

## Channa bhoi

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species*

### Why in news?

Recently, the Scientist have discovered the new snakehead fish species in a village in Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya.

- **Nomenclature** - Named as Channa bhoi to honour the Bhoi community, who are the original inhabitants of Ri-Bhoi region.
- **Family** - Channidae.
- **Location** - It was found in a small mountain stream near Iewmawlong village in Ri-Bhoi district.
- **Endemic** - It is **endemic** to Ri-Bhoi district, Meghalaya.
- **Taxonomy** - It belongs to the ***"Gachua group"*** of snakehead fishes, a group known for its high diversity in the Eastern Himalayan region.
- **Habitat** - Found in a small, shallow mountain streams with boulders and riparian vegetation, a typical of Ri-Bhoi's upland landscapes.

### Features

- **Colour** - It features a striking ***bluish-grey body***, which is unique colour pattern differentiates it from other snakehead species.
- **Markings** - Each scale on its body has a ***minute black spot***, forming eight to nine horizontal rows of broken lines along the sides.
- **Fins** - The fish also exhibits distinctive banding patterns on its pectoral fins.



- **Distinctiveness** - Its genetic analysis confirmed that it is distinct from all other known species, including those already recorded in Meghalaya.
- **Genetic Distinctness** - DNA barcoding (cox1 gene) showed 3.3-20% divergence from other Gachua group species.
- It is identified as a sister species to *Channa bipuli*, another snakehead from Northeast India.
- **Significance** - The discovery brings the ***total number of Channa species recorded from India to 26*** and highlights Meghalaya as a major hotspot for snakehead fish diversity.

## References

1. [Meghalaya Express | New snakehead fish found in Ri Bhoi stream](#)
2. [Shillong Times | New snakehead fish found in Ri Bhoi stream](#)