Newly discovered Dragonflies in Northeast India

Prelims: *Current events of national importance | Biodiversity & Conservation*

Why in News?

Recently, Scientists have discovered 3 new species of dragonflies in Northeast India.

- **3 newly identified species**
  - Clouded Boghawker (Sarasaeschna nuboides)
  - Siang Boghawker (Sarasaeschna sigotaayo)
  - Long tailed Boghawker (Sarasaeschna dosdewaensis)

Common Features

- **Order –** Odonata.
- **Family –** Aeshnidae (boghawkers).
- **Morphology –** Large multifaceted eyes, two pairs of wings, elongated body
- **Vision –** Eyes with up to 30,000 facets, nearly 360° vision
- **Behaviour –** Fast flyers, voracious predators of mosquitoes and flies
- **Evolutionary Note –** Predate dinosaurs by over 100 million years
- **Habitat & Distribution –** Found near freshwater habitats worldwide; Northeast India is recognised as an odonate biodiversity hotspot.

Distinct Features

Clouded Boghawker (Sarasaeschna nuboides)	
Habitat	Shallow shaded forest ponds in humid valleys
Distribution	Endemic to Siang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh
Appearance	Subtle differences in abdominal segment shape and caudal appendages



Siang Boghawker (Sarasaeschna sigotaayo)	
Habitat	Same Siang Valley ponds, perching close to water.
Distribution	Endemic to Siang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh
Appearance	Differentiated by male caudal appendage structure and wing venation patterns



Long-tailed Boghawker (Sarasaeschna dosdewaensis)	
Habitat	Forest trail ponds and streams
Distribution	Endemic to Karimganj district, Assam
Appearance	Characterised by elongated abdominal segments (long-tailed)



- **Ecological Importance**
  - **Predators –** Natural control of mosquito populations

- **Indicators –** Reflect freshwater ecosystem health
- **Evolutionary Significance –** Ancient lineage, valuable for biodiversity studies.

Quick Facts

- **Dragonflies and Damselflies –** Both belong *Odonata* and they are found in the same freshwater habitats. But there are key differences listed below –

Dragonflies	Damselflies
• Suborder – Anisoptera	• Suborder – Zygoptera
• Larger, robust	• Smaller, delicate
• Wings held horizontal at rest	• Wings held vertical & together at rest
• Strong, fast fliers	• Slower, weaker fliers
• Eyes are large and often touch at the top of the head.	• Eyes are separated, not touching

Reference

Arunachal Observer | Dragonflies in Northeast India

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