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**DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORDS FOR CHELONIANS FROM NORTH-
EASTERN INDIA**

By Indraneil Das

DISTRIBUTIONAL RECORDS FOR CHELONIANS FROM NORTHEASTERN INDIA¹

INDRANEIL DAS²
(With a text-figure)

Distributional records for 10 species of chelonians, based primarily on collections from the northeastern states of Assam and Meghalaya have been presented. These include: Emydidae- *Pyxidea mouhotii*, *Cuora amboinensis*, *Melanochelys tricarinata*, *M. trijuga*, *Geoclemys hamiltonii*, *Kachuga smithii*, *K. sylhetensis*, *K. tentoria*, Testudinidae-*Manouria emys* and Trionychidae-*Lissemys punctata*

INTRODUCTION

The chelonian fauna of the northeastern states of India (Fig. 1) comprises at least 17 species, belonging to 3 families (Table 1). Much of the existing knowledge on the distribution of the group in the region is based on collections that are decades old, scattered in several museums. Literature concerning the region's turtles and tortoises is scanty. Those solely dealing with north eastern India, published in the present century include Chaudhury (1912), Talukdar (1979), Vijaya (1983) and Das (1987).

The present account describes the notable records of turtles and tortoises discovered during a recent (January-February and June- July 1988) survey in the states of Assam and Meghalaya, undertaken by me and supported by the IUCN/WWF. A description of the survey will be found in the final project report (Das 1988).

METHODS

Turtles and tortoises were collected during the survey either by hand or in tangle-nets set in water or from forest villages. At the Manas Tiger Reserve, the chelonian collections made by Mr. S.K. Sarma, Forest Range Officer, Bansbari, were examined. In addition, material at several museums was verified.

The following museum acronyms have been used: BM(NH): British Museum (Natural History), South Kensington, London, England. MHNG: Museum Histoire Naturelle, Geneva, Switzerland. ZSI: National Zoological Collection, Zoological Survey of India, Calcutta, India. ZSI/ER: Zoological Survey of India, Eastern Regional station, Shillong, India.

All material referred to in subsequent sections,

except those in the MHNG have been personally verified. ID/NE refers to my north eastern India field number and material collected during the above survey are being deposited at the ZSI.

Nomenclature follows Iverson's (1986) most recent checklist. Scute terminology used are those suggested by Zangerl (1969).

Two or more of the following measurements were taken on each specimen dealt with subsequently:

1. Straight carapace length (SCL): For emydids and testudinids, cervical at carapace midline to posterior edge of 12th marginal; for trionychids, from the cervical, along the medial region to the posterior tip of flap, taken with dial vernier calipers for specimens upto 20 cm, and with steel tape for those exceeding this length.

TABLE 1
LIST OF CHELONIANS RECORDED FROM THE
NORTHEASTERN STATES OF INDIA

EMYDIDAE	
1. <i>Pyxidea mouhotii</i>	Assam, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh
2. <i>Cyclemys dentata</i>	Assam, Meghalaya
3. <i>Cuora amboinensis</i>	Assam, Nagaland
4. <i>Melanochelys trijuga</i>	Assam, Nagaland
5. <i>Melanochelys tricarinata</i>	Assam, Arunachal Pradesh
6. <i>Geoclemys hamiltonii</i>	Assam, Meghalaya
7. <i>Morenia petersi</i>	Assam
8. <i>Hardella thurjii</i>	Assam, Meghalaya
9. <i>Kachuga smithii</i>	Assam
10. <i>Kachuga tecta</i>	Assam
11. <i>Kachuga tentoria</i>	Assam
12. <i>Kachuga sylhetensis</i>	Assam, Meghalaya
13. <i>Kachuga dhongoka</i>	Assam
TESTUDINIDAE	
14. <i>Indotestudo elongata</i>	Meghalaya, possibly Assam
15. <i>Manouria emys</i>	Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland
TRIONYCHIDAE	
16. <i>Lissemys punctata</i>	Assam, Meghalaya
17. <i>Trionyx hurum</i>	Assam

¹Accepted

²Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, Vadanemmeli, Perur Post, Mahabalipuram Road, Madras 603 104.