

March 2013



SUMMEF Recreational Park & Nature Reserve Is going to be opened now, spring 2013

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The big main lake of the SUMMEF Recreation Park & Nature Reserve has been filled completely till end of 2012. Here we could release the first rescued and translocated Roofshelled terrapins (*Pangshura*) and Softshell turtles (*Nilssonina*, *Lissemys*).

One year of work and preparation for developing and realizing the infrastructure of a new recreation Park in Sanichare / Jhapa (SE-Nepal) sets the basis for starting with the first constructions for the Budo Holi Turtle Rescue & Conservation Centre. The cost evaluations had been made by the Nepali Head institution of the SUMMEF Park, our joint venture partner.....

.....and first decisions to start immediately with necessary construction works have been given by ARCO-Nepal right now this March 2013!

- **First achievements will be the construction of 2 dams for making up a small new artificial lake (lake 1 below) and a big pond (lake 2 below) to serve as first turtle rescue and catchment areas.**



The planned lakes 1 + 2 (a future possibility might be a still undecided lake 3) shall serve for primary acceptance and housing of confiscated turtle species as well as breeding for non-aggressive species that allow to be kept in groups, of course, having the proper infrastructures, thus also containing visual obstacles, vegetation and hiding as well as basking places.

For “Lake 1” we need a concrete dam being constructed of approx. 32 m to receive overflow water from the main lake. The general size of this. max. 1 m deep will be approx. 1600 sqm and 160 m of perimeter.

ARCO-Nepal gave agreement to SUMMEF to start asap with this construction!

For “Lake 2” an earthen dam is planned of 18 m length to achieve 160 qm allowing about a same water depth of max. 1m. Both lakes shall receive a lower mesh wire fencing, 20 cm dug into ground and 50 cm above surface to prevent the project turtles from escaping.



The area S to the planned Education Centre (see next issue of newsletters) shall receive 3 ponds also for primary acceptance, separate breeding of species and housing of confiscated turtle species.

The background of the photo shows the place for small future enclosures for protected rearing of hatchlings and for breeding purposes for more aggressive species.

The pillars seen to the left are part of the future education centre.

Of course we are well aware that we are just stepwise approaching the challenge of breeding endangered turtles in the sake of conservation issues –but unless the proper infrastructure is not developed we just must fight for the survival of confiscated, donated or whatever survival chance we get for native turtle species.

- **New Species Rescued and Translocated to TRCC**

During last year we received already different species like *Nilssonia hurum*, *Pangshura flaviventer*, *Indotestudo elongata* and *Lissemys punctata*.

After the reception or translocation of these turtle specimens they had been **checked for their health status** and every single specimen received its **individual entry-data-sheet** to assure its origin, size, conditions and possibilities for easy re-identification in future.



Photos of rescued animals: *Melanochelys tricarinata*, *Indotestudo*, *Lissemys*

Translocation of Endangered Turtle Specimens from Central Nepal to TRCC

After completing, MOU signing ceremony between SUMMEF and ARCO-Nepal, I got an ample opportunity to accompany Spanish scientists Prof. Dr. Hermann Schleich, Prof. Rodriguez Linde and Prof. Christian De La Fe in their field visit in last April 2012. After one week of travelling in different places in Nepal starting from Jhapa, then Ilam Mai pokhari, Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve and Chitwan National Park, finally we waved them goodbye at Tribhuvan International airport at Kathmandu (Nepal). While returning from Kathmandu, a couple made request for the lift to our car. They were Mr. Om B.K. and his wife local of Bharatganj VDC, ward no.-6, Bara District, Central Nepal. We gave them lift from Hetauda to Nijgadh of Bara district. During this short trip, I explained them about our mission for the rescue and conservation of rare turtles. After one month, Mr. Om B.K. called me and I was informed that he had found two turtles in the forest and river and kept in his house. I requested him to send me photographs of these two turtles by email. He did so. I came to know that, of these two specimens one was *Melanochelys tricarinata* and the other was *Indotestudo elongata*. After identification I requested him to keep them securely by managing proper food and shelter. He did so. Now, the main task was how to bring them to TRCC legally. Turtles are protected by law in Nepal and interdistrict translocation of protected species is prohibited by law. I made request to regional forest office to give permission to rescue them for their conservation and scientific study. Finally they agreed in the clause that rescue and translocation should be done in the supervision of government authority belonging to the department of forest. I agreed. I went to the Bara, paid some money voluntarily to him for rearing them for about eight months and finally bring them securely by keeping them into a big kardon (paper box) half filled with leaves and paddy straw. I took necessary biometry and filled the registration form for each of them. Both of them were females according to Prof. Hermann Schleich. Of them *I.elongata* weighed about 1kg and *M. tricarinata* weighed 530 g. At present, both live specimens are kept temporarily in the Turtle Conservation Centre (ARCO-TCC) at Bhadrapur in Jhapa district managed by Prof. Dr. Kalu Ram Rai. We have planned to translocate them to Budo Holi TRCC as soon as the fencing around is completed. By: Milan Kharel

Individual acquisition and specimen and data recording



Amphibian & Reptile Conservation - Nepal (ARCO-Nepal)
Turtle Rescue & Conservation Centre (TRCC),
Sanischare, Jhapa, Nepal



SPECIES ACQUISITION FORM

▪ Data Sheet No..... Date of entry:.....

Reporter's name:.....

- Address:Cell.....
- Common Name of the species: Eng.....
- Species ID:..... Nep:.....
- Scientific name of the species:.....
- Date of first sight/collection:.....
- Location of sight/collection:.....
- Time of sight /collection:.....Day: ☐ sunny ☐ cloudy ☐ rainy
- GPS coordinates:..... Elevation:.....
- Size (l-w) straight median line cm: Carapace:..... Plastron:.....
- Tail length.....Height:..... Weight:.....
- Caught by: ☐ Hand ☐ Hook ☐ Net ☐ Trap / Others:
- Condition: ☐ Dead ☐ Alive
- Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Juvenile
- Special features: Spots/Markings ☐ Yes ☐ No
- External injuries: ☐ Yes ☐ No Type:
.....
- Coloration: Carapace: Plastron:
- General condition:..... Kept in.....
- Food given:

Species rescued by:

- Released at: TRCC, Jhapa Date: Time:.....
- Notes/Remarks:

Standard Data Sheet for individual specimen registration

eg.:

Lissemys punctata

E: Indian flap-shelled turtle

N: Putali Kachhuwa

Released at: TRCC- Jhapa

Recording Person: Kharel, M.

Specimen ID: LP6-10/12

Date of Entry: 25.10.2012

Status Quo: Live Released (place/date/person)

Expired (date): **Others:**

TRCC/ 25.10.2012/ Rai, A.

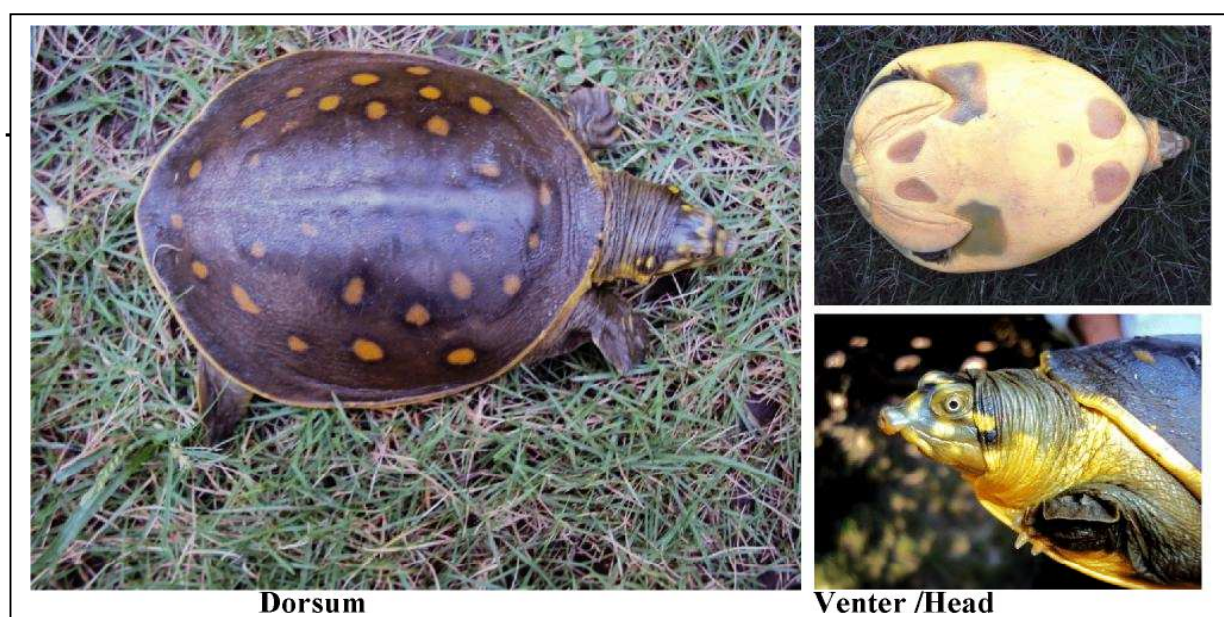
GPS: N 26°40'66" / E 87° 41'42"

Entry data

Locality/Origin form: Bouddha Tole, Damak-10, Jhapa Reception name: Kharel, M.

Imported by (name): Local farmer, Collected from: Canal Way of catchment (hooked/netted/hand etc): By Hand Acquired by: Milan Kharel

ID photos/drawings/sketches



Dorsum

Venter /Head

Sex female

Age sad

No. of growth rings (max) on horny shield -

Measurements

Subsequent measurements on separate following data/paper sheets to be added in file holder, length —width (measured at maximum straight mid line) in cm:

Carapace/Shell	Plastron/Shell	Tail-length	Height	Weight (gm)
12.0-11.0	11.5- 10.0	2.0 cm	5.0 cm	240 g

Additional information/notes

Not any external injury was seen at the time of reporting.

ARCO-NEPAL' S CONTRIBUTIONS TO CONSERVATION

1. **INVESTIGATION.** After 25 years of collaboration with Nepal's Institutions like University, Natural History Museum, Department of National Parks and Wildlife, Zoo, many international colleagues and uncounted here unnamed helpers, friends and native people allowed us to try some holistic approaches to cover the field of Herpetology (Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal, pp. 1002, 2002) for this country. Several books, publications conservation contributions have been issued during these times (see www.arco-nepal.de) and now we are going to finalize the edition of an updated "**Fieldguide for the Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal**". The book, authored by Werner Kaestle, Kalu Ram Rai & H. Hermann Schleich (2013) will be printed in English and Nepali, on 627 pages and with over 1000 text drawings and 120 colour photographs on xx plates in A 5 format.

Prices are not fixed yet but preorders can be already made to: arco-nepal@t-online.de

2. **EDUCATION.** Four study books (2012) for teachers, students and children are now available

FOR FREE DOWNLOAD

on our website: www.arco-nepal.de:

amphibians, turtles, lizards & crocodiles and snakes (pp. 40).

In nepali and English, with black/white full size text illustrations to be coloured according to many colour photographs shown on coversides

....and also NOW AVAILABLE by ARCO-NEPAL: Field Identification cards

On 40 pages 18 full A 5 size colour photographs of all turtles known to occur or possibly existing in Nepal are shown. Accompanying texts are in Nepali and English and shall help for the identification in the field. Front and back cover are plastified, the whole is spiral bound and printed on 250 g paper for easy handling. Independently are listed on three pages the conservation status of the species treated. The Field ID Cards had been made particularly for National Park staff and other researchers in the field of turtle conservation. ISBN: 978-3-9814938-5-6.

Orders can be made by mail to arco-nepal@t-online.de; price EUR 14.-- + postage EUR 9.60.

Citation: ARCO-Nepal Field ID Cards.- 2012 ; pp. 40.

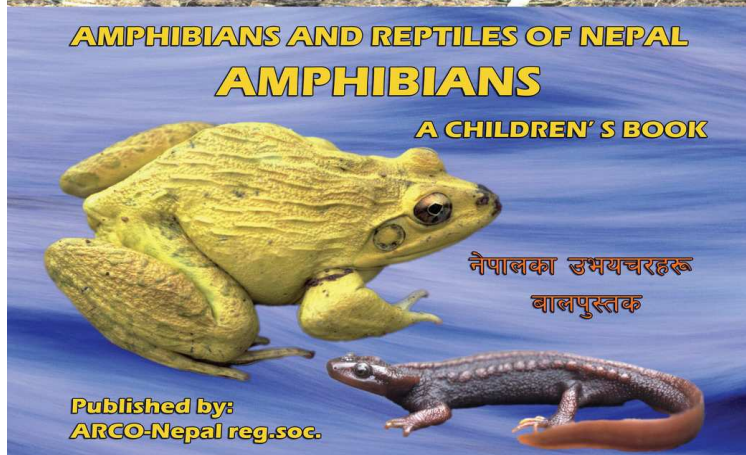
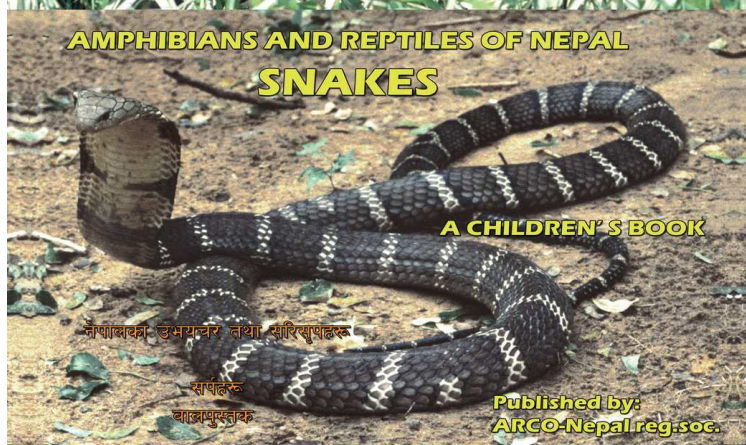
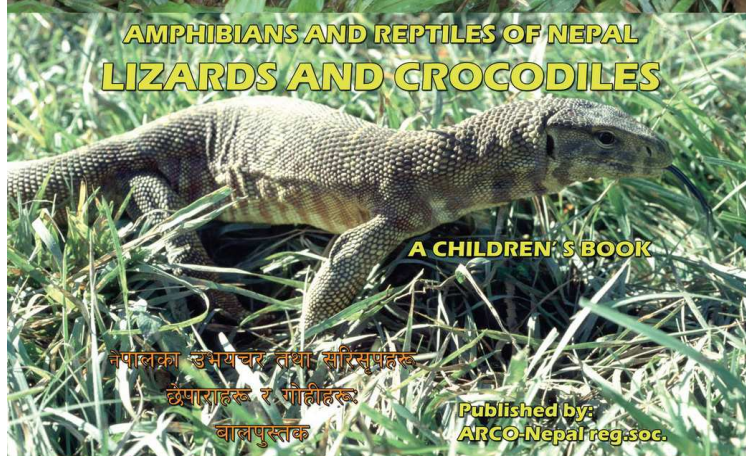
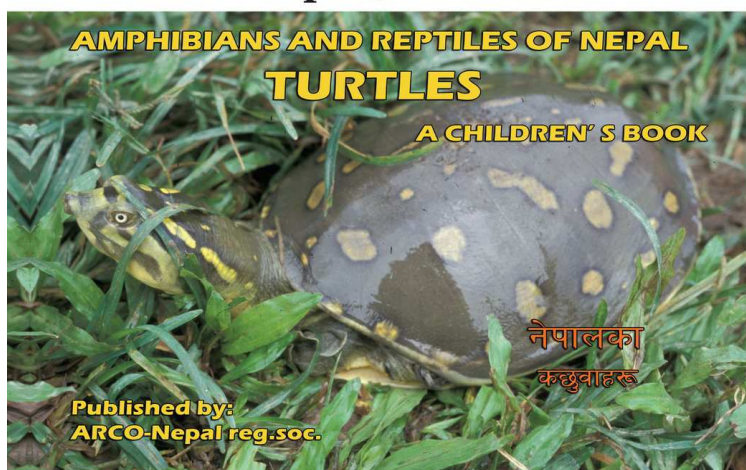
Turtle Conservation for Nepal's Endangered Species Field ID Cards by ARCO-Nepal



2012

3. **CONSERVATION** by Protection, Breeding and Assurance colonies for Government coordinated Release and Re-introduction Programs is the aim of our Turtle Rescue & Conservation Centre

www.arco-nepal.de
arco-nepal@t-online.de



Free Download for new BOOKS
In Nepali & English

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal
TURTLES**

All known and proved to occur TURTLES of Nepal, with listing of all species and their state of vulnerability as endangered species are presented. Colour photos of 12 species and full A4 size black/white drawings for all species – can be coloured according to samples given in colour photographs -- are shown.

42 pages. ISBN 978-3-9814938-4-9

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal
LIZARDS & CROCODILES**

All known and proved to occur LIZARDS and CROCODILES of Nepal are listed and 24 species are shown on colour photo-graphs and full A4 size black/white drawings. All species can be coloured according to samples given in colour photographs, also for different sexes. 40 pages. ISBN 978-3-9814938-1-8

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal
SNAKES**

All known and proved to occur species of Nepal, are listed. 34 species are shown on colour photographs and full A4 size black/white drawings for all to be coloured according to samples given in colour photographs.

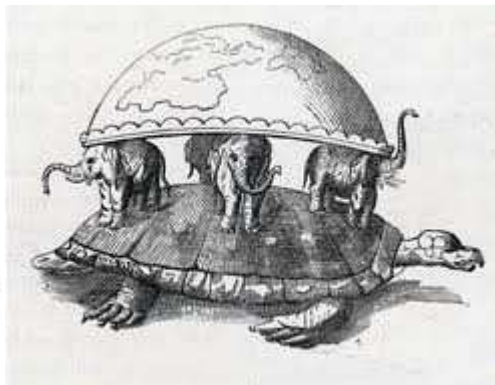
42 pages. ISBN 978-3-9814938-2-5

**Amphibians and Reptiles of Nepal
AMPHIBIANS**

All known and proved to occur AMPHIBIANS of Nepal, with listing of all species and 32 colour photos with full A4 size black/white drawings for all species -- to be coloured according to samples given in colour photographs-- are shown. 32 pages. ISBN 978-3-9814938-3-2

Turtles in Hindu Mythology

In Hindu Mythology it is believed that "Earth is supported on the back of Turtle". There are ten directions like East, West, North, and South as per Vaastu Shastra. But there is one more 11th direction and very rarely some one travels in that direction. This 11th direction is inwards, towards our own Source. There are few people who have traveled on the inner journey like Buddha, Jesus, Mahavira, Krishna, Guru Nanak, Osho, Mohammed, Moses etc. Those who have traveled inwards and found the bliss have always shared their Bliss and wisdom with us. Their wisdom has always directed the humanity on right path and saved it from disaster. We pray to God or we go to Saints only when we are in trouble and they always Guide us and protect us. Symbolically Sages are being compared with the Turtle and it is being conveyed that because of sages, still there is truth alive in this world. The churning of the Ocean of Milk was an elaborate process. Mount Mandaranchal (or Mount Meru) - it's mythologically the very same) was used as the dasher (churning tool), and Vasuki, the king of serpents, became the churning rope. The gods held the tail of the snake, while the demons (Asuras) held its head, and they pulled on it alternately causing the mountain to rotate, which in turn churned the ocean. However, once the mountain was placed on the ocean, it began to sink. Vishnu in his second incarnation, in the form of a turtle Kurma, came to their rescue and supported the mountain on his back.



Submitted by: Milan Kharel, Nepal

The turtle pillar is mounted in the courtyard of Purnachandi Mandir (temple of Hindu deity power, MAHAKALI dated on Bikram Sambat 1219 or Nepal Sambat 208 (present 2070 which is about 851 years back, around 1162 AD. It is located in the Lalitpur sub-metropolitan city, ward no -20, Kathmandu, Nepal about 200 m east from the Krishna Mandir of Patan (which is included in the list of world heritages published by UNESCO). During preliminary survey no other authentic information about the artist of the turtle is collected. According to locals, the pillar was built by Nepali artist. Reported by: Milan Kharel



Meetings/assemblages:

- **Turtle Survival Alliance, 11th meeting:** August 7-10th, St. Louis
- **ARCO-Spain soc. reg.,** Tabernas, S-Spain at Cortijo Sol y Vida,
Annual assemblage: May 18th. **New Email:** arco.spain05@gmail.com

Celebrate World Turtle Day: May 23rd
Make your Donation Now for our Conservation Efforts

Editorial: ARCO-Nepal / Prof. Dr. H. Hermann Schleich

Photo credits: Milan Kharel, Google Earth

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Please write us your opinion on our conservation issues at email: arco-nepal@t-online.de

Or simply post it on facebook at arco-nepal