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Amphibian Diversity of Arunachal Pradesh, North-East India: Updated Checklist

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ABSTRACT

Arunachal Pradesh, located within the eastern region of the Himalaya biodiversity hotspot, supports one of the richest amphibian assemblages in India. However, rapid taxonomic advances in recent years have significantly changed the understanding of its amphibian diversity. Herein, we present an updated checklist of the amphibians of the State by collating recent taxonomic revisions, new species descriptions, distributional records, and conservation assessments. This account includes 107 amphibian species under 10 families and three orders. We also address several taxonomic uncertainties, particularly in morphologically cryptic groups where historical records require re-evaluation using an integrative taxonomic approach for clarity. We also adopt a conservative treatment in cases of unresolved species complexes and exclude doubtful records pending further study. This work also revisits the taxonomic status of the nomen *Rhacophorus namdaphaensis*. The legal protection, conservation status, and endemism were reassessed in light of recent updates, emphasising the presence of many threatened and range-restricted species. This amphibian checklist provides an updated baseline for taxonomic research, biodiversity monitoring, and conservation planning in Arunachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Distribution, eastern Himalaya, *Rhacophorus namdaphaensis*, resurrection

1. INTRODUCTION

Arunachal Pradesh, which is located within the eastern region of the Himalaya and the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspots, represents one of the most biodiverse regions of India. The complex topography, wide elevational gradient, varied climatic regimes, and extensive forest cover of this region have created a mosaic of habitats that support rich assemblage of amphibian diversity. Due to its position at the confluence of the Palearctic and the Oriental biogeographic realms, the State harbours a unique assemblage of taxa, including several endemic and range restricted species.

However, in spite of this recognised importance, the amphibian fauna of Arunachal Pradesh has remained inadequately documented. Earlier accounts of amphibians from the State were fragmentary and based largely on opportunistic surveys (Sinha and Saikia, 2022) resulting in an underestimation of its species diversity. Systematic documentation improved only after the publication of the State Fauna Series by the Zoological Survey of India, which listed 39 amphibian species (Sarkar and Ray, 2006) from Arunachal Pradesh. This was followed by the work of

Sinha and Saikia (2022), where they reported 96 species from the State.

In recent years, as Arunachal Pradesh has emerged as a major centre for amphibian studies in India, with numerous new species descriptions, range extensions, and taxonomic revisions (Boruah et al., 2023a,b,c, 2025; Nijhawan et al., 2021; Saikia et al., 2022a,b, 2024; Sarmah et al., 2026; Tajo et al., 2025), the known species diversity from the State has increased. Besides, many new species were erected based on phylogenetic studies of the cryptic species complexes (Boruah et al., 2025; Mahony et al., 2018; Saikia et al., 2022a,b; Sarmah et al., 2026), which necessitated the re-evaluation of several historically reported taxa from the State. These recent findings have resulted in the need for an updated checklist to accurately reflect the current status of amphibian diversity in the State that will serve as a baseline for future taxonomic research, biodiversity monitoring, and conservation planning in this biologically diverse landscape.

The present study also evaluates the subjective synonymy of *Rhacophorus namdaphaensis* under *R. rhodopus* (Bordoloi et al., 2007), to reassess its taxonomic validity in light of recent systematic insights.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Prior to the publication of the State Fauna Series of Arunachal Pradesh by the Zoological Survey of India, which documented 39 amphibian species (Sarkar and Ray, 2006), the State lacked a comprehensive account of its amphibian diversity. However, Sinha and Saikia (2022) presented a substantially revised and expanded account of the amphibians of the State and expanded the count to 96 species. Their work represents the most comprehensive baseline account of the state of amphibian diversity from Arunachal Pradesh. Undoubtedly, our updated checklist is primarily based on the work of Sinha and Saikia (2022), which is augmented with recent works of Boruah et al. (2023a,b,c, 2025), Nijhawan et al. (2021), Saikia et al. (2022a,b, 2024), Sarmah et al. (2026), and Tajo et al. (2025).

In addition to updating the checklist, to assess the endemic status of species described from the State, Frost (2025) is followed. Following the completion of the Global Amphibian Assessment 2 in 2022, which led to substantial revisions in IUCN Red List categories, the current conservation status of each species is updated as per the database of the IUCN available at <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>. We also consulted the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022, for information on protected species.

3. RESULTS

The present species count of amphibians of Arunachal Pradesh stands at 107 species, which belong to 10 families under three orders (see Table 1). Seven families (103 species) represent the anurans, while two families (three species) represent the caecilians. Additionally, there is a report of a single species of salamander from the State (Mansukhani et al., 1976; Sethy and Chauhan, 2011).

Table 1: Updated checklist of amphibians of Arunachal Pradesh [W(P)AA, 2022=Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022; IUCN=International Union for Conservation of Nature; EN-Endangered, NT-Near Threatened, VU-Vulnerable, LC-Least Concern, DD-Data Deficit and NE-Not Evaluated]

Sl. No.	Species	Type locality in Arunachal Pradesh	Endemism	W(P)AA, 2022 protection	Threat Status (IUCN)
Class AMPHIBIA Linnaeus, 1758					
Order ANURA Fischer von Waldheim, 1813					
Family BUFONIDAE Grey, 1825					
1	<i>Bufo gargarizans</i> Cantor, 1842	–	–	–	LC
2	<i>Duttaphrynus himalayanus</i> (Günther, 1864)	–	–	–	LC
3	<i>Duttaphrynus melanostictus</i> (Schneider, 1799)	–	–	–	LC
4	<i>Duttaphrynus stuarti</i> (Smith, 1929)	–	–	–	LC
5	<i>Firouzophrynus stomaticus</i> (Lütken, 1864)	–	–	–	LC
6	<i>Ingerophrynus macrotis</i> (Boulenger, 1887)	–	–	–	LC
Family CERATOBATRACHIDAE Boulenger, 1884					
7	<i>Alcalus fontinalis</i> Boruah, Narayanan,	Namdapha TR,	Endemic	–	NE

	Gerard, Das, and Deepak, 2023	Changlang,			
8	<i>Liurana himalayana</i> Saikia and Sinha, 2019	Talle Valley, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	DD
9	<i>Liurana indica</i> Saikia and Sinha, 2019	Talle Valley, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	DD
10	<i>Liurana kempii</i> (Annandale, 1912)	Upper Rotung, E. Siang	Endemic	–	DD
11	<i>Liurana medogensis</i> Fei, Ye, and Huang, 1997	–	–	–	LC
12	<i>Liurana minuta</i> Saikia and Sinha, 2019	Talle Valley, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	DD
Family DICROGLOSSIDAE Anderson, 1871					
13	<i>Euphlyctis adolfi</i> (Gunther, 1860)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
14	<i>Hoplobatrachus crassus</i> (Jerdon, 1853)	–	–	–	LC
15	<i>Hoplobatrachus tigerinus</i> (Daudin, 1802)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
16	<i>Ingerana borealis</i> (Annandale, 1912)	–	–	–	LC
17	<i>Limnonectes khasianus</i> (Anderson, 1871)	–	–	–	LC
18	<i>Limnonectes kuhlii</i> (Tschudi, 1838) sensu lato	–	–	–	LC
19	<i>Minervarya asmata</i> (Howlader, 2011)	–	–	–	LC
20	<i>Minervarya nepalensis</i> (Dubois, 1975)	–	–	–	LC
21	<i>Minervarya pierrei</i> (Dubois, 1975)	–	–	–	LC
22	<i>Minervarya teraiensis</i> (Dubois, 1975)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
23	<i>Nanorana annandalii</i> (Boulenger, 1920)	–	–	–	LC
24	<i>Nanorana blanfordii</i> (Boulenger, 1882)	–	–	–	LC
25	<i>Nanorana chayuenensis</i> (Ye, 1977)	–	–	–	LC
26	<i>Nanorana conaensis</i> (Fei and Huang, 1981)	–	–	–	DD
27	<i>Nanorana gammii</i> (Anderson, 1871)	–	–	–	NT
28	<i>Nanorana liebighii</i> (Günther, 1860)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
29	<i>Ombrana sikimensis</i> (Jerdon, 1870)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
Family MEGOPHRYIDAE Bonaparte, 1850					
30	<i>Boulenophrys minor</i> (Stejneger, 1926)	–	–	–	LC
31	<i>Jingophrys pachyproctus</i> Huang, 1981	–	–	–	DD
32	<i>Jingophrys vegrandis</i> (Mahony, Teeling, and Biju, 2013)	Sessa Village, W. Kameng	Endemic	–	EN
33	<i>Leptobranchium bompu</i> Sondhi and Ohler, 2011	Eaglenest, W. Kameng	–	–	LC
34	<i>Leptobranchium somani</i> Sarmah, Garg, Tajo, Upadhyaya K., Hanken, and Biju, 2026	Tiwarigaon, L. Dibang Valley	Endemic	–	NE
35	<i>Leptobranchium mechuka</i> Sarmah, Garg, Tajo, Upadhyaya K., Hanken, and Biju, 2026	Mechuka, Shi Yomi	Endemic	–	NE
36	<i>Oreolalax</i> sp.	–	–	–	–

37	<i>Scutigera nyingchiensis</i> Fei, 1977	–	–	–	LC
38	<i>Xenophrys apatani</i> Saikia, Sinha, Shabnam, Kharkongor, and Dinesh, 2024	–	Endemic	–	NE
39	<i>Xenophrys ancræ</i> (Mahony, Teeling, and Biju, 2013)	Namdapha, Changlang	Endemic	–	DD
40	<i>Xenophrys himalayana</i> (Mahony, Kamei, Teeling and Biju, 2018)	Elephant Village, W. Kameng	Endemic	–	EN
41	<i>Xenophrys major</i> (Boulenger, 1908)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
42	<i>Xenophrys medogensis</i> (Fei, Ye and Huang, 1983)	–	–	–	EN
43	<i>Xenophrys monticola</i> Günther, 1864	–	–	–	LC
44	<i>Xenophrys periosa</i> (Mahony, Kamei, Teeling and Biju, 2018)	Pangin, Siang	–	–	EN
45	<i>Xenophrys robusta</i> (Boulenger, 1908)	–	–	–	LC
46	<i>Xenophrys</i> sp. 1	–	–	–	–
47	<i>Xenophrys</i> sp. 2	–	–	–	–
Family MICROHYLIDAE Günther, 1858 (1843)					
48	<i>Microhyla berdmorei</i> (Blyth, 1856)	–	–	–	LC
49	<i>Microhyla eos</i> Biju, Garg, Kamei, and Maheswaran, 2019	Namdapha, Changlang	Endemic	–	DD
50	<i>Microhyla</i> cf. <i>nilphamariensis</i> Howlader, Nair, Gopalan, and Merilä, 2015	–	–	–	LC
51	<i>Uperodon assamensis</i> (Das, Sengupta, Ahmed, and Dutta, 2005)	–	–	–	VU
52	<i>Uperodon globulosus</i> (Günther, 1864)	–	–	–	LC
Family RANIDAE Batsch, 1796					
53	<i>Amolops adicola</i> Patel, Garg, Das, Stuart, and Biju 2021	Basin of Mossing River, U. Siang	Endemic	–	DD
54	<i>Amolops aniqiaoensis</i> Dong, Rao, and Lü, 2005	–	–	–	NT
55	<i>Amolops assamensis</i> Sengupta, Hussain, Choudhury, Gogoi, Ahmed and Choudhury, 2008	–	–	–	VU
56	<i>Amolops beibengensis</i> Jiang, Li, Zou, Yan, and Che, 2020	–	–	–	NE
57	<i>Amolops chanakya</i> Saikia, Laskar, Dinesh, Shabnam, and Sinha, 2022	Dirang, W. Kameng	Endemic	–	NE
58	<i>Amolops</i> cf. <i>chunganensis</i> (Pope, 1929)	–	–	–	LC
59	<i>Amolops gerbillus</i> (Annandale, 1912)	Yembung, E. Siang	–	–	LC
60	<i>Amolops himalayanus</i> (Boulenger, 1888)	–	–	Schedule-II	NT
61	<i>Amolops tawang</i> Saikia, Laskar, Dinesh, Shabnam, and Sinha, 2022	GomkyalengVillage, Tawang	Endemic	–	NE

62	<i>Amolops terraorchis</i> Saikia, Sinha, Laskar, Shabnam, and Dinesh, 2022	Sessa River, W. Kameng	Endemic	–	NE
63	<i>Clinotarsus alticola</i> (Boulenger, 1882)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
64	<i>Hylarana garoensis</i> (Boulenger, 1920)	–	–	–	DD
65	<i>Hylarana humeralis</i> (Boulenger, 1887)	–	–	–	LC
66	<i>Hylarana khare</i> (Kiyasetuo and Khare, 1986)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
67	<i>Hylarana lacrima</i> (Sheridan and Stuart, 2018)	–	–	Schedule-II	NT
68	<i>Hylarana leptoglossa</i> (Cope, 1868)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
69	<i>Hylarana tytleri</i> (Theobald, 1868)	–	–	–	LC
70	<i>Nidirana noadihing</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2023	Confluence of Noa-Dihing and Yakhulo, Changlang	–	–	NE
71	<i>Odorrana andersonii</i> (Boulenger, 1882)	–	–	–	LC
72	<i>Odorrana arunachalensis</i> Saikia, Sinha and Kharkongor, 2017	Talle Valley, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	VU
73	<i>Odorrana chloronota</i> (Günther, 1876)	–	–	–	LC
74	<i>Odorrana livida</i> (Blyth, 1856)	–	–	–	LC
75	<i>Odorrana mawphlangensis</i> (Pillai and Chanda, 1977)	–	–	Schedule-II	DD
Family RHACOPHORIDAE Hoffman, 1932 (1858)					
76	<i>Chirixalus doriae</i> Boulenger, 1893	–	–	–	LC
77	<i>Chirixalus simus</i> Annandale, 1915	–	–	–	LC
76	<i>Feihyla shyamrupus</i> (Chanda and Ghosh, 1989)	Namdapha, Changlang	Endemic	–	LC
77	<i>Gracixalus medogensis</i> (Ye and Hu, 1984)	–	–	–	DD
78	<i>Gracixalus patkaiensis</i> Boruah, Deepak, Patel, Jithin, Yomcha, and Das, 2023	Namdapha, Changlang	–	–	NE
79	<i>Kurixalus naso</i> (Annandale, 1912)	Egar Stream, E. Siang	–	–	LC
80	<i>Kurixalus verrucosus</i> (Boulenger, 1893)	–	–	–	LC
81	<i>Nasutixalus jerdonii</i> (Günther, 1876)	–	–	–	LC
82	<i>Nasutixalus medogensis</i> Jiang, Wang, Yan, and Che, 2016	–	–	–	DD
83	<i>Polypedates assamensis</i> Mathew and Sen, 2009	–	–	–	LC
84	<i>Polypedates himalayensis</i> (Annandale, 1912)	–	–	–	LC
85	<i>Polypedates subansiriensis</i> Mathew and Sen, 2009	Soro Village, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	DD
86	<i>Polypedates teraiensis</i> (Dubois, 1987)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
87	<i>Raorchestes arunachalensis</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Rengging village, E. Siang	Endemic	–	NE

88	<i>Raorchestes dibangensis</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Abango, L. Dibang Valley	Endemic	–	NE
89	<i>Raorchestes eaglenestensis</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Eaglenest, W. Kameng	Endemic	–	NE
90	<i>Raorchestes garo</i> (Boulenger, 1919)	–	–	–	DD
91	<i>Raorchestes magnus</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Tiwarigaon, L. Dibang Valley	Endemic	–	NE
92	<i>Raorchestes nasuta</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Namdapha Tiger Reserve, Changlang	Endemic	–	NE
93	<i>Raorchestes orientalis</i> Boruah, Deepak, and Das, 2025	Namdapha TR, Changlang	–	–	NE
94	<i>Rhacophorus bipunctatus</i> Ahl, 1927	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
95	<i>Rhacophorus namdaphaensis</i> Sarkar and Sanyal, 1985	Namdapha TR, Changlang	Endemic	–	NE
96	<i>Rhacophorus subansiriensis</i> Mathew and Sen, 2009	Ziro-Hapoli, L. Subansiri	Endemic	–	DD
97	<i>Rhacophorus translineatus</i> Wu, 1977	–	–	–	NT
98	<i>Rhacophorus tuberculatus</i> (Anderson, 1871)	–	–	–	DD
99	<i>Theلودerma baibungense</i> (Jiang, Fei, and Huang, 2009)	–	–	–	LC
100	<i>Theلودerma moloch</i> (Annandale, 1912)	Upper Renging, E. Siang	–	–	LC
101	<i>Zhangixalus burmanus</i> (Andersson, 1939)	–	–	–	LC
102	<i>Zhangixalus smaragdinus</i> (Blyth, 1852)	–	–	Schedule-II	LC
103	<i>Zhangixalus suffry</i> (Bordoloi, Bortamuli and Ohler, 2007)	–	–	–	LC
Order CAUDATA Fischer von Waldheim, 1813 Family SALAMANDRIDAE Goldfuss, 1820					
104	<i>Tylototriton cf. himalayanus</i> Khatiwada, Wang, Ghimire, Vasudevan, Paudel, and Jiang, 2015	–	–	Schedule-I	NT
Order GYMNOPHIONA Müller, 1832 Family CHIKILIDAE Kamei, San Mauro, Gower, Van Bocxlaer, Sherratt, Thomas, Babu, Bossuyt, Wilkinson, and Biju, 2012					
105	<i>Chikila alcocki</i> Kamei, Gower, Wilkinson, and Biju, 2013	–	–	–	LC
106	<i>Chikila darlong</i> Kamei, Gower, Wilkinson, and Biju, 2013	Darlong, Seijosa, E. Kameng	Endemic	–	DD
Family ICHTHYOPHIIDAE Taylor, 1968					
107	<i>Ichthyophis sendenyu</i> Kamei, Wilkinson, Gower & Biju, 2009	–	–	–	DD

The recent phylogenetic studies on the *Rhacophorus rhodopus* species complex (Lee et al., 2024; Tang et al., 2024) that restricted *R. rhodopus* sensu stricto to Yunnan in China, have rendered the earlier records of *R. rhodopus* sensu lato from Arunachal Pradesh (Saikia et al., 2021; Sinha and Saikia, 2022) without a name. To assign a valid name to the Arunachal Pradesh population, it is necessary to reassess the synonymy proposed by Bordoloi et al. (2007), who treated the reddish-brown tree frog *Rhacophorus namdaphaensis*, originally described from Namdapha in Arunachal Pradesh by Sarkar and Sanyal (1985), as a junior subjective synonym of *R. rhodopus*.

A detailed examination of Bordoloi et al. (2007) reveals several morphological characters that distinguish *R. namdaphaensis* from *R. rhodopus* sensu stricto (characters of the latter in parentheses). These include a smaller body size (vs. larger), a rounded snout (vs. obliquely pointed), a rounded canthus rostralis (vs. distinct), the tympanum one-third of the eye diameter (vs. half), the tongue moderately sized, oval, and emarginate (vs. long, narrow, and notched), tibio-tarsal articulation reaching the eye (vs. nostril), and red webbing between the toes (vs. reddish-orange).

In light of these distinctions, *R. namdaphaensis* should be resurrected as a valid species from the subjective synonymy of *R. rhodopus*, which was proposed by Bordoloi et al. (2007). Accordingly, we refer previous records of *R. rhodopus* sensu lato from Arunachal Pradesh to this species pending further integrative taxonomic assessment.

4. DISCUSSION

Sarania et al. (2015) reported *Scutigera nyingchiensis* from Sela in Tawang District; however, given the low inter-specific variation among the congeners (Frost, 2025), it needs to be verified with molecular evidence to ascertain its range in the State.

Roy et al. (2018) reported the first Indian record of the genus *Oreolalax* sp. from Arunachal Pradesh. They also included three species under *Xenophrys* sp., without further data on the specific identities. Subsequently, Sinha and Saikia (2022) also reported two additional species under *Xenophrys* sp. without specific identity. As these *Xenophrys* reports were from different localities of the State, they probably represent different species. However, herein, we are adopting a conservative approach by considering the reports of *Xenophrys* sp. to represent up to two potential species until further taxonomic clarity emerge.

While describing *Amolops wangyali* from Bhutan, which is a *Viridimaculatus* species group, Mahony et al. (2022) suggested that the *Amolops* population reported earlier from Eaglenest Wildlife Sanctuary of West Kameng District in Arunachal Pradesh by Athreya (2006) could be attributable to *A. wangyali*. However, Mahony et al. (2022) also noted morphological differences between the Bhutanese population and the Eaglenest population (Athreya, 2006). As *Amolops* species are cryptic by nature, the taxonomic status of the Eaglenest population requires comparison with other members of the *Viridimaculatus* group, which share geographic proximity in their distribution range, such as *A. chanakya* and *A. tawang*. Hence, we are not including *A. wangyali* in this checklist.

The bushfrog diversity of Arunachal Pradesh have recently undergone a major taxonomic revision (Boruah et al., 2025). Previously only five species of bushfrogs were known from the State (Sinha and Saikia, 2022). However, Boruah et al. (2025) described six new species bushfrogs and excluded *Raorchestes andersoni* and *R. annandalii* from the faunal list of the State. They also proposed the synonymy of *R. sahai* under *Nasutixalus jerdonii* and *Philautus namdaphaensis* under *R. garo*. Additionally, they reassigned *Philautus kempii* under the genus *Liurana*.

The salamander species *Tylostrotion verrucosus* was described from Yunnan in China, and was later reported from Arunachal Pradesh by Mansukhani et al. (1976) from Lohit District. Subsequently, Sethy and Chauhan (2011) recorded this species from the adjoining Changlang District. However, according to Hernandez et al. (2018), the eastern part of the Himalaya and the Irrawaddy Valley is the contact zone between *Tylostrotion himalayanus* and *T. verrucosus*, with the additional potential of harbouring unnamed cryptic species. With the recent recognitions of multiple lineages within the *T. verrucosus* species complex (Frost, 2025), such as *Tylostrotion zaimeng* from Manipur (Decemson et al., 2023), the taxonomic identity of populations from Arunachal Pradesh needs re-evaluation. Therefore, there is a need for a detailed integrative study to clarify its species status. Until then, we are conferring the previous report of salamander species from the State (Mansukhani et al., 1976; Sethy and Chauhan, 2011) under *T. himalayanus*.

5. CONCLUSION

Till now, researchers have described a total of 34 amphibian species from Arunachal Pradesh, of which 27 are still endemic to the State. Of the 107 species known from the State, 16 species are currently included under the protected list of the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 that include one species under Schedule-I and 15 species under Schedule-II. Additionally, four species are categorised as Endangered, three as Vulnerable, and six as Near Threatened under the IUCN Red List assessment. We reject the

subjective synonymy of *R. namdaphaensis* under *R. rhodopus* for the reasons outlined above. Accordingly, we apply the name *R. namdaphaensis* to the reddish-brown tree frog population previously referred to as *R. rhodopus sensu lato* from Arunachal Pradesh.

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Author Contributions

Bhaskar Saikia contributed in compiling the checklist and in writing the draft manuscript and revising the paper. Bikramjit Sinha contributed in compiling the checklist and in revising the draft manuscript. Prasanta Nanada contributed in compiling the checklist and data analysis. Mridul Kumar Borthakur contributed in the data analysis.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Not applicable.

Ethical approval & declaration

Not applicable. The Updated Checklist of Amphibian Diversity of Arunachal Pradesh, North-East India was documented through data mining. There are no animals experimented through the research.

Data and materials availability

All data associated with this study are present in the paper.

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