

A Report on the Indigenous Fishing Baits of North-Eastern States of India

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North-Eastern states of India has been known for bountiful resources of freshwater in the forms of rivers, streams, dams, lakes, wetland and cold water etc. and ranked 6 among the top 25 biodiversity hot spot in the world. It has diversified fish fauna and flora. Common fishing methods being widely practiced are cast net, lift net, hooks and line, barricade, encircling gear, entangling gear, impaling gear, scooping gear, groping, impoundment, indigenous traps/pots etc. Though destructive fishing is banned, it is prevailing in many parts of India including North-Eastern states. Some of the indigenous fishing baits commonly used from the above regions are given below.

Types of Baits

Earth worm: Earth worms are mainly used in hooks as traditional fishing method in rivers, lakes, dams, ponds and wetland. It is mainly used targeting common carp, catfishes, eels and murels.

Grass shopper: Grass shopper is commonly used as seasonal bait in monsoon and post monsoon during in May-November targeting carnivorous and omnivorous species of fishes in ponds, lakes, reservoirs, wetland and dams. Grass shopper is inserted into the hook after wing, leg and head are removed.



Frogs: Frogs are traditionally used as bait targeting mainly catfishes and murels in wetlands, dams, ponds and rivers. The frog skin is removed and the frog leg is inserted into hook. A frog is one of the commonly used indigenous fishing bait in hooks in rural areas of Manipur, Mizoram and Assam.



Termite nest: Termite nest is commonly used as feed as well as baits in rivers, streams and ponds to catch omnivorous and carnivorous species such as catfishes, murrel and tilapia. It is also used in cold water streams to catch Mahseer and Polynemus species using cast net and gill net.

Wood worm: It is collected from the certain tree fibres from jungle. The head part is removed and inserted into hooks. It is used mainly to catch murrel, catfishes and tilapia in rivers, dams, wetland and lakes.



Mole cricket: It is seasonal bait used during monsoon. It is collected from paddy field during ploughing. The head, leg and wings are removed and inserted into J type hook to targeting catfishes and murels.



Fermented rice with rice husk: Fermented cooked rice with rice husk are commonly used to catch omnivorous species such as common carp, mrigal, silver carp and puntius in pond, lakes, and dams. Fermented rice is mixed with rice husk and make into dough and put inside the traps.



Freshwater prawn (*M.manipurensis*): It is rarely used as a bait in hook after rostrum, cheleped, chelate, uropod, pleopods, carapace, telson, pleura and antennae are removed and insert into hook. It is used targeting omnivorous and carnivorous fish species such as *Clarius batracus*, *C. gariepinu*, *C.straitus*, *C.marulius* and *Oreochromis niloticus*.



Smaller fishes: Puntius and zebra fishes are commonly used as baits to catch catfishes and murels in the ponds, lakes, wetlands, rivers and dams. The head part of the fish is removed and inserted into the hooks.

Chicken viscera: It is commonly used in hook and traps targeting carnivorous species in ponds, lakes, rivers and dams. It is mainly targeting murrel, catfishes and freshwater crabs.

Jackfruits: The latex and rag parts of ripened jackfruits are commonly used as bait in rural area of Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh targeting freshwater crabs in streams and rivers. The crabs are catch by handpicked or using scoop net.



In North-eastern States of India, different types of natural baits such as organism, vegetable and lives forms are commonly used in domestic and recreation scale of fishing. However, there is scanty of documentation and information on different types of baits used in different gears.