

NEW RECORD OF AN AMPHIBIAN, *UPERODON TAPROBANICUS* (PARKER 1934) (SRI LANKAN PAINTED FROG) FROM NANDED, MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Sri Lankan native amphibian species *Uperodon taprobanicus*, also found in Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and India. It can grow up to 3 inches in length. In India, it is most familiar as ‘Sri Lankan painted frog’. This species is generally found in southern and eastern parts of India, especially in West Bengal, Odisha, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh states of India. But there are very few records from the Middle region of India specially from Maharashtra state where this species is found. During the present investigation in Nanded district, Maharashtra. *U. taprobanicus* was recorded at Nanded City (19°06'48.45"N, 77°17'58.13"E). Species were identified by diagnostic physical features including globular body, small head, rounded snout, inconspicuous tympanum, smooth dorsal skin and distinctive dark brown blotches on a light brown background. The present observation extends the distribution of the species in Marathwada region of Maharashtra and this is the first report of the species for Nanded District. This is the closest ever record at the Parbhani District, about 80 km away from this record. The findings confirm the importance of conducting continuous amphibian surveys in poorly surveyed regions to better understand the distribution and conservation status of species and suggest that the species might be more extensively distributed in Maharashtra than previously realised.

Keywords: *Amphibia, Uperodon taprobanicus, Sri Lankan Painted Frog, Diversity, frog, Nanded*

INTRODUCTION

The source of significant food source is wetlands (Jadhav et al., 2022). Water is an important for the aquatic life (Dayalwad et al., 2025). Wetland ecology experiences biodiversity loss due to issues including misuse, population increase, and climate change (Jadhav & Chavan, 2025). The ancient class of vertebrates known as amphibians (Class Amphibia) is distinguished by porous skin, sensitivity to environmental changes, and life cycles that involve both aquatic and terrestrial phases. As both predators and prey, amphibians are among the most vital elements of freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems, greatly enhancing biodiversity and ecological function. Amphibians are well known for being useful bioindicators of ecosystem health because of their biphasic life cycle and porous skin, which make them extremely sensitive to environmental changes (Alse et al, 2026). Documenting the range and occurrence of amphibians is crucial for biodiversity conservation since they suffer several dangers on a global scale, such as habitat degradation, pollution, climate change, new illnesses, and anthropogenic disturbances. In the family Microhylidae the genus *Uperodon* Duméril and Bibron, 1841 includes a number of species found throughout South Asia, many of which are still little understood because to their nocturnal lifestyles. It is commonly known as Sri Lankan Painted Frog, Sri Lankan Bullfrog, or Painted Globular Frog. *Uperodon taprobanicus* (Parker, 1934), The globular body, smooth skin, tiny mouth, and distinctive dorsal pattern with irregular dark brown markings on a lighter background set this medium-sized microhylid frog apart. The monsoon season is when the species, which is mostly fossorial, comes out to eat and reproduce. Moist deciduous woods, agricultural fields, plantations, marshes, village fringes, and human-modified landscapes are just a few of the environments it lives in. Because of its comparatively wide geographic range and likely high population, the species is now classified as Least Concern.

The distribution of *U. taprobanicus* is in country such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and several regions of India. In India, distributed in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra in Sangli and Parbhani species recorded. New location records from Maharashtra's Sangli and Parbhani districts have broadened the species' known range, suggesting that it may be more widespread than previously thought. Previously (Yadav et al. 2023) observed the existence of *Uperodon taprobanicus* in Sangli District of Maharashtra State. Before that, species habitat was found in the Navegaon Bandh Wildlife Sanctuary, Arnala Beach, Virar, Mumbai, and central and eastern Vidarbha Zone (Padhye et al. 2002; Nandvikar and Shaikh 2009; Sreekumar and Dinesh 2020) and also in Chandrapur district (Dinesh D. Khate and Kiran Bawaskar 2020). Recently, *Uperodon taprobanicus* was reported from Parbhani district (Bandgar MM et al.2024.).

In present study *Uperodon taprobanicus* (Parker, 1934) recorded first time from Nanded District, Maharashtra, India. The observation provides another confirmation of the general distribution of the species in Maharashtra and contributes to the knowledge of its distribution in Deccan Plateau and Marathwada region. The record also includes a focus on the importance of continued field surveys and biodiversity recording in under-studied areas, as a means to understand amphibian diversity, distribution patterns and conservation requirements.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present investigation was conducted at Nanded district, Maharashtra for the amphibian diversity by systematic survey of the area. The monsoon period was selected for the study, during high activity of amphibian diversity. For the study Visual Encounter Surveys (VES) method was used (Crump & Scott 1994). Predetermined transects and typical habitat patches, such as forests, grasslands, agricultural fields, marshes, ponds, and stream banks, were the sites of systematic searches. Since most amphibian species are active after sunset, surveys were conducted both during the day and at night, with a focus on nocturnal searches. When feasible, every individual seen was recognized down to the species level and documented, along with details about their environment.

Identification of species was done by Parker (1934), Dutta and Ray (2000), and Frost (2025). The species was identified as *Uperodon taprobanicus* (Parker, 1934) based on its distinctive globular and strong body, tiny head, short rounded snout, inconspicuous tympanum, smooth dorsal skin and light brown to greyish brown dorsum with irregular dark brown patches. The toes were somewhat webbed, but the fingers were free. These diagnostic characters are similar to those described by Parker (1934) and the later taxonomical changes of the species.

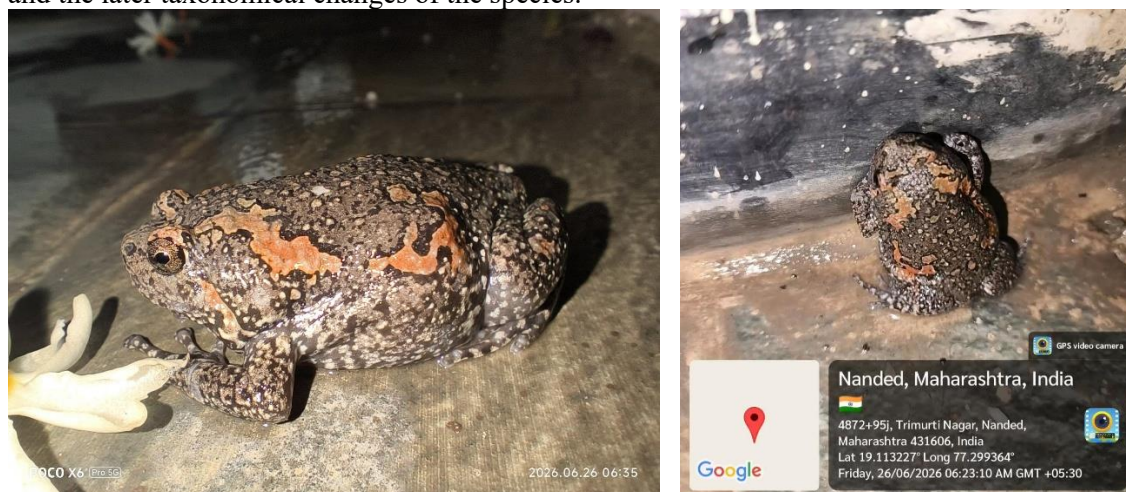


Figure 1 & 2: *Uperodon taprobanicus* (Parker 1934) from Nanded, Maharashtra, India

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Single *Uperodon taprobanicus* (Figure 1 & 2) appeared in front of our house, situated at Nanded, Maharashtra, India. (Coordinates: 19°06'48.45"N 77°17'58.13"E; Elevation: 389.9 m). This is the fifth

authenticated record from Maharashtra State (Map 1). It is believed that the frog may have come near the garbage can from the seasonal water puddle in front of the house during the monsoon to feed on the fine insects, ants and nocturnal insects under the garbage can. After recording the new geographical location of *Uperodon taprobanicus* in Nanded district (which is only about 80 kilometres from the previously recorded location in Parbhani district), it appears that the possibility of this species, which is rare in central India, especially in the state of Maharashtra, being widespread throughout Maharashtra cannot be ruled out. More research is needed in this aspect.



Map 1: Maharashtra State, India Showing locality records for the Sri Lankan Painted Frog (*Uperodon taprobanicus*). **Red dots** indicate previously known records and the **Blue dot** marks the new record from Nanded district. (Map Source: Survey of India <https://surveyofindia.gov.in>)

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