



# First Documented Record of the Indian Roofed Turtle, *Pangshura tecta* (Gray 1831), from the Makwal Wetland, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India

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The Indian Roofed Turtle (*Pangshura tecta*) is a generally aquatic omnivore that can reach a carapace length of 23 cm; it occurs primarily in slow-moving rivers and stagnant bodies of water such as ponds, puddles, tanks, and roadside ditches (Das 1991; Hossain and Sarker 1995; Ahmed and Das 2010). Threats to the species include the illegal pet trade, exploitation for food and traditional medicine, and loss of habitat (Ahmed et al. 2021). The species is protected under Schedule I: Part C (Reptiles) of the Wildlife Protection Act (1972) (Government of India 2023), has been listed as Vulnerable (VU) on the IUCN Red List (Ahmed et al. 2021), and is in Appendix I of CITES (2024).

This species is distributed widely in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan (Bour 2008; Hossain et al. 2013; Luiselli et al. 2016; Agha et al. 2018; Sung et al. 2021; Ayub et al. 2023; Uetz et al. 2024). Although recorded from many locations in India (e.g., Smith 1931; Ahmed and Das 2009; Basumatary and Sharma 2013; Deha and Saikia 2015; Baruah et al. 2016; Barhadiya and Khudsar 2019; Chaudhari and

Soni 2022), including Jammu and Kashmir (Sahi and Koul 2020), no reports have documented the occurrence of this species in the Makwal Wetland.

The Makwal Wetland (32.680115, 74.689993), part of the Kukarian Conservation Reserve, lies near the Indo-Pakistani border in Mandal Tehsil of Jammu District, about 30 km from Jammu City. The main sources of water are spillover from the defence ditch and the Tawi River, and shallow groundwater present in the area. The area is surrounded primarily by agricultural fields with rice and wheat as the main crops. Vegetation in the wetland includes macrophytes such as *Eichhornia crassipes* (Water Hyacinth), *Typha latifolia* (Cattail), *Ipomea aquatica* (Water Spinach), *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed), and tall grasses such as *Saccharum munja* (Moonj Grass).

At 1202 h on 16 September 2023, we found a juvenile *Pangshura tecta* (Fig. 1; Table 1) in the Makwal Wetland. We identified the turtle based on descriptions in Smith (1931), Hossain et al. (2013), Kästle et al. (2013), and Baruah et al.



**Figure 1.** A juvenile Indian Roofed Turtle (*Pangshura tecta*) from the Makwal Wetland, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India. Photograph by Mohinder Kumar.

**Table 1.** Morphometry of the juvenile Indian Roofed Turtle (*Pangshura tecta*) from the Makwal Wetland, Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India.

Character	Measurements
Straight carapace length (SCL)	65.8 mm
Straight carapace width (SCW)	52.0 mm
Plastron length (PL)	59.5 mm
Plastron width (PW)	31.7 mm
Shell height (SH)	37.5 mm
Mass	49 g

(2016). This is the first record of the species from the Makwal Wetland. A photographic voucher has been deposited in the University of Kansas Digital Archive (KUDA 14631), Lawrence, Kansas, USA. The identity of the species was confirmed by Dr. Archana Bahuguna.

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