

Project Update - June 2016

We began our fieldwork at the end of April and continued until May 20th 2016 as the first phase (pre-monsoon survey). During then, we conducted amphibian survey, collected information on threats, held awareness programme at schools and successfully organised the 8th Annual Save the Frogs Day at Philim, Sirdibas Village Development Committee (VDC), Manaslu Conservation Area (MCA), Gorkha District, Nepal.



Amolops formosus in pairs photographed in Gyanak stream, Chumchet VDC

We carried amphibian surveys (diurnal and nocturnal) in six out of seven VDCs of MCA, according to local people's information on availability of frogs. We surveyed nearly all the streams in six VDCs (*Sirdibas-Chumchet-Bihi-Prok-Lho-Samagaun*) to find mountain frogs (Paha). We observed total four species of amphibian viz. *Amolops formosus* (eight individuals), *Paa liebigii* (six individuals), *Chaparana sikimensis* (seven individuals) and one dead *Duttaphrynus himalayanus*. We also saw egg masses and tadpoles (unidentified) with metamorphosed legs. Detecting amphibians in MCA involved rigorous survey over the pre-existing areas. Our threat assessment survey reveals that Paha is hunted down for local consumption mostly by young aged males and school children in Sirdibas VDC. There is no local reporting of amphibian in Lho, Samagaun and Chhekampar VDCs and hunting is restricted under legal communal obligations including, Chumchet and Prok VDCs.



Male *Paa liebighii* with several small black horny spines as prominent feature



8th Annual Save the Frogs Day celebration at Philim, Sirdibas VDC (Photo credit: Min B. Gurung)

Our second phase of field work will take place in monsoon season preferably when the trail and study location remains unaffected by any natural disaster.



Left to right: Awareness program at Lho Primary School; Habitat of Paha; PI Biraj Shrestha measuring SNV of *Paa liebighii* & *Paa liebighii*





Left to right: Unidentified egg mass; Unidentified metamorphosed tadpole; *Amolops formosus* and *Chaparana sikimensis*.