

**on 21 November 2012**



VERY RARE: A close-up footage of the elusive Bay Cat recorded recently.

### **Endangered Bay Cat recorded to be seen in Upper Baram**

KUCHING: The Bornean Bay Cat *Pardofelis badia*, one of the rarest and most elusive cats in the world, has been recorded to be seen in the Sela'an Linau Forest Management Unit (FMU), a logging concession in Upper Baram.

A press release from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) stated that in the state, the Bay Cat had only previously been recorded to be seen in the Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary, Pulong Tau National Park, and last year in the Anap Muput Forest Management Unit.

The Bay Cat is classified as 'Endangered' on the IUCN (World Conservation Union) Red List of Threatened Species and is totally protected in the state under the Wild Life Protection Ordinance 1998.

The Sela'an Linau FMU covers an area of approximately 56,000 ha and lies in the interior of northern Sarawak, north of the upper Baram River.

Due to its close proximity to Pulong Tau National Park and its location within the central spine of the greater "Heart of Borneo (HoB)" initiative, the FMU is important for many of Borneo's highland species as it provides suitable habitats for dispersal, thereby ensuring genetic exchange between subdivided populations.



ENDANGERED CAT: A footage of the elusive Bay Cat recorded recently.

Photo images of the Bay Cat were obtained by researchers from the Hose's Civet and Small Carnivore Project, Borneo (Hoscap Borneo), a research-based conservation project under the Institute of Biodiversity and Environmental Conservation (IBEC), UNIMAS.

Images of the species were obtained from two locations in the Murud Kecil mountain range in September and October this year.

This mountain range is set aside as 'Protected Zone' by the logging concessionaire, Samling, for conservation purposes; however, it is not gazetted under the state government and thus has no legal protection.

The director of IBEC, Professor Dr Andrew Alek Tuen, said "the records of the Bay Cat highlight the Sela'an Linau FMU, particularly the Murud Kecil mountain range, as an important area for wildlife."

The FMU is one of the few places in Borneo which has 4 of the 5 wild cat species known in Borneo.

It also has the highest number of encounters of the rare Bornean endemic, the Hose's Civet *Diplogale hosei*, one of the world's least known carnivores.

The Hoscap Borneo team has also recorded footages of six different species of hornbills there and at least three species listed as Endangered on the IUCN Red List: the Bay Cat, Bornean Gibbon (both endemic to Borneo) and the Pangolin.

Other rare Bornean endemics recorded to be seen in the area include the Tufted Ground Squirrel and the Bulwer's Pheasant. The Hoscap Borneo team has released a video clip on YouTube of such footage from the wild, including rare footage of the Hose's Civet.

Professor Dr Andrew added "This is an excellent opportunity for all stakeholders to work together and show that we truly care about our environment and are able to manage Sarawak's forests sustainably for the conservation of its biodiversity."

He hoped the state government would continue in its efforts to promote high standards and good timber harvesting practices in logging areas.

"With UNIMAS, Samling, Sarawak Forest Department and Sarawak Forestry Corporation working together with support from the public and corporate donors, we can make sustainable forest management a reality. If we all play our part, there is no reason why we cannot do this."

The Hose's Civet and Small Carnivore Project, Borneo (Hoscap Borneo) is funded by The Care-For-Nature Trust Fund (administered by HSBC Trustee (Singapore) Limited) and Ocean Park Conservation Foundation, Hong Kong while logistical support is provided by Yaw Teck Seng Foundation.

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