



Channa bhoi (New Snakehead Species)

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Subject: GS Paper III (Environment and Biodiversity) **UPSC Relevance:** Biodiversity hotspots, new species, and conservation.



- **Taxonomy:** A freshwater predatory fish found in the **East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya**. It belongs to the *Channidae* family (Snakeheads), famous for being **Obligate Air Breathers**.
- **The "Bhoi" Significance:** Named after the **Bhoi community**, an indigenous group of Meghalaya. This highlights the importance of **Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)** in modern science.
- **Biodiversity Indicator:** Snakeheads are apex predators in small stream ecosystems. Their presence indicates high levels of dissolved oxygen and a healthy food chain.
- **Conservation Status:** While not yet on the IUCN Red List, it is threatened by **Rat-hole Coal Mining** runoff, which acidifies the streams of Meghalaya, and the illegal international aquarium trade.