



AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF NORTHEAST INDIA

A PHOTOGRAPHIC GUIDE

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Prasanta Choudhury

Assamese Cascade Frog

SVL: 94.4 mm

Amolops assamensis

Asomiya Nijora Beng (As)

Distinguishing Characters:

- Body stout and slightly elongated. Dorsal skin granular. Dorsolateral series of glandule from behind eye to lower back.
- Limbs long and strong. Digits with large discs. Fingers free, toes fully webbed.
- Dorsally olive green with rounded or irregular dark brown patches placed close to each other. Flank light yellow to white with dark brown flakes. Limbs cross barred.

Distribution Range: Assam and Meghalaya. Endemic to NE India.

Habit and Habitat: Crepuscular and nocturnal. Inhabit fast flowing rocky streams in tropical semi-evergreen forests (70-200 m). Sit on wet boulder and retreat under water when disturbed. Tadpole adapted to live in fast water current and stick to boulders using its ventral sucker. Breed during April-July.

Diet: Insects.

Legal Protection: None.

Conservation Status and Threats: Not assessed. Uncommon. Restricted distribution and habitat loss.

Note: This species was described from Assam in 2008.



Manoj V. Nair

Khasi Hills Bent-toed Gecko *Cyrtodactylus khasiensis*

SVL: 9 cm, TL: 10.2 cm

Khasia Jethi (As)

Distinguishing Characters:

- Unlike other geckos, digits are long, bent and sharply clawed. Lamellae on digits absent.
- Dorsum light brown with dark brown spots. Tail with dark brown and white bands. Belly cream coloured.

Distribution Range: Throughout Northeast India. North Bengal and Sikkim. Bhutan and Myanmar.

Habit and Habitat: Nocturnal. Inhabit tropical forests and secondary growth. Associated with large rocks and trees close to streams. Also found in plantation, roadside culverts and vegetation.

Diet: Insects.

Legal Protection: None.

Conservation Status and Threats: VU. Common. No imminent threat except habitat loss.



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Green Cat Snake

Total length: 1.87 m

Boiga cyanea

Kalpatia Mekuri-sakua Sap (As)

Gasua Alod (Ba)

Distinguishing Characters:

- Long and slender. Head large, distinct from neck.
- Dorsally plain green in colour and inter scale skin black. Throat bluish and mouth black inside. Belly yellowish.

Distribution Range: Throughout Northeast India. North Bengal, Sikkim and Nicobar Islands. Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Southern China and Southeast Asia.

Habit and Habitat: Nocturnal and arboreal. Inhabit tropical and subtropical evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist deciduous forests and plantations (40 to 2000 m). Frequent in human habitations near forests. When threatened pose with 'S' shaped loops and wide open the mouth to display black color inside.

Diet: Birds, rodents, lizards and also other snakes.

Legal Protection: WL(P)A, 1972- Schedule IV.

Conservation Status and Threats: NT. Uncommon. No apparent threat.

Note: Rear-fanged and mildly venomous.



Abhijit Das Peter Praschag (Inset)

Assam Roofed Turtle

Maximum length: 20 cm

Pangshura sylhetensis

Asomi Dura, Phulen Dura (As)

Pani Kathua (Ba)

Distinguishing Characters:

- Unique species with 13 pairs of marginal. Carapace smoothly domed in females; highly elevated in males and juveniles, third vertebra spiked. Males smaller than females.
- Olive brown above and an 'S' shaped red stripe behind eye. Plastron yellow with large black blotches on each scute.

Distribution Range: Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. West Bengal. Bhutan and Bangladesh.

Habit and Habitat: Crepuscular. Inhabit slow flowing rivers and streams in woody areas in lowland and foothills forests. Bask communally on logs on water. Known to lay 5 eggs during March. Natural history information lacking.

Diet: Carnivorous.

Legal Protection: WL(P)A, 1972- Schedule I.

Conservation Status and Threats: EN. Rare. Poorly known turtle species. Restricted distribution. Habitat loss and local collection has nearly extirpated this species outside protected areas.

Note: Commonly seen in Kaziranga and Nameri NP of Assam.



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Gharial

Gavialis gangeticus

Total length: 7 m

Gharial (As, Ba)

Distinguishing Characters:

- A large growing freshwater crocodilian. Snout long and slender. In Mugger (see page 131) the snout is short, broad and heavy.
- Adult males with knob or pot-like appendage (*Ghara*) on the tip of snout.

Distribution Range: The Brahmaputra and the Barak River systems. Ganges and Mahanadi River systems. Nepal. Extinct in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar.

Habit and Habitat: Inhabit large river systems with sandy banks. Bask on sand bars. Mating takes place in December-February. Females make nest on sandy riverbanks and sandbars. Lay up to 60 eggs, in a 40-45 cm dug up nest. Hatchlings come out during June-July.

Diet: Primarily fish-eater. Occasionally crustaceans.

Legal Protection: WL(P)A, 1972- Schedule I. CITES- Appendix I.

Global Conservation Status and Threats: CR. Total adult breeding population in the wild is around 200 individuals and all of them are restricted to few protected areas in India and a small population in Nepal.



▲ *Dinodon gammiei* (Arunachal Pradesh)

Viral Mistry



▲ *Lycodon jara* (Assam)

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▼ *Lycodon zawi* (Meghalaya)

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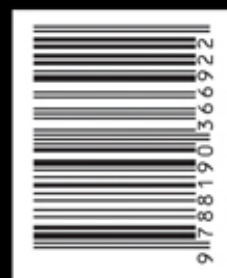
▼ *Oligodon cyclurus* (Assam)

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- First colour field guide to the amphibians and reptiles of Northeast India.
- Prepared by renowned herpetologists of the region.
- Cover 101 species with more than 165 colour photographs.
- Photogallery represents additional 88 species.
- Useful section of Snakebite and its management.

Authors can be reached over email herps@aaranyak.org to know more about amphibians and reptiles.



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