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OCCURRENCE OF *TYLOTOTRITON VERRUCOSUS* ANDERSON IN MANIPUR

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This paper embodies the finding of a preliminary survey on the occurrence of *Tylototriton verrucosus* Anderson, Ukhrul District of Manipur. A brief description of the specimen studied have been acknowledged in tihis paper.

Key words : Salamander, *Tylototriton verrucosus*, endangered species, Manipur.

Manipur being a part of Indo-Burma hotspot region is extremely rich in faunal and floral diversity with several endemic species. Among them the tailed amphibian salamander *Tylototriton verrucosus* Anderson is the only one species of the genus *Tylototriton* recorded from India Further, it has reported only from Himalayan region only (Shrestha, 1984) occurring in Manipur, Khasi hills and Sikkim in North East India. In the meantime, it is being regarded as a threatened species (Ramaakantha et al. 2009) and its occurrence in Manipur is also rare.

As early as 1960, Gyi (1964) reported the occurrence of *T. verucossus* In China Wongratana (1984) assessed its range and described its colour pattern in Thailand. Shrestha (1984) described the distribution and habitat of the species in Nepal. From India, Das (1984) and Chand (2002) reported the occurrence of the salamander in certain regions of North East India. Singh (1995) reported the species alongwith other amphibians and reptilian species from Manipur.

A recent survey during 2008 for incidence in the State revealed its occurrence in Hundong (1,800m MSI) in the Ukhrul district in Manipur. The specimens were collected from shallow and stagnant water. Its incidence was recorded during May to June. Full grown adults measured about 140,05-178.2mm in length. The body colour is blackish brown and lighter in area of tips, snout and throat. The head is depressed and broader than long. The fore limbs have free four fingers with blunt tips. The hind limbs are slightly longer than fore limbs with five free toes. Tail is flattened, laterally compressed with yellowish margin. There is no evidence of sexual dimorphism but females are longer than males.

Habitat destruction has been considered the primary threat to the survival of this tailed amphibian. Taking into consideration, the important status of *T. verrucossus* it is necessary to study this species through out its localized habitat with reference to its bio-ecology and conservational status.

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