New grasshopper species 'Heteracris jalukie' found in Nagaland

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News

A new grasshopper species has been found on vegetation at the edge of a bamboo-dominated moist forest at Jalukie 'B' village in Peren district, Nagaland. It has been named 'Heteracris jalukie' after the village where it was collected. It was described by Amlanjyoti Gautam and Jennifer Lyngdoh of the Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) North-Eastern Regional Centre, Shillong, Rajnish Ranjan of ZSI's Gangetic Plains Regional Centre, Patna, and Jeanne Agrippine Yetchom Fondjo and Martin Husemann of the State Museum of Natural History Karlsruhe and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany. The study appeared in the journal Contributions to Entomology (76(2): 329–339, 2026) in November 2026; the specimens were collected in August 2024. Its features include fully developed clear forewings without spots or bands, bright reddish-orange hind legs and distinctive male genitalia. Only three species of the genus were known from India before; this is the first record of the genus Heteracris from Northeast India. The authors note that grasshoppers of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot remain little explored.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Species	Heteracris jalukie (sp. nov.)
Family	Acrididae; subfamily Eyprepocnemidinae
Order	Orthoptera (grasshoppers, crickets)

Point	Details
Locality	Jalukie 'B' village, Peren district, Nagaland
Named after	Jalukie village, where it was found
Researchers	ZSI Shillong, ZSI Patna + Karlsruhe institutions, Germany
Journal	Contributions to Entomology 76(2): 329–339 (2026)
Significance	First record of the genus in NE India; 4th species in India

Background

- Biology: grasshoppers, locusts and crickets belong to the order Orthoptera ('straight wings'). Their large hind legs, built for jumping, are a hallmark. Beetles belong to Coleoptera, butterflies and moths to Lepidoptera, and flies to Diptera. A new species is named under binomial nomenclature (genus + species) – here the genus is Heteracris and the species name jalukie.
- Institution: the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) was set up in 1916, with headquarters at Kolkata. Working under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, it studies the country's animal diversity. It has 16 regional centres – including Shillong (North-East), Chennai (Southern and Marine Biology), Port Blair and Kozhikode (Western Ghats).
- Geography: Peren became a full revenue district in 2004; it is bounded by Dimapur to the north, Kohima to the east, Manipur to the south and Assam to the west. The Jalukie valley is called the 'Rice Bowl of Nagaland'; the Zeliang and Kuki tribes are the district's main inhabitants. Northeast India forms part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot.
- Culture: Nagaland's famous 'Hornbill Festival' is held every year for ten days from 1 December at the Naga Heritage Village, Kisama, near Kohima. Begun as a tourism initiative showcasing Naga tribal culture, it has been held for more than two decades.

Tamil Nadu link: Two of the Zoological Survey of India's 16 regional centres – the Southern Regional Centre (SRC) and the Marine Biology Regional Centre (MBRC) – are in Chennai. Studies of south India's fauna and marine life are carried out from here.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Species: Heteracris jalukie (sp. nov.); Family: Acrididae; subfamily Eyprepocnemidinae; Order: Orthoptera (grasshoppers, crickets); Locality: Jalukie 'B' village, Peren district, Nagaland.

What is the background to this news?

Biology: grasshoppers, locusts and crickets belong to the order Orthoptera ('straight wings'). Their large hind legs, built for jumping, are a hallmark.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Grasshoppers and crickets belong to which insect order?

A) Coleoptera

B) Orthoptera

C) Lepidoptera

D) Diptera

Answer: B – Explanation: Orthoptera ('straight wings'). Coleoptera – beetles; Lepidoptera – butterflies and moths; Diptera – flies.

2. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) works under which Union Ministry?

A) Science & Technology

B) Agriculture

C) Environment & Forests

D) Culture

Answer: C – Explanation: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. ZSI was founded in 1916; its headquarters is in Kolkata.

3. In which city are both ZSI's Southern Regional Centre and its Marine Biology Regional Centre located?

A) Chennai

B) Kochi

C) Visakhapatnam

D) Mangaluru

Answer: A – Explanation: Chennai – both. ZSI has 16 regional centres; the new species was described by its North-Eastern centre at Shillong.

4. Where is Nagaland's 'Hornbill Festival' held every December?

A) Kisama, Kohima

B) Ziro

C) Majuli

D) Mawlynnong

Answer: A – Explanation: Naga Heritage Village, Kisama – 10 days from 1 Dec. Ziro is in Arunachal, Majuli in Assam, Mawlynnong in Meghalaya.

5. Nagaland's Peren district, where the species was found, borders Assam and which other State?

A) Mizoram

B) Meghalaya

C) Tripura

D) Manipur

Answer: D – Explanation: Manipur (south); Assam lies to the west. Peren's Jalukie valley is known as the 'Rice Bowl of Nagaland'.