

A record of Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* from West Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh, India

Neeraj MAHAR* and Rahul KAUL

Abstract

Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* is rarely recorded in India. One held captive near the village of Gankak, West Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh, in March 2011 had been caught incidentally by a villager. There was no indication of any trade demand.

Keywords: Adi tribe, captive, trade, trapping

Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor* is rarely recorded in the northeastern part of India (Choudhury 1999). The species is found in much of non-Sundaic Southeast Asia, southern China, the northeastern part of India, Nepal and perhaps Bhutan (Van Rompaey 1995, Holden & Neang 2009). Although it has been considered to be rare and uncommon throughout its range, it is presently listed as Least Concern on *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* (Duckworth *et al.* 2008). It is in Appendix I of CITES. In India, the species is legally protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 which considers it a Schedule I species, a highly protected species under the act (Anon. 2003). Spotted Linsang records from India are summarised in Lyngdoh *et al.* (2011); in addition, skins and skulls were reported by Katti *et al.* (1990), Soud *et al.* (2010) and camera-trap records by Ghose *et al.* (2012) and, from Namdapaha National Park, Arunachal Pradesh, by Aaranyak (2012). Although records come from a wide scatter of localities in the northeastern part of India, nowhere has the species been found commonly.

During a survey of the All India Tiger Census, a captive Spotted Linsang (Fig. 1) was sighted on 29 March 2011 near the village of Gankak, Pumbe, Yomcha circle of West Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh (28°06'25"N, 94°32'15"E). The animal, kept in a bamboo hut in a patch of *jhum* (shifting cultivation) amid subtropical forest, had been caught by a local villager of the Adi tribe in a trap set for pheasants (Phasianidae) and rats (Muri-



Fig. 1. Captive Spotted Linsang *Prionodon pardicolor*, village of Gankak, Arunachal Pradesh, 29 March 2011. Photo copyright: Neeraj Mahar.

dae). The capture site was reportedly in forest about 5–8 km from this hut. The altitude in this area varies from 800 to 1,200 m a.s.l. The nearest protected area to the reported capture site is Mouling National Park, about 50 km distant. Hunting of Spotted Linsang was reported from West Siang district, apparently 70 km from present record (Kumar 1999). The villager mentioned that he might keep the linsang captive for a long duration or might eat it. It was clear that it was not caught or kept for any sort of trade. No further information was obtained from the village with regard to hunting of linsangs or perceived conflict with them.

No other small carnivore species was recorded on this survey; in Gankak, only skulls and skins of other animals such as Red Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjak*, Asian Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* and Eurasian Wild Pig *Sus scrofa* were found.

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Wildlife Trust of India, F-13, Sector 8, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, 201301, India.

***Present address: Wildlife Institute of India, Chandrabani, PO Box# 18, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, 248001, India.**

Email: neeraj.mahar88@gmail.com