Our team members, who have been stationed inside the Reserve since September 2024, noticed intensive stink bug collection begin in the second week of November 2024 and continue to early February 2025. White-bellied herons tend to forage in open river stretches, and this increase in anthropogenic pressure will make it increasingly difficult for the species to find suitable sites within the Reserve. Furthermore, the heron's nesting season starts in June following courtship beginning during January–February in Namdapha. Absence of the heron in its known localities during this period therefore highlights concern for its reproduction in 2025. A pause in breeding may lead to a further decrease in the already limited population in India. If not addressed quickly, this emerging threat will lead to declines in the heron population in Namdapha Tiger Reserve, where the population is already decreasing (Menzies et al., 2025, *Oryx*, 58, 730–734). Stricter reserve management and provision of alternative incomes for inhabitants of the Reserve are required to mitigate the issue.

Gopinathan Maheswaran (gmaheswaran@yahoo.com) and Srinjoy Das
Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, India

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Rediscovery of the Critically Endangered *Sinocrassula techinensis* in Sichuan, China

Dry-hot valleys of the tropical regions are considered special ecosystems in which woody and herbaceous plants coexist, strongly influenced by seasonal drought, climate and ecological characteristics. The ancient, primary vegetation of the dry-hot valleys of the Jinsha River basin in south-west China is predominantly herbaceous, with scattered shrubs and trees, resembling a sparse tree savannah. Plants of the genus *Sinocrassula* (family Crassulaceae) are representative of the region's unique vegetation.

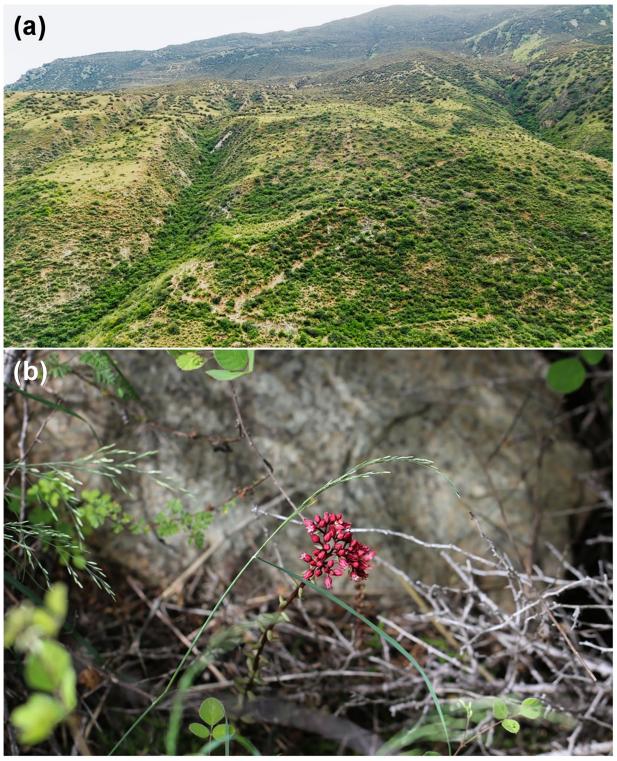
With support from the Sichuan Province Batang County Wild Plant Resources Comprehensive Scientific Investigation Project, we surveyed the valleys of the Jinsha River basin in August 2024. During our surveys we incidentally discovered a brightly coloured *Sinocrassula* plant, which we later confirmed to be the rare *Sinocrassula techinensis*.

Sinocrassula techinensis is a perennial herbaceous plant. The whole plant is glabrous, the flowering stem is solitary and erect, the stem leaves are alternate and the inflorescences are corymbiform with red petals. It often grows alone amongst grass on rocky hillsides. It is categorized as Critically Endangered on the China Biodiversity Red List—Higher Plants and the Red List of China Higher Plants. We discovered a single population of c. 15 individuals at 3,229 m altitude, within shrubland composed of *Sinocrassula davidii* var. *chuansiensis*.

Historically, *S. techinensis* has only been recorded in Yunnan and Tibet, with the previous specimens collected by Fang Zhendong and stored at the Missouri Botanical Garden in 2003. Our discovery is the first record of this species in Sichuan and is of importance for studying the flora, biogeography and phylogenetic relationships of the genus *Sinocrassula*.

Our finding not only enriches knowledge of the biodiversity of Batang County but also demonstrates the suitability of the dry-hot valley environment in the upper reaches of the Jinsha River for the growth and reproduction of *S. techinensis*. To protect this Critically Endangered plant, the local government plans to expand the survey area and continue long-term monitoring, taking effective measures to ensure the survival and reproduction of the species.

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The rediscovery of *Sinocrassula techinensis* in Batang County, Sichuan Province: (a) its habitat in the dry-hot valleys of the Jinsha River basin, and (b) a flowering individual observed during our surveys in August 2024. Photos: Gang Gao.

Gang Gao, Xuyan Chen, Zhimin Jiang and Yang Yang
Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Engineering, Yibin University, Yibin, Sichuan, China

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