

Bugs & All

Invertebrate Conservation & Information Network of South-Asia (ICINSA)

Newsletter of the
Invertebrate Conservation & Information Network of South-Asia (ICINSA)

Hornet Wasp feeding on the meat of Indian Bullfrog

The Black Shield Wasp or Hornet Wasp *Vespa bicolor* is the largest of the known eusocial wasps. It is a common species of the hornet group of wasps of the family Vespidae. It is found in a wide range of environment and can also be found near human habitations. This species plays a vital role in the pollination of orchids (Gillott 2012). Although hornets feed on nectar, their workers also prey on insects especially honey bees and are also known to feed on meat for nutrients (Gillott 2012; Sung et al. 2014; Dorji et al. 2017). Here we report the Hornet Wasp *V. bicolor* feeding on the fresh meat of Indian Bullfrog *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*.

A road kill of this frog being fed by a number of yellow-coloured wasps was observed at Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, Darjeeling



A road kill of Indian Bullfrog *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus* being fed by Hornet Wasp *Vespa bicolor* at Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, West Bengal. © M. Kamalakannan.

District, West Bengal, India (26.478° N, 88.223° E). The wasp was identified as a Hornet Wasp *Vespa bicolor* (Fabricius, 1787) through its bright yellow colour body with black stripes and a black triangular patch on the central part of the thorax. The smashed frog was identified as an Indian Bullfrog *Hoplobatrachus tigerinus* (Daudin, 1803)

through its yellow spotted dorsum with a vertebral line. It was also noted that the Bullfrog kill was relatively fresh (determined through its fresh meat) while being fed by Hornet Wasps. Among vehicle-caused wildlife mortalities, amphibians especially Bullfrogs are the easier victims due to their slow mobility (Baskaran & Bhoominathan 2010). After



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the road kill of any wildlife, scavengers like the birds of prey, carrion insects, etc. feed on the remains. Hymenopterans like ants and wasps can promptly detect prey/food from far away due to their higher temporal sense organs (Gillott 2012). The present observation corroborates the immediate presence of wasps in the feeding of meat of unattended road kills.

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