





(a) Limestone outcrop in the municipality of Felipe Guerra, Rio Grande do Norte, where we recorded (b–d) *Borreria apodiensis*, (e–g) *Ipomoea apodiensis* and (h–j) *Pectis loiolae*. Photos: E.C.O. Chagas.

these species. We discovered three additional locations, on limestone outcrops of 220–8,500 ha, of *B. apodiensis* and *I. apodiensis*, and two of *P. loiolae*, which was previously known only from the type locality, increasing the extent of occurrence (EOO) and area of occupancy (AOO) of all three species. We recorded *B. apodiensis* and *I. apodiensis* near the municipality of Jandaíra (in Rio Grande do Norte), c. 200 km from their previously known range in the Chapada do Apodi. The two new locations of *P. loiolae* were in the Chapada do Apodi. We also examined herbarium specimens from the local MOSS herbarium in Rio Grande do Norte, expanding our knowledge of the species' distributions and providing new insights into flowering and fruiting periods.

Based on their increased EOO, both *B. apodiensis* and *I. apodiensis* could be recategorized as Vulnerable, but their discontinuous distribution along the limestone outcrops justifies their Endangered status, as is the case for the rare *P. loiolae*. All three species could face declines in EOO, AOO and habitat quality, primarily because of rock extraction for paving, gypsum production, and the installation of wind and solar power plants. The Parque Nacional da Fuma Feia, the only legally protected area containing limestone outcrops in the Potiguar Basin, is crucial for conserving these species.

Currently, the team at the Laboratório de Sistemática e Evolução de Plantas, Universidade Federal Rural do Semi-Árido, is using species distribution models to identify potential new areas of occurrence. We are also establishing a germplasm bank for ex situ conservation and studying germination and vegetative propagation to support future species restoration. We plan to collaborate with managers of protected areas and private reserves to promote these species as umbrella or flagship species for conservation.

JOSIMAR GABRIEL RODRIGUES DE ARAÚJO , EARL CELESTINO DE OLIVEIRA CHAGAS , ERICKA CATARINA CHAGAS  and JAMES LUCAS DA COSTA-LIMA  ([james.lima@ufersa.edu.br](mailto:james.lima@ufersa.edu.br)) Universidade Federal Rural do Semi-Árido, Mossoró, Brazil

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### Tibetan brown bear recorded in Changthang, Ladakh, India

Four species of bear occur in India: the Himalayan brown bear *Ursus arctos isabellinus* and Asiatic black bear *Ursus thibetanus* in the Himalayan mountain ranges, and the sloth bear *Melursus ursinus* and sun bear *Helarctos malayanus* in the tropical forest areas of the north-eastern hill states and in peninsular India. All four species are categorized as threatened on the IUCN Red List because of increasing threats throughout their range, including habitat



Camera-trap images of a Tibetan brown bear *Ursus arctos pruinosus* in Changthang region, Ladakh Union Territory, India. Distinguishing features include: dark fur colour and broad white collar around the neck (a-d), a prominent white mark on the lateral side of the body (b & d) and black fur on the legs and feet (d).





fragmentation, low population densities, illegal killing, human–bear conflicts and climate change. They are all protected under Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 in India, and are listed in Appendix I of CITES.

The Himalayan brown bear is the largest carnivore in the high-altitude regions of the Indian Himalayan states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, and Ladakh Union Territory (Mukherjee et al., 2021, *Science of the Total Environment*, 142416), and there are no reports of the subspecies further north or north-east of Kargil and Drass in Ladakh, India.

Following incidents of human–wildlife conflict involving large mammals not seen before in the Changthang region, the Department of Wildlife Protection of Ladakh deployed camera traps in the area. Because of the presence of snow leopards, the Changthang is one of the most studied landscapes in Ladakh, and although extensive camera trapping and field surveys have been conducted, there are no previous reports of brown bears. We deployed eight camera traps in Kyungyam village in the Nyuma Wildlife Range, Changthang, where local people had reported the sightings of an unfamiliar, large, bear-like species. Three of the eight camera traps captured images of an individual bear: on 22 June 2024 at 23:57 and on 23 June 2024 at 0.24 and 0.49. We carefully examined the images and, based on distinguishing characteristics including coat colour and the irregular-shaped white or light collar and pale stripe along the lateral side of the body, we identified the species as the Tibetan brown bear *Ursus arctos pruinosus*.

This finding is of considerable conservation importance as it expands our knowledge of this subspecies' range, previously thought to be limited to the Tibetan Plateau

and parts of China. The occurrence of the Tibetan brown bear in this landscape could be a result of historical or current population expansion, long-range dispersal, climate change or the availability of new habitats. This finding underscores the need for systematic camera trapping in the region to investigate the Tibetan brown bear population and implement appropriate management and conservation actions.

VINEET KUMAR<sup>1</sup> , B. M. SHARMA<sup>2</sup> , LALIT KUMAR SHARMA<sup>1</sup>   
and BHEEM DUTT JOSHI<sup>1</sup>  ([joshidutt01@gmail.com](mailto:joshidutt01@gmail.com))

<sup>1</sup>Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, India. <sup>2</sup>Department of Wildlife Protection, Ladakh, India

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## Rediscovery of *Hymenidium amabile* (Apiaceae) in India after a century

The genus *Hymenidium* Lindl. (Apiaceae) comprises 39 species distributed from Central Asia to China and the Himalayas. In India, *Hymenidium* species are treated under the genus *Pleurospermum*, with 15 species occurring in the country (six other species are now considered under different genera).

In July 2024, authors AD and TH collected an interesting plant at 4,654 m altitude, c. 1 km from Lagong Tso lake near Klemta, Tawang district, Arunachal Pradesh. The plant was growing on alpine grassy and rocky slopes, with 4–5 mature and a few immature individuals. We identified the plant as *Hymenidium amabile* (Craib & W.W. Sm.) Pimenov &