

Terrestrial Small Mammals

*Faisal Ali Anwarali Khan, Nurshilawati Latip, Rafik Murni,
Nur Mukminah Naharuddin, Pui Chai Fung, Nur Elfieyra Syazana Hamdan,
Mathew Jenang, Shafri Semawi, Mohd-Azlan J. and Andrew Alek Tuen*

Small mammals are generally ecologically cryptic, making them a group that is least encountered in south-east Asian tropical rainforest, due to their human avoidance behaviour. There are over 200 species of small mammals on Borneo, which can be generally divided into five major groups, which include the bats, rodents, squirrels, shrews and treeshrews. Among the common groups recorded in south-east Asia are members from the order Rodentia and Scandentia. Members from the order Rodentia which includes mice, rats, squirrels, porcupines, beavers, guinea pigs, and hamsters are the most diverse group of mammalian fauna as they occupy almost all continents, except Antarctica. On contrary, members of the order Scandentia, which includes treeshrews, are native to tropical forest of south-east Asia. Both these diverse groups have important ecological functions, although some are considered agricultural pest by humans.

In Tanjung Datu National Park, a total of 17 individuals from the order Rodentia and Scandentia were recorded. Rodentia was recorded with a total of five species, representing two families (Muridae and Sciuridae) and three genera (*Maxomys*, *Niviventer* and *Sundasciurus*). These include three species from Spiny Rats, one individual of Dark-Tailed Tree Rat and two individuals of Brooke's squirrel. Both the terrestrial rodents *Maxomys* and the semi-arboreal rodents *Niviventer* have a nocturnal behaviour that consumes a wide range of fruits and seeds, as well as insects. The diurnal and primarily arboreal *Sundasciurus* has similar diet to *Maxomys* and *Niviventer*. As for the order Scandentia, a total of two species, representing a single family (Tupaiaidae) and genus (*Tupaia*). These include the Large Treeshrew and Long-Footed Treeshrew. Both these treeshrews were terrestrial species that spend most of their time on the forest floor looking for food such as earthworms, arthropods and fruits. Of the 17 non-volant individuals collected from the order Rodentia and Scandentia, none of the individuals were found pregnant indicating the month of May, would possibly not be their breeding season for populations from western Sarawak.

Although all rodents, squirrel and treeshrews species recorded in Tanjung Datu National Park are common species that were typically recorded from