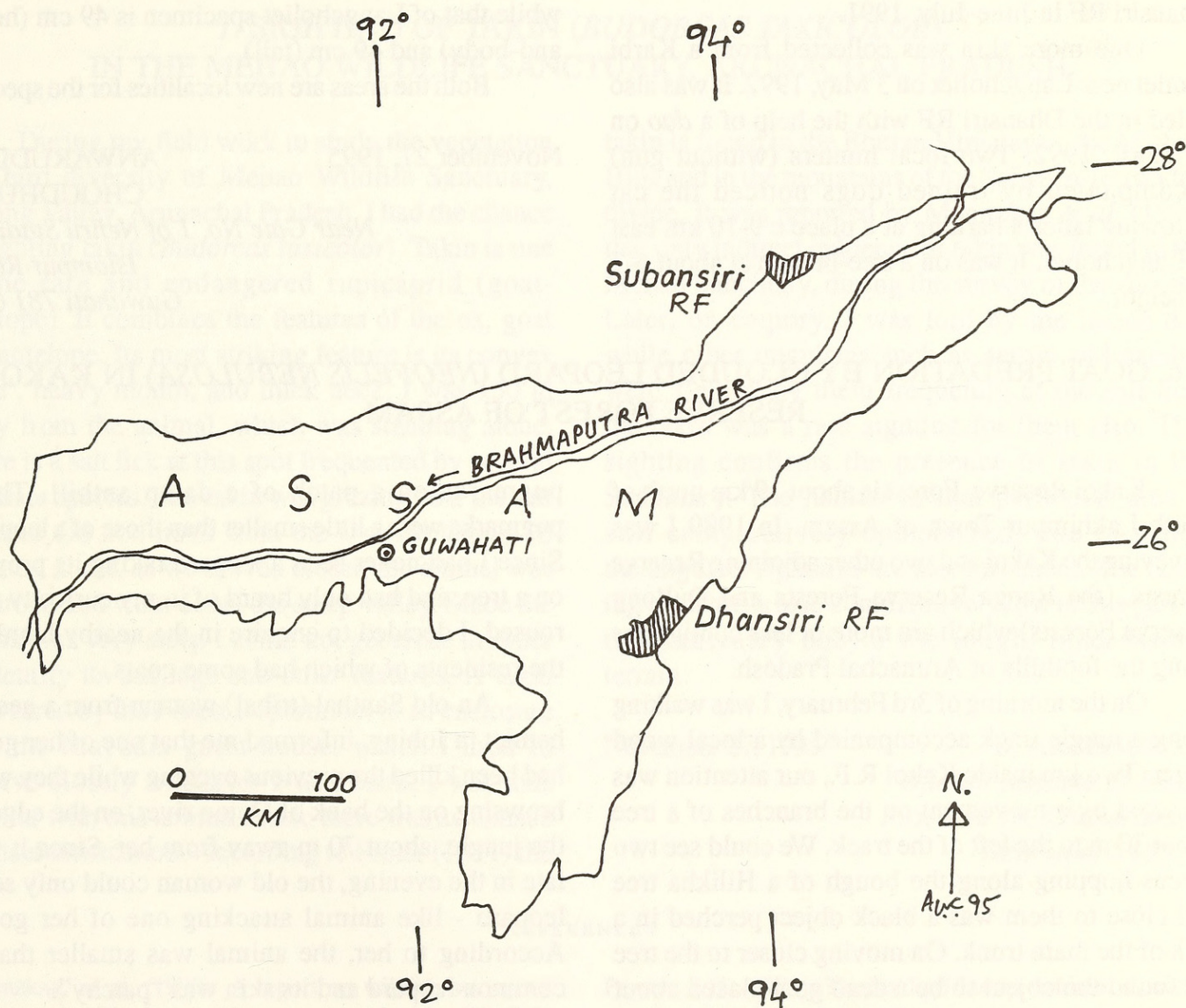


## 5. THE MARBLED CAT *FELIS MARMORATA* MARTIN IN ASSAM - SOME RECENT RECORDS

(With one text-figure)

The Marbled cat *Felis marmorata* (Martin) is a rare small felid known to occur in northeastern India extending westwards up to Nepal within the limits of the Indian Subcontinent (Prater, 1948). Its sighting and specific locality records are few and far between. I describe here three localities of confirmed reporting.

On 2 November, 1990, while on a field trip to Subansiri Reserve Forest (RF) in Dhemaji district, I obtained a skin in Dirpai village, a settlement of the Adi (Abor) tribe within the reserve forest. It was shot by a local shikari in the last week of October, 1990, while it was sitting on the ground at dawn. The site was not far from the village and was within the



Map of Assam showing study areas.



reserve forest. While I was examining the skin, another local Adi came to me and reported that he had also killed a similar cat about a year back from the same reserve forest.

The Subansiri RF is mostly hilly being at the foot of the Eastern or Arunachal Himalaya and the habitat type is of tropical wet evergreen (now degraded at the lower reaches). Elevation in the forest ranges from 150 to above 1000 m. The cats seemed to have been shot at lower elevations.

On 10 August, 1991, I came across a skin in Muolzol Kuki village near Baghmari, south-west of Diphu town in Karbi Anglong District. It was killed by a local Karbi (Mikir) tribal hunter from the nearby Dhansiri RF in June-July, 1991.

One more skin was collected from a Karbi hamlet near Langcholiét on 3 May, 1992. It was also killed in the Dhansiri RF with the help of a *dao* on 27 April, 1992. Two local hunters (without gun) accompanied by trained dogs noticed the cat following latter's barking at a place c 9-10 km east of Langcholiét. It was on a tree-branch at about 6-7 m height.

The same hunters again saw a Marbled cat on 13 May, 1992, in the upper reaches of Karli Langso, c 6 km south-east of Langcholiét inside the Dhansiri RF.

The elevation of Dhansiri RF, where the cats have been recorded is about 200 m above msl. The habitat type is tropical semi-evergreen with a fairly good number of deciduous species. In comparison to Subansiri RF, this area is rather dry (rainfall less than 1000 mm a year while in Subansiri, it is around 3000 mm).

The specimen from Subansiri RF is the largest known in the world with a head-and-body length of 65 cm. The Baghmari specimen is 48 cm (only body), while that of Langcholiét specimen is 49 cm (head-and-body) and 49 cm (tail).

Both the areas are new localities for the species.

November 27, 1995

ANWARUDDIN  
CHOUDHURY

Near Gate No. 1 of Nehru Stadium,  
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## 6. GOAT PREDATION BY CLOUDED LEOPARD (*NEOFELIS NEBULOSA*) IN KAKOI RESERVE FOREST OF ASSAM

Kakoi Reserve Forest is about 19 km north of North Lakhimpur Town of Assam. In 1989 I was surveying the Kakoi and two other adjoining Reserve Forests, (the Ranga Reserve Forests and Dullong Reserve Forests) which are more or less contiguous along the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh.

On the morning of 3rd February, I was walking along a jungle track accompanied by a local wood cutter. Two km inside Kakoi R.F., our attention was attracted by a movement on the branches of a tree about 30 m to the left of the track. We could see two ravens hopping along the bough of a Hilikha tree and close to them was a black object perched in a fork of the main trunk. On moving closer to the tree we found the object to be a dead goat placed about 4 m above the ground.

On looking around we found three small

pugmarks on a patch of a damp anthill. These pugmarks were a little smaller than those of a leopard. Since I had never seen a leopard taking its prey up on a tree, and had only heard of it, my curiosity was roused. I decided to enquire in the nearby hamlets, the residents of which had some goats.

An old Santhal (tribal) woman from a nearby hamlet in Johing, informed me that one of her goats had been killed the previous evening while they were browsing on the bank of Dejo river, on the edge of the jungle, about 70 m away from her. Since it was late in the evening, the old woman could only see a leopard - like animal attacking one of her goats. According to her, the animal was smaller than a common leopard and its skin was "patchy".

Next morning at about 0600 hr. accompanied by the wood cutter, I proceeded towards the spot





Choudhury, Anwaruddin. 1996. "The marbled cat *Felis marmorata* Martin in Assam: Some recent records." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 93, 583–584.

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