



Attempted Predation of an Andaman Bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis andamanensis*) by an Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) on Havelock Island, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India

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The impact of invasive species on native species, communities, and ecosystems has been widely recognized for decades (Elton 1958; Lodge 1993a, 1993b; Simberloff 1996; Simberloff and Rejmanek 2011). The Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) is widely distributed in southern Asia, occurring in Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar through Bangladesh and India to Pakistan and Afghanistan (Frost 2021). *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus* has characteristics that make it a likely candidate for invasion success (Mohanty et al. 2021), and introduced populations occur in Madagascar (Glaw and Vences 2007) and possibly in the Maldives (Dutta 1997) and Laccadive Islands (Gardiner 1906). The species also was introduced recently to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands by some farmers from West Bengal, who released them into rice

fields in Mayabunder, Middle Andamans, from which they rapidly spread, mediated largely by humans (Harikrishnan and Vasudevan 2013; Rangaswamy et al. 2014; Mohanty and Measey 2019b). Indian Bullfrogs are known to be voracious feeders, consuming a variety of prey including small vertebrates (Padhye et al. 2008), which are represented in these islands by numerous endemic species (Das 1999), many of which are at risk of competition with or predation by Indian Bullfrogs (Mohanty and Measey 2019a).

The endemic Andaman Bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis andamanensis*) (Fig. 1), locally known known as Hara Shaap (= Green Snake) or Lao Lata, is diurnal and arboreal, inhabits low bushes and trees and feeds on frogs, lizards, geckos, and even birds (Whitaker and Captain 2004).



Fig 1. An Andaman Bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis andamanensis*) basking on a tree branch. Photograph by Nariman Vazifdar.



Fig 2. An Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) trying to eat an Andaman Bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis andamanensis*) on Havelock Island, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. Photograph by Kaushik Lahon.

At about 1215 h on 7 July 2021 at the bottom of Yullatung Hill, #5 Havelock, KL encountered an Indian Bullfrog with an Andaman Bronzeback in its mouth (Fig. 2). The frog was using its forelimbs in an effort to push more of the struggling snake's body into its mouth. After about ten minutes, the frog suddenly jumped and let go off the snake, which quickly escaped up a nearby tree. The frog then retreated into the undergrowth.

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