of extended focus software, LAS version 3.6.

The species identifications were made using Chhotani (1997). All specimens are deposited in the national zoological collections of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), at Kozhikode, Kerala, India.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As a part of the inventory on the termite fauna of Kerala, Amina & Rajmohana (2014) reported 60 species of termites from Kerala under 28 genera and three families. In addition to this, nine more species were reported (Amina & Rajmohana 2016; Amina et al. 2016a,b; Ipe &

Mathew 2019). With the present report, an additional six species, within four genera under the family Termitidae are hereby documented as new records from the state.

New reports:

Family: Termitidae

Subfamily: *Nasutitermitinae*

1. *Nasutitermes cherraensis* Roonwal & Chhotani, 1962

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5474, 11-ii-1988, one colony, India, Kerala, Palakkad (Silent Valley), coll. ZSI collection. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5475, 24-ii-2013, one colony, India, Kerala, Palakkad (Keralamedu) 10.6467N, 76.8072E, coll. Sureshan & party. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5476, 22-ii-2013, one colony, India, Kerala, Palakkad (Poochippara), 10.7867N, 76.6548E, coll. Sureshan and team. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5477, 22-ii-2013, one colony, India, Kerala, Palakkad (Varadimala), 10.7867N, 76.6546E, coll. Sureshan & team.

Distribution in India: Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Palakkad) (present study),

Diagnostic features: Soldier Caste (Image 1). Dimorphic. *Major soldier:* Total body length 3.50–4.60 mm. Head capsule without nasus pear shaped (head length with nasus 1.50–1.80 mm, head length without nasus 0.90–1.13 mm, head width 0.80–1.07 mm, head width index 0.87–0.93). Head in profile incurved behind nasus, nasus long (nasus length 0.60–0.77 mm, nasus/head length index 0.65–0.79) narrow, thin and cylindrical. Antennae 12–14 (mostly 12) segmented, segment 3 longer than (1.5 times) 2 in 12 segmented conditions and shorter in 14 segmented condition. Mandible without or with a very small spine like process. Pronotum saddle shaped. *Minor Soldier:* (Adapted from Chhotani 1997). Rare occurrence. Small. Head narrow (head length with nasus



Image 1. *Nasutitermes cherraensis* Roonwal & Chhotani: A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of mandibular region. © Authors

1.25–1.40 mm; head length without nasus 0.68–0.80 mm; maximum head width 0.60–0.67 mm; head width index is 0.84–0.88). Head behind antennae constricted. Antennae 11–12 segmented. *Worker*: monomorphic. Total body length 4.30–5.90 mm, head capsule subcircular (length to tip of labrum 1.30–1.40 mm, length to base of mandible 0.92–1.20 mm and maximum width 1.00–1.33 mm). Antennae 13–15 segmented, segment 3 shortest in 13 segmented conditions and segment 4 shortest in 14 segmented antennae.

Remarks: Of the total 250 world species of *Nasutitermes*, 23 species are reported from India (among them 18 species are endemic to India) and three are known from Kerala. *N. cherraensis* is a species endemic to India and has a limited distribution, known hitherto only from northeastern India. This species is documented for the first time from the Western ghats of Kerala. As per Chhotani (1997), the worker caste is with 14–15 antennal segments and pronotum with a prominent notch at anterior margin. In the present collections, workers with 13 segmented antennae were also present. Soldier minor was not represented in the present collection, hence the attributes of the soldier minors given above are from Chhotani (1997).

2. *Nasutitermes kali* Roonwal & Chhotani, 1962

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5537, ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5538, ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5539, 06-i-2015, three colony, India, Kerala, Ernakulum: Thattekad (Urulamthanni) 10.1281N, 76.7552E, coll. Amina Poovoli.

Distribution in India: Assam, Meghalaya (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Ernakulum) (present study)

Diagnostic features: Soldier (Image 2): Monomorphic. Head capsule without nasus pear shaped; head length without nasus a little longer than head width (head length with nasus 1.30–1.58 mm, head length without nasus,

0.78–0.86 mm, head width 0.73–0.90 mm, head width index 0.93–0.97, nasus length 0.50–0.55 mm, nasus/head length index 0.60–0.63). Head in profile straight with a weak hump behind nasus. Nasus short and conical. Antennae 11–12 segmented, segment 3 slightly shorter and narrower than 2 in 12 segmented antennae and subdivided in 11-segmented antennae. Mandibles with long prominent spine. Pronotum saddle shaped. Cerci short; 2 segmented. *Worker*. Dimorphic. *Major worker*: Total body length 3.4–3.70 mm. In dorsal view, head capsule subcircular, epicranial suture distinct. Antennae 13 segmented, 3 shortest. Post clypeus slightly swollen, length less than half of width (length 0.18–0.22 mm, width 0.43–0.46 mm). *Minor worker*: Similar to major worker, varying in their size and slightly in their colour. Total body length 2.60–3.00 mm.

Remarks: *N. kali* is an Indian endemic species and they were confined to the northeastern part of India and now this species is reported from Kerala, from Western Ghats. The samples were collected from trees.

Subfamily: Termitinae

3. *Angulitermes acutus* Mathur & Sen-Sarma, 1961

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/4652, 18-ix-2013, India: Kerala: Palakkad (Walayar Deer Park) 10.834N, 76.8461E, coll. Amina Poovoli.

Distribution in India: Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Palakkad) (Present study)

Diagnostic features: Soldier (Image 3). Head capsule subrectangular with wavy sides; maximum width at anterior part Head capsule comparatively large and more wide (head length to the base of mandibles 1.20–1.35 mm; head length to tip of frontal projection 1.35–1.45 mm; maximum head width 0.95–1.00 mm); antero-lateral point of head not prominent. Left mandible comparatively longer than head length to base of mandible (1.35–1.40

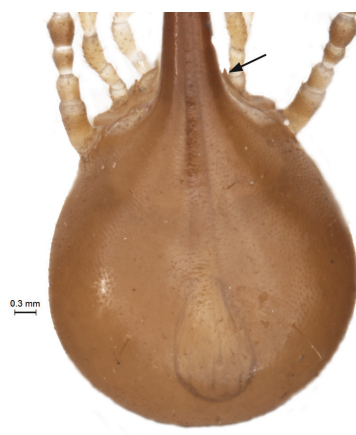


Image 2. *Nasutitermes kali* Roonwal & Chhotani: A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of mandibular spine. © Authors



Image 3. *Angulitermes acutus* Mathur & Sen-Sarma: A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of head. © Authors

mm). Frontal projection short and pointed, with slightly raised tip, extending beyond the base of mandibles and covering part of labrum. Antennae 14 segmented; segment 3 a little longer than 2; 4 shortest or sometimes subequal to 2. Labrum asymmetrical, mandibles slightly snapping type; slender, long and rode-like. Postmentum short and club shaped, pronotum saddle shaped. *Worker*: Total body length 3.00–4.10 mm, head subcircular, antennae 14 segmented, segment 3 shorter than 2; 4 shortest.

Remarks: *A. acutus* is an Indian endemic species and it was formerly reported only from Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Now the species is reported from Kerala for the first time. The colonies of this species have been collected from under boulders.

4. *Dicuspидitermes obtusus* (Silvestri, 1923)

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/5616, 18-ix-2013, one colony, India: Kerala: Palakkad (Walayar) 10.834N, 76.8461E, coll. Amina Poovoli. ZSI/WGRC/IR/5617, 17-v-2013, one colony, India, Kerala, Wayanad (Kuruva Dweep), 11.8217N, 76.0922E, coll. Amina Poovoli. ZSI/WGRC/IR/5618, 26-xi-2014, one colony, India, Kerala, Ernakulum (Thoppimudi-Thattekkad), 10.1319N, 76.7071E, coll. Jafer Palot. ZSI/WGRC/IR/5619, 27-xi-2014, one colony, India, Kerala, Ernakulum (Kolumba-Thattekkad), 10.1039N, 76.7004E, coll. Jafer Palot. ZSI/WGRC/IR/5620, 5-i-2015, one colony, India, Kerala, Ernakulum (Kootikkal-Thattekkad), 10.075N, 76.7495E, coll. Amina Poovoli.

Distribution in India: Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Palakkad, Wayanad, Ernakulum) (present study)

Diagnostic features: Soldier (Image 4). Head capsule subrectangular, Frons inclined at angle of 45°, antero-lateral tubercle of head short and blunt; median suture of head extending up to half of head length, fontanelle

transverse, situated at frontal inclination. Antennae 14 segmented; segment 2–4 subequals, sometimes 3 slightly longer than 2 or 4. Labrum asymmetrical, anterior margin deeply incurved; lateral margin produced into long, thin spine like processes and with a few serrations on antero-lateral margin at the base of spines. Mandibles asymmetrical; left mandible strongly twisted at middle and with beak at tip; sometimes point-tip seen damaged. Right mandible blade like, apical blade elongate and highly incurved on inner margin, postmentum club shaped, waist narrow and long, lying at posterior end, pronotum saddle shaped. *Worker*: Total body length 4.00–5.10 mm, head capsule subcircular and wider than head length, antennae 14 segmented, segment 3 and 4 subequal and segment 2 slightly longer than 3 and 4.

Remarks: Of the 20 known species of *Dicuspидitermes*, *D. obtusus* has very distinctive characters from other species. They have very short and blunt antero-lateral processes on head. This species is recorded for the first time from Kerala and were collected from the soil underneath boulders

5. *Pericapritermes dunensis* (Roonwal & Sen-Sarma, 1960)

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5717, 21-ix-2014, one colony, India: Kerala: Idukki (Chinnar WS), 10.3068N, 77.2060E, coll. Emiliyamma & party. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5715, 10-iv-2013, one colony, India, Kerala, Pathanamthitta (Gavi) 9.4358N, 77.1657E, coll. Rajmohana & party. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5718, 23-ix-2014, one colony, India, Kerala, Idukki (Erachipara-Munnar), 9.8479N, 77.1464E, coll. Emiliyamma & party. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5719, 7-i-2015, one colony, India, Kerala, Ernakulam (Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary- Kallippara), 10.0749N, 76.4551E coll. Amina Poovoli. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5716,



Image 4. *Dicuspiditermes obtusus* (Silvestri): A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of head. © Authors



Image 5. *Pericapritermes dunensis* (Roonwal & Sen-Sarma): A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of head. © Authors

23-i-2014, one colony, India, Kerala, Pathanamthitta (Pekkavu), 9.4916N, 76.666E, coll. Sureshan & party. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5720, 10-ix-2015, one colony, India, Kerala, Idukki (Uppupara-PTR), 9.5262N, 77.2368E, coll. Sureshan & party.

Distribution in India: Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Ernakulam, Idukki, and Pathanamthitta) (present study)

Diagnostic features: Soldier (Image 5). Head capsule elongate, subrectangular, sides slightly narrowing anteriorly (head length with mandibles 3.95–4.25 mm, head length to base of mandibles 2.30–2.50 mm, maximum head width 1.28–1.48 mm), frons weakly inclined in front; median suture of head distinct, extending from posterior margin to fontanelle, fontanelle small, circular, fontanelle gland small in size, sometimes indistinct. Antennae 14 segmented; segment 3 a little longer than 2 or 4, segment 4-shortest, labrum asymmetrical; anterior margin weakly incurved, with short, horn-like antero-lateral points, mandibles strongly asymmetrical, shorter than

head length (left mandible length 1.43–1.70 mm, right mandible length 1.37–1.50 mm), postmentum long and club shaped, narrowed at waist. *Worker:* Total body length 3.2–4.00 mm, head capsule subcircular, broader than long. Antennae 14 segmented, segment 3 shorter than 2 and a little longer than 4, segment 4 shortest.

Remarks: This species is documented for the first time from Kerala as well as from Western Ghats. The colonies of this species have been collected from under boulders.

6. *Pericapritermes topslipensis* Thakur, 1976

Material examined: ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5721, ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5728, 11-ix-2013, 2 colonies, India: Kerala: Wayanad (Muneeswarankunnu), 11.7032N, 76.0834E, coll. Bhavana. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5733, 31-vii-2015, one colony, India: Kerala: Wayanad (Thalappuzha), 11.8403N, 75.9492E, coll. Shili. ZSI/WGRC/IR/INV/5734, 15-vii-2015, India: Kerala: Wayanad (Vythiri), 11.5516N, 76.0403E, coll. Shili.

Distribution in India: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu (Krishna et al. 2013), Kerala (Wayanad) (present study)

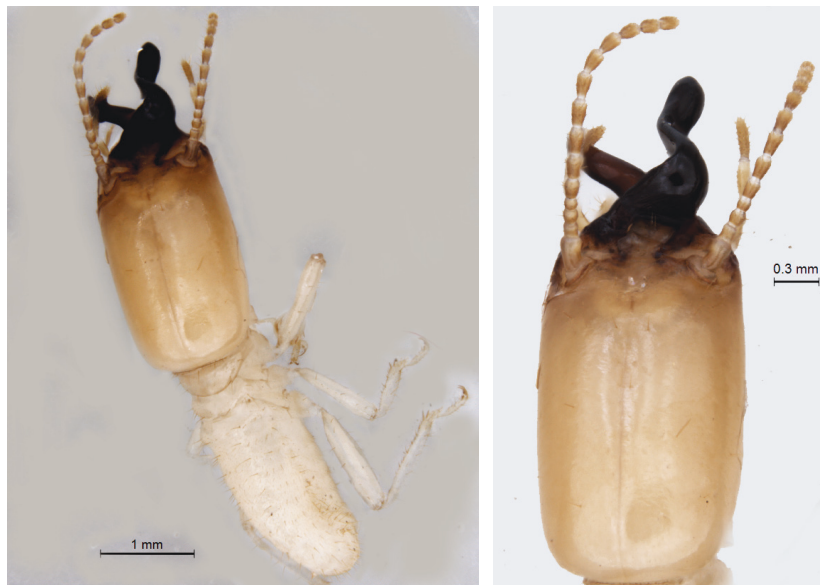


Image 6. *Pericapritermes topslipensis* Thakur: A—Soldier | B—Dorsal view of head. © Authors

Diagnostic features: Soldier (Image 6). Head capsule elongated subrectangular, sides substraight (head length with mandibles 4.00–4.25 mm, head length to base of mandibles 2.50–2.70 mm, maximum head width 1.30–1.45 mm) frons weakly inclined in front; median suture of head distinct, extending from posterior margin to almost up to fontanelle, fontanelle small, circular, fontanelle gland small in size, antennae 14 segmented; segment 3 subequal to slightly longer than 2; segment 4—shortest, labrum asymmetrical; anterior margin substraight, with very short antero-lateral points, mandibles asymmetrical, shorter than head length (left mandible length 1.39–1.48 mm, right mandible length 1.36–1.45 mm), postmentum long and club shaped, pronotum strongly saddle shaped. *Worker*. Total body length 4.00–4.60 mm, head capsule subcircular, broader than long, antennae 14 segmented, segment 3 shorter than 2 and a little longer than 4, segment 4 shortest.

Remarks: The median suture of Y-arm is well distinct in some specimens and in some it is indistinct. *P. topslipensis* is a southern Indian endemic species from Kerala. It is reported only from the high elevation zones.

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Articles

Spatiotemporal movement pattern of Asian Elephants *Elephas maximus* Linnaeus, 1758 in Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra, India

– Milind Digambar Patil, Vinayak Krishna Patil & Ninad Avinash Mungi, Pp. 18099–18109

Conservation ecology of birds in Mt. Hilong-hilong, a Key Biodiversity Area on Mindanao Island, the Philippines

– Arturo G. Gracia Jr., Alma B. Mohagan, Janezel C. Burlat, Welfredo L. Yu Jr., Janine Mondalo, Florfe M. Acma, Hannah P. Lumista, Riah Calising & Krizler Cejuela Tanalgo, Pp. 18110–18121

Nesting and hatching behaviour of Olive Ridley Turtles *Lepidochelys olivacea* (Eschscholtz, 1829) (Reptilia: Cryptodira: Cheloniidae) on Dr. Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha, India

– P. Poornima, Pp. 18122–18131

Communications

Feeding ecology of Walia Ibex *Capra walie* (Mammalia: Artiodactyla: Bovidae) in Simien Mountains National Park, Ethiopia

– D. Ejigu, A. Bekele & L. Powell, Pp. 18132–18140

Assessment of crop and property damage caused by *Semnopithecus vetulus nestor* (Bennett, 1833) (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae) in Gampaha District, Sri Lanka

– Sunil Wijethilaka, Lakshani S. Weerasekara, Saumya Bandara & Kithsiri B. Ranawana, Pp. 18141–18147

Habitat preference of the Indian Pangolin *Manis crassicaudata* inhabiting Margalla Hills National Park, Islamabad, Pakistan

– Tariq Mahmood, Shaista Andleeb & Faraz Akrim, Pp. 18148–18155

The endangered Himalayan Red Panda: first photographic evidence from its westernmost distribution range

– Saroj Shrestha, Sony Lama, Ang Phuri Sherpa, Sonam Tashi Lama & Dinesh Ghale, Pp. 18156–18163

Ecological niche modelling predicts significant impacts of future climate change on two endemic rodents in eastern Africa

– Aditya Srinivasulu, Alembrhan Assefa & Chelmala Srinivasulu, Pp. 18164–18176

Avian diversity in a fragmented landscape of central Indian forests (Bhopal Forest Circle)

– Amit Kumar, Yogesh Dubey & Advait Edgaonkar, Pp. 18177–18188

Nest tree preference shown by Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri* (Scopoli, 1769) in northern districts of Tamil Nadu, India

– M. Pandian, Pp. 18189–18199

Two new species of *Euphaea* Selys, 1840 (Odonata: Zygoptera: Euphaeidae) from northern Western Ghats, India

– Shriram Dinkar Bhakare, Vinayan P Nair, Pratima Ashok Pawar, Sunil Hanmant Bhoite & Kalesh Sadasivan, Pp. 18200–18214

Two new light attracted rove beetle species of *Astenus* Dejean, 1833 (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Paederinae) from Kerala, India

– P. Sreevidhya, S.V. Akhil & C.D. Sebastian, Pp. 18215–18226

A new distribution record of mason wasp *Pison punctifrons* Shuckard, 1838 (Hymenoptera: Sphecidae: Larrinae) from Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

– Rajiv K. Singh Bais & Aakash Singh Bais, Pp. 18227–18236

Diversity of freshwater molluscs from the upper Brahmaputra Basin, Assam, India

– Jyotish Sonowal, Munmi Puzari & Devid Kardong, Pp. 18237–18246

Diversity of understory flowering plants in the forest patches of Marilog District, Philippines

– Florfe M. Acma, Noe P. Mendez, Noel E. Lagunday & Victor B. Amoroso, Pp. 18247–18256

Legumes of Kerala, India: a checklist

– Anoop P. Balan & S.V. Predeep, Pp. 18257–18282

Legumes (Angiosperms: Fabaceae) of Bagalkot District, Karnataka, India

– Jagdish Dalavi, Ramesh Pujar, Sharad Kambale, Varsha Jadhav-Rathod & Shrirang Yadav, Pp. 18283–18296

Indigenous knowledge of ethnomedicinal plants by the Assamese community in Dibrugarh District, Assam, India

– Pranati Gogoi & Namita Nath, Pp. 18297–18312

Short Communications

Marine mammal strandings in the northern Palk Bay from 2009 to 2020

– Vedharajan Balaji & Veeramuthu Sekar, Pp. 18313–18318

First distribution record of the Asiatic Toad *Bufo gargarizans* Cantor, 1842 from India – Dibang Valley in Arunachal Pradesh

– Sahil Nijhawan, Jayanta Kumar Roy, Iho Mitapo, Gata Miwu, Jibi Pulu & M. Firoz Ahmed, Pp. 18319–18323

A checklist of fishes of Telangana State, India

– Kante Krishna Prasad & Chelmala Srinivasulu, Pp. 18324–18343

Report on the stingless bees of Bhutan (Hymenoptera: Apidae: Meliponini)

– Tshering Nidup, Pp. 18344–18348

New records of six termite (Blattodea: Termitidae) species from Kerala, India

– Poovoli Amina & K. Rajmohana, Pp. 18349–18354

Status, abundance, and seasonality of butterfly fauna at Kuvempu University Campus, Karnataka, India

– M.N. Harisha & B.B. Hosetti, Pp. 18355–18363

Observations on butterflies of non-protected areas of Titabar, Assam, India

– Abhijit Konwar & Manashi Bortamuly, Pp. 18364–18377

Three new distribution records of Conidae (Gastropoda: Neogastropoda: Conoidea) from the Andaman Islands, India

– Jayaseelan Benjamin Franklin & Deepak Arun Apte, Pp. 18378–18384

A new record of an endangered and endemic rare Rein Orchid *Habenaria rariflora* from Gujarat, India

– Mital R. Bhatt, Pp. 18385–18389

Glimpse of climber diversity in Saharanpur District, Uttar Pradesh, India

– Lalita Saini, Archasvi Tyagi, Inam Mohammad & Vijai Malik, Pp. 18390–18397

First report of the fleshy mushroom *Trichaleurina javanica* (Rehm) M. Carbone et al. (Ascomycota: Pezizales: Chorioactidaceae) from southern India

– Munuswamy Kumar, Sekar Nithya & Antony Agnes Kayalvizhi, Pp. 18398–18402

Notes

Photographic record of Temminck's Tragopan *Tragopan temminckii* (Gray, 1831) (Aves: Galliformes: Phasianidae) from eastern Bhutan: an evidence of its westward range expansion

– Tshering Dorji, Kinley Kinley, Letro Letro, Dawa Tshering & Prem Nanda Maidali, Pp. 18403–18405

The Malay Cardamom *Meistera aculeata* (Roxb.) Škorničk. & M.F. Newman (Zingiberaceae: Alpinioideae) from the Palghat gap: a new record to Kerala, India

– Vadakkevedu Jagadesh Aswani, Manjakulam Khadersha Jabeena & Maya Chandrashekar Nair, Pp. 18406–18410

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