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Beautiful Science



An adult male of a newly discovered frog species – Microhyla laterite – spotted among laterite rock formations of India's coastal plains.

The frog, which measures around 1.6cm, is pale brown with prominent black markings on its hands, feet and flanks. It has a call that can be easily mistaken for that of a cricket.

The species was discovered by a team of researchers from India and the National University of Singapore (NUS), led by Mr Seshadri K.S., a PhD student from the department of biological sciences at the NUS Faculty of Science. The finding was published in the journal, Plos One, last month.

The research team named the species after the habitat it resides in, and have suggested "Laterite narrow-mouthed frog" for its common name, as frogs in the Microhyla genus have a smaller mouth compared with other frogs.

Since the species appears to be restricted to the laterite rock formations along the west coast, the researchers intend to conduct further research to determine the creature's evolutionary ecology, and to test for an association with laterite formations.

PHOTO: SESHADRI K.S.

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