

**DISTRIBUTION AND CONSERVATION STATUS OF SLENDER LORIS IN INDIA**

S. Radhakrishna<sup>1</sup>, H.N Kumara<sup>1</sup>, A.Sinha<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, India. <sup>2</sup>Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore, India

Presenter's Email: [sindhu@nias.iisc.ernet.in](mailto:sindhu@nias.iisc.ernet.in)

The slender loris, *Loris lydekkerianus* is one of two nocturnal primates found in India. Two subspecies of the slender loris are found in India – the dry forest Mysore slender loris, *Loris lydekkerianus lydekkerianus* and the wet forest Malabar slender loris, *Loris lydekkerianus malabaricus*. As with many nocturnal primates, studies on the ecology and behaviour of the slender loris were only begun in the more recent past, and much still remains unknown about the species, particularly precise information about its geographical range in India and factors affecting the distribution of the two subspecies. During a three year study (January 2006 - December 2009) on the distribution and conservation status of the slender loris, we surveyed approximately 185 sites in southern India. Surveys were conducted during the night on foot and by vehicle, and surveyed sites encompassed a variety of forest types and protected and non-protected forest areas. The results of our study delineate, for the first time, new geographical range limits for the species, ecological correlates of the two subspecies distribution and survival threats affecting the long-term survival of the slender loris in India. The common threats of deforestation, loss of habitat and anthropogenic pressures have affected the two subspecies differently and this emphasizes the view that the subspecies require different conservation strategies in the country. The results of the study are thus, not only directly relevant to the conservation of the slender loris, but also enhance our understanding of the behavioral ecology of the two subspecies.

Keywords: slender loris, India, distribution, subspecies