



# Larval Indian Bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) Scavenging on an Indian Tiger Centipede (*Scolopendra hardwickei*)

Nariman Vazifdar<sup>1</sup>, Monowar Alam Khalid<sup>2</sup>, and Mervyn D’Costa<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mumbai, Maharashtra, India (narimanvazifdar@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Integral University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

<sup>3</sup>Ajmer, Rajasthan, India

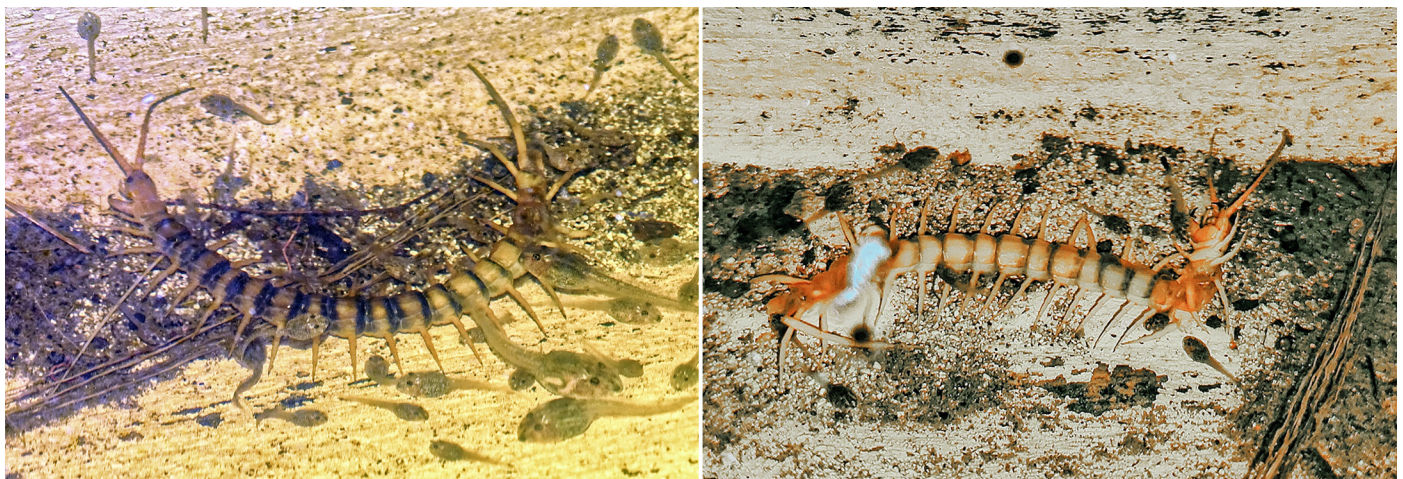
Although larval anurans often are most conspicuous in standing water in temperate zones, tadpole assemblages can be very abundant and diverse in lotic habitats in the tropics (e.g., Inger et al. 1986; Whiles et al. 2006). Recent evidence suggests that generalized, rasping tadpoles incorporate a variety of animal matter into their diet, and cannibalism and scavenging are well documented for a variety of tadpole taxa (Crump 1983, 1992).

On 11 May 2021, NV observed larval Indian Bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) scavenging a presumably drowned Indian Tiger Centipede (*Scolopendra hardwickei*) in a shallow cement trough where water had collected on Radhanagar Beach, Swaraj Dweep, Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Fig. 1). A recent heavy rainfall had triggered the emergence of many winged termites, a suddenly available and plentiful

food source on which a variety of predators feast (Sekhar and Vidhyavathi 2018).

Three ways by means of which the centipede might have become accessible to the tadpoles are: (1) The centipede was trying to get at winged termites flying over the water trough and fell in; (2) the centipede was dislodged from the cement post by strong winds and landed in the water trough; or (3) the centipede was trying to eat the tadpoles and the undeveloped eggs but got stuck in the water trough and drowned. Centipedes foraging on a beach is not unusual; in fact, centipedes have been recorded hunting in pools in an intertidal zone and being caught by sea anemones (Moraes and Chagas-Júnior 2009).

During the initial observation, the larger, more developed tadpoles were actively scavenging especially the legs of



**Fig. 1.** Larval Indian Bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) scavenging an Indian Tiger Centipede (*Scolopendra hardwickei*). Photographs by Nariman Vazifdar and Mervyn D’Costa.



**Fig. 2.** Separated head and remaining segments of an Indian Tiger Centipede (*Scolopendra hardwickii*) after one day of scavenging by Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) tadpoles (left) and remnants of the exoskeleton after the second day (right). Photographs by Nariman Vazifdar and Mervyn D'Costa.

the centipede. By the next day, the head of the centipede had been detached and a few segments had been eaten, and by the second day, the entire centipede had been devoured and only the exoskeletal remains of a few segments were left (Fig. 2).

### Acknowledgements

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