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**Short Communication**

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**A new distributional record of the rare bat *Coelops robinsoni* from Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo****M.R. Abd Rahman<sup>1\*</sup>, Anang Setiawan Achmadi<sup>1,2</sup>, Roberta Chaya Tawie Tingga<sup>1</sup> and Noor Haliza Hasan<sup>1</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT.** A specimen of the rare Lesser Tailless Roundleaf Bat, *Coelops robinsoni* was caught at the mouth of Lobang Gan Kira, one of the entrances to Niah Cave, Niah National Park (NNP) on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2008. This bat is a new record for the park and only the third record for Malaysian Borneo, the previous records being from the Deer Cave, Mulu and Sarawak Planted Forest Zone (SPFZ), Bintulu Division. Detailed descriptions of the external morphology, skull and dentition are presented. Additional individuals of this species may occur in the cave as a potential roosting site was found on the cave ceiling approximately six meters above the floor and 300m from the entrance. More information on this bat is crucial for immediate and effective conservation plans as this species is listed as vulnerable by the IUCN.

**Keywords:** *Coelops robinsoni*, Niah National Park, Borneo.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Genus *Coelops* is classified under the family Hipposideridae in the suborder Microchiroptera. This genus is comprised of two species, *Coelops frithi* and *C. robinsoni*

(Corbet & Hill, 1992; Nowak, 1994; Francis, 2008). *Coelops robinsoni* or the Lesser Tailless Roundleaf Bat is a very small bat which has long and soft fur. The fur colouration is brown to blackish on the dorsal surface and ashy on the ventral surface. It can be distinguished from the other roundleaf bats by its small size and the absence of the tail. The distribution of this bat is restricted to the Southeast Asian region from Peninsular Thailand, Peninsular Malaysia to Borneo and possibly to the Philippines (Payne *et al.*, 1985; Francis, 2008).

This species was first described from a specimen collected in Malaysia by Bonhote (1908) from the foot of Mount Tahan, Pahang. This was followed by Tate (1941) from the specimen collected on the Archbold expeditions which descriptions resemble *C. robinsoni* even though it was slightly smaller than the type specimen. Throughout Borneo, there are only two records for this distinctive little bat, but no measurements are available. The first record of this bat in Borneo was from the Deer Cave, Mulu National Park (Cranbrook, 1984) and the second record was from the Sarawak Planted Forest Area (SPFZ), Bintulu Division (Mead, 2007).