

VIBRANT GANGA



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES OF GANGA RIVER BASIN



Amphibians and reptiles are at the frontline of a worldwide biodiversity catastrophe with one-third of amphibians and one-fifth of reptiles being threatened. Amphibians have semi-permeable membrane which makes them highly sensitive to changing environments. Reptiles especially snakes, on the other hand, are the most misunderstood animal and often get killed by people due to lack of knowledge.

A thorough systematic study on amphibians and reptiles of the Ganga river was undertaken during the first phase of the National Mission for Clean Ganga - Wildlife Institute of India project titled "Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation". In the second phase of the project amphibians and reptiles of the tributaries of Ganga river are being studied. A survey was undertaken in the Ramganga and Tons rivers, where 37 herpetofaunal species were recorded. The brochure provides information on some of these unique amphibians and reptilian species.

AMPHIBIANS

SKITTERING FROG

Euphlyctis adolfi

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Red list: Least concern, Cites: Not listed
- Distribution and habitat: along the foothills of the Indian Himalayas from 100 m to 1500 m asl. Highly aquatic, permanently resides in marshes, pools and various other wetlands.
- Females are larger (50 - 62 mm) than males (38 - 43 mm). Dorsum light grey, olive-green or light brown with irregular black spots. Underside is white.

INDIAN BULLFROG

Hoplobatrachus tigerinus

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Red list: Least concern, Cites: Appendix II
- Distribution and habitat: Widespread. Found in Ganga river basin from 50 m to 1000 m asl. Semiaquatic spending most of the time in riparian vegetation near streams and rivers.
- Large frog measuring up to 170 mm. Dorsally greenish or brown with dark spots and often light vertebral line. Ventrally whitish. Males become yellow in breeding season with large blue paired lateral vocal sacs.

JAUNSAAR CASCADE FROG

Amolops jaunsari

- IWPA, 1972: Not listed, IUCN Redlist: Data deficient, Cites: Not listed
- Distribution and Habitat: Endemic to the upper stretch of Ganga river basin (Chakrata hills) in Uttarakhand from 1000 to 1500 m asl. Aquatic, residing in the cascade/boulders of hill streams, occasionally found in riparian habitat.
- Body size 35 - 45 mm. Dorsum dark olive green. Limbs marked with alternating light and dark brown cross bars.

REPTILES



KUMAON MOUNTAIN LIZARD

Japalura kumonensis

- IWPA, 1972: NA, IUCN Redlist: Least concern, Cites: Appendix II
- Distribution and Habitat: Endemic to western Himalayas (India, Nepal) from 1500 m to 2500 m asl.
- 50 - 70 mm body size. Ventral coloration light brownish or whitish; dorsal coloration light brown or creamy with no green in males.



HIMALAYAN TRINKET SNAKE

Elaphe hodgsoni

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Redlist: Least concern, Cites: Not listed
- Distribution and Habitat: Found in the Ganga basin at elevation ranging from 1500 to 5000 m asl. Semi arboreal, can be found along riparian zone.
- 1200 - 1600 mm in length. Yellowish to olive brownish dorsal, few dorsal scales edged with white, a central dark blotch on the top of head.



NORTHERN WHITE-LIPPED PIT VIPER

Trimeresurus septentrionalis

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Redlist: Least concern, Cites: Not listed
- Distribution and Habitat: Found in the Ganga basin at elevation ranging from 900 to 2000 m asl. Arboreal, sometimes found hanging along riparian zone.
- 600 - 750 mm in length. Distinct triangular head. Greenish dorsum with white ventrolateral stripe. Pale yellowish belly.



MACKINNON'S WOLF SNAKE

Lycodon mackinnoni

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Redlist: Near threatened, Cites: Not listed
- Distribution and Habitat: Found in the Ganga basin at elevation ranging from 700 to 1600 m asl. Terrestrial, rocky area.
- 350 - 465 mm in length. Dorsum greyish - brown with a network of yellow bands from just behind the head to vent.

REPTILES



© Abhijit Das

BENGAL MONITOR LIZARD *Varanus bengalensis*

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule I, IUCN Redlist: Near threatened, Cites: Appendix I
- Distribution and Habitat: widely distributed in the Ganga basin from 50 - 2000 m asl. Usually found on ground, shelter in burrows, crevices in rocks and buildings.
- Can grow up to 175 cm. Brownish or olive above, usually with black dots. Ventral yellowish.



© Abhijit Das

ELONGATED TORTOISE *Indotestudo elongata*

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Redlist: Critically endangered, Cites: Appendix II
- Distribution and Habitat: A rare species found in the foothills of the Himalayas, along the riparian Sal forests.
- Carapace (length up to 360mm) and plastron brownish yellow with black blotches.



© Abhijit Das

INDIAN BLACK TURTLE *Melanochelys trijuga*

- IWPA, 1972: Schedule IV, IUCN Redlist: Least concern, Cites: Appendix II
- Distribution and Habitat: Patchy distribution in the Ganga basin, upto 1400 m asl. Semi aquatic, can be found in both natural and man-made ponds, and in rivers.
- 38 - 45 cm carapace length. Carapace blackish - brownish. Plastron brown in color.



National Mission for Clean Ganga,
Ministry of Jal Shakti,
Department of Water Resource,
River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation,
Major Dhyan Chand Stadium, New Delhi - 110001

GACMC

GANGA AQUALIFE CONSERVATION MONITORING CENTRE

P.O. Box # 18, Chandrabani
Dehradun - 248002, Uttarakhand



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India

P.O. Box # 18, Chandrabani
Dehradun - 248002, Uttarakhand
wii@wii.gov.in