

SHORT COMMUNICATION

Survey of Small Mammals in Bukit Taat, Tasik Kenyir, Hulu Terengganu, Malaysia.

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ABSTRACT

A survey on small mammals was conducted at Bukit Taat, Tasik Kenyir from 2nd to 5th September 2014. This survey aimed to document the species diversity of small mammals in Bukit Taat. A total of eight mist nets, two four-bank harp traps and 50 cage traps baited with banana slices were used. A total of 36 individuals comprising 14 species of chiropteran but none of non-volant small mammals were recorded. *Hipposideros larvatus* (36.1% of total individuals) were recorded as the most captured species followed by *H. diadema* (19.4% of total individuals) and *Penthetor lucasi* (8.3% of total individuals). This survey formed the first list of chiropterans recorded at Bukit Taat, Tasik Kenyir, Hulu Terengganu, Malaysia.

Keywords: Bukit Taat Tasik Kenyir, chiropterans, non-volant small mammals, small mammals

Tasik Kenyir is known as the largest man-made lake in South-East Asia. The surrounding area was flooded in 1978 to become part of the Sultan Mahmud Hydro Electric Dam. Nested within the lake are the remainder of many hilltops and highlands that remains unsubmerged at the height of 138 m above ground. Bukit Taat is located at the southern end of Tasik Kenyir, 76 km from Kuala Terengganu (Mohd-Kamaruzaman, 2002). According to Fontaine (1988), Bukit Taat is formed by limestone deposition during the Middle Permian (270.6 – 260.4 million years ago).

Gaines and McClenaghams (1980) describe small mammals as any terrestrial and arboreal species with their adult weights up to 5 kg. Small mammals can be further separated into two categories which include volant and non-volant small mammals. Chiroptera (bats) are the only small mammals which have evolved the ability to fly, hence are categorised as volant (Gaines & McClenaghams, 1980) whereas non-volant (flightless) small mammals that are commonly found in South East Asia consist Scandentia, Rodentia, Soricomorpha, and

Erinaceomorpha.

The information on the diversity of small mammals and the number of species presence in Bukit Taat, Tasik Kenyir has been scarce. Hence, this survey aimed to determine the diversity of small mammals living in Bukit Taat. This collaboration survey was between students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and the Kenyir Research Institute of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT).

This survey was carried out in Bukit Taat, Tasik Kenyir [4°49'59.29"N 102°42'59.81"E] (Figure 1) located approximately 1500 meters above sea level. A total of eight mist nets, two four-bank harp traps and 50 standard cage traps were set at strategic locations for three consecutive nights with a total sampling effort of 116 traps per night. Mist nets were deployed along and across the trails while harp traps were placed across the opening of the trails. Cage traps were baited with ripe bananas (locally known as "pisang emas") slices which was reported to be one of the preferred bait for small mammals (Bernard, 2003) and placed on the ground along available trail at approximately 2 m intervals. All standard cage

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