



Indian Bullfrogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*): Observations of Predation and Cannibalism in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal

Sandeep Oli¹, Basant Subedi², and Siddhartha Regmi³

¹Department of Zoology, Tri-Chandra Campus, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal (sandeep1.765402@trc.tu.edu.np)

²Faculty of Agriculture, Agriculture and Forestry University, Rampur, Chitwan, Nepal

³Institute of Forestry, Hetauda Campus, Tribhuvan University, Hetauda, Nepal

The Indian Bullfrog, *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus* (Daudin 1802), is a voracious predator, consuming a variety of invertebrates (snails, insects, prawns, land crabs) and vertebrates (anurans, including conspecifics, lizards, snakes, birds, and small mammals) (Chanda 2002; Daniel 2002; Datta and Khaledin 2017; Gautam and Bhattarai 2020a; Khan 1973; Khatiwada et al. 2016; Mohanty and Measey 2018; Parajuli and Budha 2006; Rahman et al. 2012; Sapkota et al. 2022; Tripathi 2018). Anurans are known prey of fishes, turtles, frogs (including conspecifics), snakes, crocodiles, birds, and small mammals (Gautam and Bhattarai 2020b; Hossain 2016; Lodé 2010; Toledo et al. 2007; Wadeker 1963).

At 1300 h on 17 September 2021, the first author received a rescue call from a neighbor in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal (28.1900, 82.1333). Upon arrival, he found a Checkered Keelback (*Fowlea piscator*) swallowing an adult *H. tigerinus* (Fig. 1). The snake, disturbed by the gathering

crowd, attempted to escape with the frog but, when followed, released the frog. Predation on Indian Bullfrogs by *F. piscator* was reported previously by Hossain (2016).

At 1900 h on 7 June 2022, in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal (28.1894, 82.1317), the first author encountered an adult *H. tigerinus* ingesting a smaller conspecific (Fig. 2). After being disturbed the larger frog released its prey and jumped into a nearby pond. Cannibalism has been reported by tadpoles (Saidapur 2001; Rajput et al. 2011; Phuge et al. 2023) and, although cannibalism of adult *H. crassus* was reported by Sapkota et al. (2022), to the best of our knowledge, this is the first documented case of attempted cannibalism of an adult conspecific by *H. tigerinus* from Nepal.

At 1800 h on 18 November 2023, in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal (28.1893, 82.1317), the first author found an adult *H. tigerinus* trapped in a 1-m deep pit and an Asian House Shrew (*Suncus murinus*) sticking its snout out of an



Figure 1. A Checkered Keelback (*Fowlea piscator*) preying on an Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal. Photograph by Sandeep Oli.



Figure 2. An adult Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) preying on a smaller conspecific in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal. Photograph by Sandeep Oli.



Figure 3. An Asian House Shrew (*Suncus murinus*) feeding on an Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*) in Hapure, Dang District, Nepal. Photograph by Sandeep Oli.

inlet hole in the side of the pit. When the latter approached the frog, it emitted a distress call, but the shrew grasped the frog's snout and held on. After half an hour, the shrew broke the frog's upper jaw. Two hours later, the frog died (Fig. 3). After another 2.5 hours, the shrew had consumed one quarter of the frog. By 0800 h the next morning, nothing was left of the frog. Predation of *H. tigerinus* by *S. murinus* has been reported previously in Nepal (Gautam and Bhattarai 2020b) and Bangladesh (Rabbe and Roy 2021).

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