

Project Update: July 2016

This report is the summary of work done during last 3 months. All the designated sites from 2350 m asl to 3850 m asl were visited by the team and all required information were recorded. Careful observation and necessary measurement of specimen were taken at the site and back home. Specimens were identified with the help of reference book and herpetologist. Till date more than three species of anurans are recorded from the study site. It was observed that conservation threat is limited to Himalayan bull frog only. Direct consumption of *Paa leibigii* by human with belief for medicinal treatment is increasing (Local people consultation and collection of *Paa leibigii* made for consumption). The distribution and abundance of *Bufo himalayanus* is leading comparing to other two species identified (Record and observation base) *Bufo himalayanus* are recorded breeding from early March in the upper valley until June in the lower altitude. It was observed that *Paa leibigii* commence breeding from December to June at different micro habitats, however breeding and distribution status of *Scutiger sikimensis* is limited and subject of future study.

Open ground and agricultural fields are common sites for *Bufo himalayanus* however *Paa leibigii* and *Scutiger sikimensis* are recorded only from perennial streams in the higher altitude up to 3500 m asl. The breeding timing of *Paa leibigii* is interesting subject to study in future as eggs and young one are continuously recorded from February to June with in limited latitudinal differences.

The interesting phenomenon of the *Paa leibigii* observed in the field here is, as the warmer months commences from March, mature frogs are out of rivulets but young one are still in the water. First detection was made in February under water, and later *Paa leibigii* were mostly encountered along the rivulet bank during repeated field visits. Local people were consulted and our observation was true. *Scutiger sikimensis* are very rare in the study area which share the common habitat with *Paa leibigii*. Dead logs/wood and perennial rivulets with large rocks and are common site for both *Paa leibigii* and *Scutiger sikimensis* in the higher altitude area. So far distribution of this species in my study area is confined to above 3200 m asl in the mixed conifer forest in very few pockets of area.



Left: Eggs of *Paa leibigii* under Rhododendron forest at 3500 msl. Right: Rare species of toad (*Scutiger* spp) first reported in 2004.