

The New Record of Variagated Frog (*Ramanellavariegata*, *Stoliczka* 1872) in Deuli Hill near Jaraka , Jajpur and Ambagadahill near Berhampur, Ganjam Districts in Odisha, India

Udaya Kumar Das^{1*}, Sanjeeb Kumar Behera², Amita P. Das³, Rajkishore Das⁴

¹Research Fellow, State Wildlife Organisation, Prakruti Bhavan, 5th floor Prakruti Bhawan,
Nilakantha Nagar, Bhubaneswar, -10 Odisha India

²Bharatiya Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development, Kabisurya Nagar, Ganjam Odisha, India

³Society for Blackbuck Protection, Community Conservation Centre, Bhetnoi, Ganjam, Odisha, India

⁴APS and ASS squad State Forest Department, Govt of Odisha, Khallikote Forest Range office,
Ganjam, Odisha, India.

***Corresponding Author:** Udaya Kumar Das, ¹Research Fellow, State Wildlife Organisation,
Prakruti Bhavan, 5th floor Prakruti Bhawan, Nilakantha Nagar, Bhubaneswar, -10 Odisha India . E-
mail: udayak.dash@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

On the January 18th 2018 I along with my field persons made a trip for occasional visit to suburb of Berhampur city, the Ambagada village (GPS Lat 19° 20 '3.35" Lon 84° 45 '01.33. "). The hilly terrain with scrub land near western side of Berhampur town which have elevation 45-55 MSL elevation 42mtrs MSL). It is situated close to Kerandimal hills of Ganjam districts of Odisha. On a cold evening of the winter season, we visited the stonequary site and came to found a small frog jumping ahead our slow trekking motorcycle then we confirmed it as Variageted frog (*Ramnellavariegata*). The frog measured about 25 mm SVL) and 13mm in diameter at mid body .

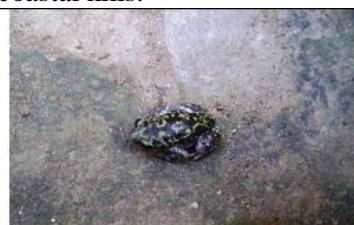
INTRODUCTION

The Variageted frog (*Ramnellavariegata*) is a solitary frog found in very few individuals and move at night. The frog perched in a huge boulder side to road and on putting torch light it

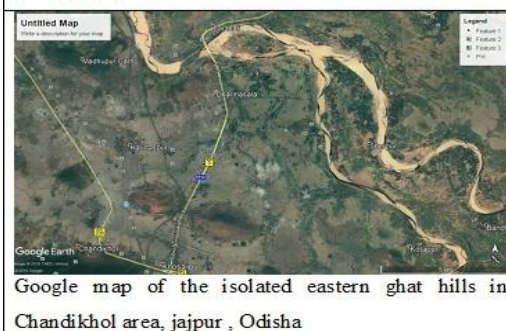
tries to crawl up on the stone, before escaping jump, it was photographed. The present record is 35 km away from the Lakhari valley wildlife sanctuary in the west direction and this species is newly recorded in the south Odisha region in the coastal hills.



P-1 Rannella variegata in Ambagada, Odisha (night photography)



ccP-2 Rannella variegata in Ambagada, Odisha (day photography)



Google map of the isolated eastern ghat hills in Chandikhol area, jajpur, Odisha



Rannella Variegata habitat in Deuli hill, Jaraka, Jajpur, Odisha

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Sighting of *Ramanella variagata* in Deulihill in the south bank of River Brahmani near the National highway bridge. (top of the image)

In another trip to the 23rd August 2018 this year the species is encountered in 5 numbers in the Deuli hill of Dalijoda forest range of Cuttack division near Jaraka town. The height of the Deulihill is 105 meter and situated to the bank of river Brahmani. This place is a paradise for frogs and other 5-6 species of frogs are recorded earlier.

There are about 27 species of amphibians recorded from Odisha, still there may be of new record of finding of frogs, toad and tree frogs in the little known places in the state. There is little work in the bio-diversity study in territorial forest divisions having numerous lesser protected revenue hills with scrub vegetation in the Cuttack forest division of Odisha. These Eastern Ghat hills of small to medium size and moderate elevation are surrounded by crop lands, human habitations, urban and small industrial settlements in coastal region of old Cuttack district. The Eastern Ghats hills are very little known in the field of biodiversity survey and research on wildlife so far in the sanctuaries of Odisha. Therefore, it needs new attention for scientific exploration.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIES:

Variagated frog (*Ramanellavariagata*, *Stoliczka* 1872) is a small frog, body flattened, neck slightly distinct, skin entirely smooth and slimy; large and triangular discs on fingers, webbing on toes rudimentary; males have single vocal sacs. Body colour olive brown, finely marbled with yellow or golden, underside is white, dark patches on throat. Specimens Examined: 2 nos in foot hill of Ambagada stone quarry site near Berhampur GPS Lat 19° 20 '3.35" Lon 84° 45 '01.33." elevation 42mtrs MSL. 3 nos in Deuli hill near Jaraka, Jajpur (GPS Lat 20° 46 ' 46.64" Lon 86° 08 ' 48.84." Elevation 105mtrs MSL

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

Open forests at the edge of the forest within human habitation. It breeds in dirty ponds and pools. They are terrestrial and nocturnal, secretive and seen only in breeding season the species was recorded here was seen during a cold season on 3rd Nov 2017 in Ambagada of Ganjam and 23rd Aug 2018 in Deuli of Jajpur in Odisha. The calling males are not very easy to locate near temporary rainwater pools and ditches. The frog croaks very loudly with high

pitch sounds while floating in water. Sometimes they hide in burrows near waterbodies, congregations in more numbers are observed near termite mounds. Diet: small insects.

DISTRIBUTION

In Odisha it was found in Similipal and in plains, post harvested paddy fields on the way to Betnoti, Khunta and Udala. It was found in throughout Odisha, It was recorded from Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala; outside India, it is found in Eastern province Northern Province Anuradhapura, Mihintale Palatupuna and Opata of Sri Lanka. It was newly found in Deuli hill near Jaraka of Jajpur district of Odisha. Ambagada area near Berhampur which is a new record in south Odisha close to coastline.

DISCUSSION

The new recorded location fall in a lesser known biodiversity zone of the Eastern Ghats in Odisha, The habitats mostly consist of dry deciduous forest, semi evergreen vegetation patches composed largely of Mango trees together with a few shrubs and rarely grasses. The nearest conservation area is 24 kms from the Lakheri wildlife Sanctuary and proposed Mahendragiri Biosphere reserve in Gajapati district. This small hill comes in the Kumbhahari beat of Berhampur range and Berhampur forest division. It was also observed that it was a rare sighting during the month of November in which period when most of the frogs species go for winter hibernate. However more observation is needed for detailed study on distribution and population status of this species in the Eastern Ghats of Jajpur in Odisha as well as in India.

REMARKS

Not uncommon, the species is very colorful and secretive nature when disturbed, the frog tries to escape with long leaps and hiding in bushy thickets, stone crevices. The species is described in this literature was 25 mm in SVL and 12mm wide. The maximum length is 30mm snout to vent in measurements.

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