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Short Communication

## Traditional method of catching crab and fish from Bonai Forest Division, Odisha, India

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### ABSTRACT

*Documentation of traditional knowledge is an important task in contemporary situation where we are facing a lot of health problems. Keeping this in view an attempt has been taken to document the most common traditional practices to catch food from perennial streams of Bonai Forest Division. During the survey in December 2022, we observed two common but unique techniques to catch crab in Koira range & fish in Sole Range. It was observed that crab was caught after removing of stone from the streams & fishes were caught using sound. The present communication discusses two traditional practices to get food in details & the ecological situation in current days.*

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Winter season creates scarcity of food, especially from land resources for the tribal communities. During this season, they harvest the paddy crops and in free time, collect fish and crabs. They do not get much leafy vegetables and other food from the forest. Therefore, mostly they collect the fishes and crabs for food. They catch them using traditional techniques. Urbanization has impacted everywhere and particularly on youth leads to loss of traditional practices. The conservation of traditional practices is very important for the sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. Authors are working on biodiversity assessment of Bonai Forest Division (BFD), Odisha, India and during field works, observed two unique traditional practices for getting food from perennial streams. BFD has hilly slopes, dense forests and several perennial streams. It has a great wealth of floral and faunal diversity (Kumar et al. 2021). The local communities of BFD collect different types of forest foods and sustain their life. Particularly in winter when there is a lack of plant products, they focus on edible faunal wealth like red ants, crabs and fishes.



**Plate 1: Traditional method of catching and consuming crab**



**Plate 2: Traditional method of catching and consuming fish using sonication technique**

While roaming in the forest village Belkudar, Koira Range, me & Sanjeet observed a man of Munda tribe catching crab from under the stones of a perennial stream. It was a unique practice during evening time. He lifted the stones which disturbed the dwelling place of the crab. Then he caught the crab while it was trying to escape. He wrapped the crab in Saal leaf & cooked it with fire. After the Saal leaf was burnt completely, he removed the burnt leaf and ate the crab by removing the shell (Plate 1). This whole process is a beautiful traditional practice known to the tribes of Bonai which not only provide them food for sustenance but also give various health benefits. This technique does not require any oil or additional spices for cooking. Another traditional practice is used for catching fishes residing under the stones in perennial stream. Authors observed that a man of Sole Range of BFD, catching fish from the perennial streams by hitting the stones with a hammer. Hitting stones by the hammer creates strong vibrations. Scientifically this is known as Sonication. It is a technique which creates waves that travels from the surface of the stone to fish present under the stones. This causes paralysis in the fishes and they are seen floating on the surface of water for easy collection (Plate 2). These two methods used for catching crab and fish are the traditional knowledge unique to the tribes of BFD, Odisha. This tribal knowledge is known to the current generation but very soon it might be extinct due to urbanization. Therefore, there is a need to document these practices to keep the knowledge for younger generations and for getting sustainable food from nature.

## REFERENCES

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