Re-assessment of the Reinwardt’s Gliding Frog, *Rhacophorus reinwardtii* (Schlegel 1840) (Anura: Rhacophoridae) in Southern Thailand and Peninsular Malaysia and its re-description as a new species

CHAN KIN ONN1,2 & L. LEE GRISMER2

1 Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia. E-mail: kin_onn@yahoo.com

2 Department of Biology, La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, California, 92515-8247 USA. E-mail: lgrismer@lasierra.edu

**Abstract**

*Rhacophorus reinwardtii* from Southern Thailand and Peninsular Malaysia is found to be morphologically distinct from Javan and Bornean populations and is herein described as a new species. *Rhacophorus norhayatii* sp nov. can be differentiated from *R. reinwardtii* by having a larger maximum SVL in males (64.7 mm vs. 55 mm); lacking spots on dorsum; higher degree of interdigital web pigmentation on hands and feet; and rusty brown markings on the flanks. This study adds to the growing list of taxonomic changes in Sunda Shelf taxa by demonstrating that species previously thought to be widely distributed across Sundaland are indeed distinct lineages worthy of species recognition.

**Key words:** Malay Peninsula, new species, *Rhacophorus norhayatii*, Sundaland, systematics

**Introduction**

The genus *Rhacophorus* Kuhl and van Hasselt 1822, contains at least 77 species which collectively range from central and southern China (Chou et al. 2007; Zhao et al. 2005), Japan (Matsui 1999), southwestern and northeastern India (Vasudevan & Dutta 2000), southward throughout the Indo-Chinese (Ohler & Delorme 2006; Ohler et al. 2000; Orlov et al. 2001; Wilkinson et al. 2001) and Indo-Malayan regions (Berry 1975; Manthey & Grossman 1997; Taylor 1962), including the Philippines (Alcala & Brown 1998), with 20 species occurring in Peninsular Malaysia and the island of Borneo (Chan et al. 2010a; Das & Haas 2005; Dehling & Grafe 2008; Inger & Stuebing 2005). Kuhl and Van Hasselt (1822) created the genus *Rhacophorus* for large tree frogs from Java based on two specific nomina. The first nomen, *Rhacophorus reinwardtii* (Schlegel 1840) is a medium to large-sized, arboreal tree-frog with dermal appendages on the anterior and posterior limbs and full webbing on the hands and feet. These characters are shared by many other congeners but the lack of proper, morphological scrutiny has led to considerable confusion over the exact distribution and classification of this species. *Rhacophorus reinwardtii* was first