

## HERPETOLOGICAL EXPLORATIONS IN THE ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

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KEY WORDS: Amphibia, Reptilia, zoogeography

The archipelago of the Andaman and Nicobar islands lies in the Bay of Bengal, and has been known for its species richness and high levels of endemism. Whenever herpetological collections have been made, new species have been found from both these island groups, including representatives of virtually all groups of amphibians and reptiles. Field and systematic researches, beginning in 1994, have resulted in the discovery of many new species, the revival of old names from synonymy, as well as additions of Indo-Chinese and Sundaic elements to the fauna of these islands. The importance of basic systematic work has profound importance for understanding the biogeography of these islands and for the conservation of the tropical moist forests that are now threatened by logging, other faulty land-use practices and especially emigration from the mainland.