



## MAMMALS OF ITANAGAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

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**Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary is located in southern-west part of Arunachal Pradesh. Field surveys were conducted during April, 2005 to June, 2007 and different localities of sanctuary were covered for the documentation of mammals. On the basis of direct sightings and indirect evidences such as pugmarks and interview with local people, twenty nine species of mammals belonging to 7 orders and 16 families were recorded in the area. There is no recent evidence for the occurrence of tiger, however, previously it is seen in the area by local residents. For larger mammals, the situation is almost same most probably due to rapidly declining population of these species due to habitat loss and anthropogenic pressure in terms of unorganized urbanization/ settlement and hunting.**

Arunachal Pradesh (26° 28'-29° 30' N and 91° 30'-97° 30' E) is located in the transition zone between the Himalayan and Indo-Burmese region in north-east India. The total geographical area of the Arunachal Pradesh is 83,743 km<sup>2</sup>, which is predominantly hilly and mountainous<sup>1</sup>. It is largely covered with highly varied and dense vegetation/ forest (about 80.93 % of the total geographical area). The state harbors the world's northern most tropical rain forests, which carry fairly large populations of faunal elements belong to various groups<sup>2-6</sup>. For the conservation and management of natural resources, about 12 % (9722 km<sup>2</sup>) of the total geographical area (83,743 km<sup>2</sup>) of Arunachal Pradesh, is under the protected area network<sup>7,8</sup>, comprising ten wildlife sanctuaries (7114 km<sup>2</sup>), two national parks (2468 km<sup>2</sup>) and other categories of reserve forests (140 km<sup>2</sup>).

Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary (27° 05'39" N, 93° 30'15" E) is located in southern-west part of Arunachal Pradesh. It was established in June 1978. Total area is 14,030 ha and forest area is about 10,000 ha. Poma, Pam, Pachin, Niooch (Neorochi) and Senki (Chingke) are the major streams. The habitat comprises mixed evergreen to semi-evergreen forests. The sanctuary is selected as an IBA (Important Bird Area) site due to occurrence of globally threatened species. Hunting, encroachment and unorganized urbanization/ settlement are the major threats for fauna<sup>9</sup>.