

## ***HOPLOBATRACHUS CRASSUS* JERDON, 1854 IN THE SIKKIM HIMALAYA**

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*Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon is the species found in the Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and India. In India, it was reported from Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. It is considered as Least Concern as per the IUCN status.

The literature references indicated that this species was not reported from the Sikkim Himalaya although there are many species of amphibian were reported (Mathew and Sen, 2010; Saikia and Kharkongor, 2016). The publication of Zoological Survey of India mentioned that the type specimen of *Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon was lost from ZSI, Kolkata where its type locality described Carnatic, India. (Srinivasulu et al., 2006), Dinesh et al., 2009; Bordoloi and Borah, 1999).

This species was also earlier reported in the other publications from the North Eastern region of India (Bordoloi and Borah, 1999; Saikia and Kharkongor, 2016)

This study is to ascertain that there is a presence of *Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon in the Sikkim Himalaya.

### **Material examined:**

Specimen: *Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon

Accession Number: QCLHARC 00002

Deposited at the Sikkim State Forest Repository,

Forest and Environment Department, Sikkim

Habitat: Burtuk- Arithang Paddy Field, Gangtok

### **Characteristics of the species**

It is grayish brown marked with large dark spots covering the body and limbs. The ventral skin is smooth with dull white but the upper part has warty appearance.

The body has length of ca. 12 cm



**Figure 1: *Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon**

and broad of ca. 6 cm. Its limb is ca. 10 cm having toe webbing marbled with light and dark colouration. (Srinivasulu et al., (2006), Dinesh et al., 2009)

The skin of *Hoplobatrachus crassus* Jerdon has smooth or granulate covered with with some longitudinal and some oblong folds. It bears minute warty tubercules on dorsal side of the legs.

In the Sikkim Himalaya, *Hoplobatrachus crassus* is likely to inhabit various freshwater habitats such as marshes, ponds, and rice paddies. Research on this species in the Sikkim Himalaya may focus on aspects such as its distribution, population dynamics, habitat preferences, behavior, and interactions with other species in the ecosystem.

This writing is to record the availability of *Hoplobatrachus crassus* in the Sikkim Himalaya with its habitat distribution. The habitat loss through the development of infrastructure within the region is the major cause of depleting its population in the Sikkim Himalaya. Studies on *Hoplobatrachus crassus* in this region may also assess its conservation status and the impact of human activities, climate change, and other environmental factors on its population. Additionally, the scope of research might explore the role of this species in maintaining ecological balance and ecosystem services in the Sikkim Himalaya.

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