



An Amelanistic Tadpole of the Purple Frog, *Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis* (Anura: Nasikabatrachidae)

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The Purple Frog (*Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis*; Fig. 1) and its congener (*N. bhupathi*) are the only currently recognized species in the family Nasikabatrachidae and both are endemic to the Western Ghats (Biju and Bossuyt 2003; Janani et al. 2017). The rheophilous larvae of the Purple Frog hatch and disperse during June through monsoon-intensified streams (Raj et al. 2011; Zachariah et al. 2012).

At 1945 h on 26 July 2019, we encountered an amelanistic tadpole (Fig. 2A–B) attached to an inclined rock in a very shallow stream at Myladumpara, Vazhachal Reserve Forest, Kerala, India (10°17'53.6"N, 76°41'26.8"E; 474 m asl). Its morphology clearly matched descriptions of *N. sahyadrensis* in Raj et al. (2011) and Zachariah et al. (2012), differing from normal cryptic tadpoles (Thomas et al. 2019; Fig. 2C–D) only in abnormal coloration.

Relatively few records document albinism or amelanism in amphibians (Brassaloti and Bertoluci 2008; Toledo 2011) because such abnormalities are rare and individuals with these

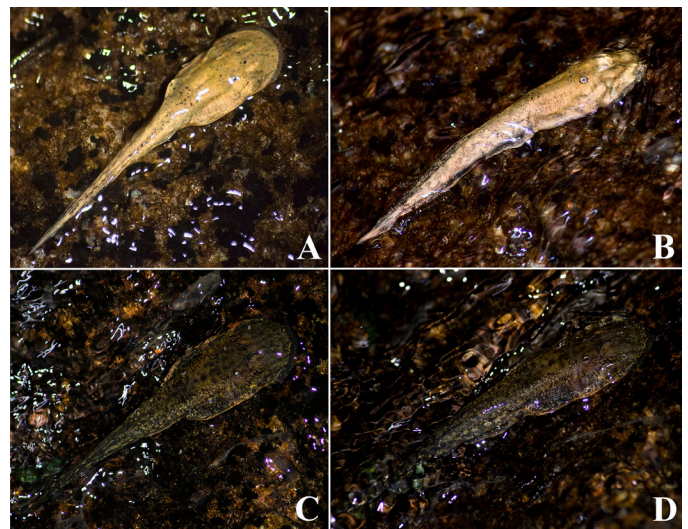


Fig. 2. Purple Frog (*Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis*) tadpoles in natural habitat. Dorsal and lateral views of an amelanistic (A–B) and a typically pigmented individual (C–D). Photographs by S. Harikrishnan (A) and Sujith V. Gopalan (B–D).



Fig. 1. A Purple Frog (*Nasikabatrachus sahyadrensis*) in natural habitat. Photograph by Sujith V. Gopalan.

color aberrations are more easily seen and caught by predators (Bechtel 1995).

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