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## NEWS AND NOTES

### NEW PUBLICATIONS

Mani, A., Mullainathan, S., Shafir, E. and J. Zhao (2013). Poverty Impedes Cognitive Function. *Science* **341(6149)**: 976-980. DOI: 10.1126/science.1238041

Burden of poverty can have profound long-term impact on nations' successful development. Lacking money or time can lead one to make poorer decisions, possibly because poverty imposes a cognitive load that saps attention and reduces effort. Mani et al. gathered evidence from shoppers in a New Jersey mall and from farmers in Tamil Nadu, India. They found that considering a projected financial decision, such as how to pay for a car repair, affects people's performance on unrelated spatial and reasoning tasks. Lower-income individuals performed poorly if the repairs were expensive but did fine if the cost was low, whereas higher-income individuals performed well in both conditions, as if the projected financial burden imposed no cognitive pressure. Similarly, the sugarcane farmers from Tamil Nadu performed these tasks better after harvest than before. The authors suggest that poverty itself reduces cognitive capacity and add that this is because poverty-related concerns consume mental resources, leaving less for other tasks

Yasamin, Kh.I., Lim, T.T., Westaway, K.E., Earl of Cranbrook, Humphrey, L., Muhammad, R.F., Jian-Xin, Z. and Lee Chai Peng (2013). First discovery of Pleistocene orangutan (*Pongo sp.*) fossils in Peninsular Malaysia: Biogeographic and paleoenvironmental implications. *Journal of Human Evolution* (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhevol.2013.09.005>).

This study presents the results from fossil extraction from two cave sites in Peninsular Malaysia, Badak Caves in the state of Perak, and Batu Caves in the state of Selangor. The authors isolated nine fossil Pongo teeth from two cave sites, which are the first fossil *Pongo* specimens recorded in Peninsular Malaysia. The authors argue that these new records from show that ancestral Pongo successfully passed the major biogeographical divide between mainland continental Southeast Asia and

the Sunda subregion before 500,000 years ago, but that environmental conditions of the peninsula during the Last Glacial Maximum evidently became inhospitable for Pongo, causing local extinction. The authors also suggest that, after the latest climatic change, a new sea barrier prevented re-colonization from the rainforest refugium in Sumatra, accounting for the present day absence of Pongo in apparently hospitable lowland evergreen rainforest of Peninsular Malaysia.

Colchester, M. and S. Chao (Eds) (2013). Conflict or Consent? The oil palm sector at a crossroads. Forest Peoples Programme, Sawit Watch and TUK Indonesia. 428pp.

This report presents results from 16 case-studies concerning how well palm oil companies live up to their promises of respecting communities legal and customary rights, and only develop plantation on their land after free, prior and informed consent. All case studies presented in the report focus on plantation companies that are members of the Roundtable for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) that require members to comply with the standards outlined in the "Principles and Criteria" (P&C). This includes refraining from developing plantations on lands regarded as "high conservation value" as well as respecting communities' legal and customary rights. The 16 case studies took place in seven different countries with Indonesia (7) the target of seven studies, followed by Cameroon (2), Liberia (2), Malaysia (2), Thailand (1), Philippines (1) and Democratic Republic of Congo (1). The findings are sobering. Many RSPO member companies have adopted new standards and procedures, and improved their practices on paper, but on the ground not much has changed. According to the report, land grabs continue, land conflicts are escalating and too often palm oil companies, even RSPO members, pursue business as usual. The report provides insightful details of target companies, local communities and respective traditions. It concludes that most of these problems stem from unjust legal and governance frameworks which fail to protect local communities' and indigenous

peoples' rights. The editors recommend that respective operational managers in the field must receive more training, and that Governments must change the way they regulate the industry and adjust land tenure systems so communities are secure in their rights.

Kawanishi, K., Clements, G.P., Gumal, M., Goldthorpe, G., Yasak, M.N. and D.S.K. Sharma (2013). Using BAD for good: how best available data facilitated a precautionary policy change to improve protection of the prey of the tiger *Panthera tigris* in Malaysia. *Oryx*, **47**, pp 420-426. doi:10.1017/S0030605312000294.

A study by the Malaysian Conservation Alliance for Tigers (MYCAT) suggests that the Endangered Malayan tigers (*Panthera tigris jacksoni*) is being undercut by dwindling prey. The paper presents a camera trapping study spanning 40,303 trap-nights resulting in a total of 10,145 wildlife photographs. Unfortunately, the results confirmed the worst predictions --- that is, tiger prey species are slowly disappearing, and with them the tiger too. The study reveals that the species least-detected - sambar, bearded pig, and gaur - were especially rare in unprotected forests. The favourite prey, sambar deer

and bearded pig, are intrinsically linked to the tiger, and the authors believe that the demise of such important prey species will also result in the demise of the tiger. MYCAT propose that the sambar deer is upgraded to a legal status as a "totally protected" species, which will bring about a \$90,000 fine and/or 10 years in prison for illegal hunting and trading.

Lim, E.A.L., Mariapan, M., Su Ming, Y.A., Abi, J., Aziz, A. and M. Zakaria (2013). Rural Students' Attitudes Toward the Malayan Tapir. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife* **18**:469-470.

This study looked into the attitudes of secondary school students in rural Malaysia towards the Malayan tapir, *Tapirus indicus*. Pictorial stimulations were used to qualitatively elicit students' cognitive beliefs and emotions toward the Malayan tapir and its threats. This study was carried out in 2012, in Jerantut, Pahang, Malaysia with 81 secondary school students as target group. The results showed that most students had heard of "tapir" but some were more familiar with the local names - tenuk or cipan. Most students regarded the Malayan tapir as "favourable", because of its unique physical appearance, with specific reference to its body



**Figure 1.** The Javan warty hog, *Sus verrucosus*, is one of Java's critically endangered species that is believed to exist in only one or two locations on mainland Java. It was believed that the Bawean Island subspecies, *Sus verrucosus blouchi*, had gone extinct but a recent survey confirmed that a small population still roam Bawean Island. ©Florian Richter.

shape and size, body pattern and color, and proboscis. Students also shared their associations of the picture stimulations to the tapir's natural habitat, its natural role and threats to its population. Students had positive emotions toward the Malayan tapir. Strong emotions of love and desire for direct contact with the Malayan tapir were prominent. The findings suggest that students' important beliefs and emotions toward the Malayan tapir should be integrated into the design of effective environmental education programs and that this constitutes a critical wildlife management tool that can be used to increase public support for the conservation of the target species.

## HOG DEER MAKE COMEBACK

New populations of hog deer, Indochina's most endangered breed of deer, have recently been discovered in Kratie and southwest Cambodia. Discovered by a joint team from the Royal University of Phnom Penh and Fauna & Flora International wild hog deer were found in five out of 10 potential areas of habitat. This is good news for conservation, because Cambodia is the only country in Indochina with any hog deer remaining.

## IUCN TIGER PROGRAMME RECEIVES €20 MILLION

The German government through the KfW Development Bank has committed to providing 20 million EURO to support tiger conservation. This is a direct follow-up from the St. Petersburg Tiger Summit where several range countries committed to doubling the number of tigers occurring within their territories by 2020. The aim of this five-year *Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme* is to increase the number of tigers in the wild and improve the livelihoods of communities living in and close to their habitat. This includes improving the management of tiger habitats, tackling tiger-human conflicts, increasing anti poaching efforts and law enforcement and involving local communities in tiger conservation work. Eligible countries include Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Viet Nam. Whereas €20 million will not sufficiently cover all tiger conservation activities across the range, the gesture is certainly a "put your money where your mouth is" action and a challenge to tiger range countries to live up to their end of the bargain.

## IUCN WILD PIG SPECIALIST GROUP

The IUCN Wild Pig Specialist Group convened a workshop from 19-21<sup>st</sup> of November, 2013 at Cikananga Conservation Breeding Center, Sukabumi, West Java, Indonesia. It was timely as the last such event took place twenty years ago (1993). The event saw 25-30 participants from

Europe, South Asia and the ASEAN region assess the conservation status of wild pigs in Asia. It soon became apparent that many of Asia's wild pigs are in immediate danger of going extinct. The conservation challenges across the region are similar whether it concerns Javan warty hog (Fig.1), *Sus verrucosus*, Babirusa, or the pygmy hogs, *Porcula salvania*, in the floodplains of Assam, Northeastern India. Reports from India, Indonesia and the Philippines paint the same picture i.e. habitat loss and hunting are the main drivers of the population declines for all wild pig species. In some instances hybridization is also a concern, for example, evidence suggests that *Sus verrucosus* have hybridized extensively with Banded pigs, *Sus scrofa vittatus*. In other cases, successful captive breeding programmes face challenges in finding suitable habitat to reintroduce captive bred individuals, because the former habitats have disappeared, as reported from the Philippines. The one positive report came from Bawean Island where a recent survey confirmed the existence of a small population of *Sus verrucosus blouchi*, once considered extinct, on the island.

The workshop participants also discussed how captive breeding facilities could contribute in pig-conservation, and which role such facilities could play. The participants unanimously agreed that, for many species on the brink of extinction, conservation breeding was an absolute necessity, and that resources-support should be offered to private as well as government facilities to encourage a more systematic and collaborative conservation breeding effort of priority species.

Finally, the workshop dealt with general challenges concerning pig conservation, especially how to address hunting problems, how to integrate pig conservation into other conservation actions, and how to promote better and more effective pig conservation on the ground. There is also a need to assess the status of feral and introduced pigs on Southeast Asian islands and to review the taxonomic status of babirusa, especially with regards to the species' presence on other islands.

The participants of the workshop thanked Erik Meijaard and Resit Sözer for organising the workshop, and the entire team at Cikananga Conservation Breeding Center.

*Thiemo Braasch*

Zoologische Gesellschaft für Arten- und Populationsschutz

### IUCN PRIMATE SPECIALIST GROUP

The IUCN Primate Specialist Group, Section for Small Apes, convened a “Reintroduction, rehabilitation and translocation” workshop. Originally set to take place in Cat Tien National Park, Vietnam, from 12-15<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, the event was rescheduled due to sudden lack of support from local stakeholders. Instead, the organisers Ben Rawson, IUCN SSC PSG SSA Vice Chair/Fauna & Flora International; Clare Campbell of Wildlife Asia (WA)/Silvery Gibbon Project (SGP) and Susan Cheyne (OuTrop) managed to set up the workshop in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from 6-10<sup>th</sup> of January, 2014.

The objective of the workshop was to reignite regional networking and information sharing amongst conservationists working with small apes, and to develop a practical “IUCN Reintroduction,



**Figure 3.** A Pileated gibbon, *Hylobates pileatus*, in Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre outside Phnom Penh, Cambodia. ©Carl Traeholt.

rehabilitation and translocation” guidelines for gibbons. Approximately 30 conservationists from Southeast Asia, North and South Asia, Indochina, Australia, Europe and Northamerica engaged in very useful information sharing through a range of interesting presentations and subsequent discussions. Topics ranged from rescue, rehabilitation and husbandry efforts concerning Javan gibbons, *Hylobates moloch*, Bornean gibbons, *Hylobates muelleri*, Pileated gibbon (Fig.3), *Hylobates pileatus*, in Cambodia and Thailand, Hoolocks, *Hoolock leuconedys*, along with informal status assessments of many other gibbon species. The participants discussed many different topics relevant to reintroduction, rehabilitation and translocation and how to prepare a set of IUCN-guidelines that will be practical for the endusers. The organisers will compile the workshop details and prepare a draft “IUCN-guidelines for reintroduction, rehabilitation and translocation of gibbons” to be presented and endorsed at the 25<sup>th</sup> congress of the International Primatological Society in Vietnam (11-16<sup>th</sup> August, 2014).

*Carl Traeholt*

### UPCOMING EVENTS

*The 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Oil Palm and Environment (ICOPE)*, will be held on 12-14<sup>th</sup> February, 2014, at The Stones Hotel, Kuta, Bali. This conference is organized jointly by SMART Tbk. Indonesia, WWF Indonesia and CIRAD France. The objective is to demonstrate how the oil palm industry is developing towards becoming a model for tomorrow’s sustainable agriculture. More information about the event can be found at <http://www.icope-series.com/>.

*Forest Asia Summit 2014* will take place in Jakarta, Indonesia, on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of May, 2014. The meeting will engage Southeast Asian Ministers in a bilateral and multilateral exchange with their counterparts, business executives, civil society and development experts from Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific will seek to find new green-growth pathways. The event is organized by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Bogor, Indonesia. More information about the event can be found at <http://www.cifor.org/forestsasia/>.

*Regional Conferences on Protected Areas and Biodiversity Management in Southeast Asia.* The is organised jointly by Yayasan Sabah, NepCon and the SAFE Project. The conference will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 2014, in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. The intention is to promote sharing experiences in the management of protected areas in the tropics and discuss topics such as landscape fragmentation, management of meta-populations and biodiversity conservation as a “crisis discipline”. For more information, please contact [fize.busu@gmail.com](mailto:fize.busu@gmail.com) or [lailatuneliyana@yahoo.com](mailto:lailatuneliyana@yahoo.com).

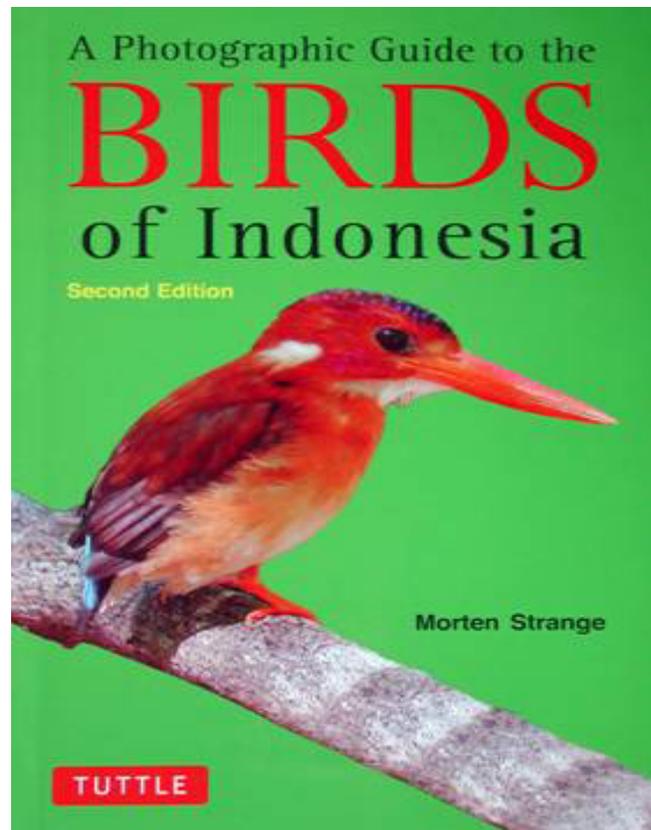
*The Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC)* will hold its 51st annual meeting from the 20-24<sup>th</sup> of July, 2014, in Cairns, Australia. The meeting also includes ATBC’s Asia Chapter meeting where up to 800 participants will convene in one of the World’s premier international conservation biology meetings. More information about the event can be found at <http://www.atbc2014.org/>.

*International Primatological Society (IPS)* will hold its 25<sup>th</sup> congress from 11-16<sup>th</sup> of August, 2014, at the Melia Hotel, Hanoi, Vietnam. Congress details can be found at <http://ips2014.vnforest.gov.vn/>.

*Society for Conservation Biology - Asia Chapter* - will hold its 3<sup>rd</sup> regional conference from 19-22<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at Equatorial Hotel, Melaka, Malaysia. The conference will bring together more than 200 of the regions foremost researchers, practitioners and students of conservation biology. Information can be found at <http://scbasia2014.org/>.

## BOOK REVIEW

Indonesia has one of highest number of bird species in the World, including the number of endemics and threatened bird species. And the number is still increasing with the description of new species. Currently only a few bird field guides are available for the entire Indonesia. Most field guides available focus on specific biogeographic areas such as Sundaland, Wallacea or Papua. This book cover all of Indonesia with some taxonomix changes. The



author, Morten Strange, is already well-known for his many high quality pictures of birds, as well as bird-guides for the Southeast Asian region. The first edition of his “A Photographic Guide to the Birds of Indonesia” was the first comprehensive photographic guide to the birds of Indonesia ever available. This best selling volume covered 686 species in one of the world’s most diverse avifauna regions. This second edition is a major upgrade with nearly 250 more species depicted for an incredible total of 912 species illustrated. Another very useful feature is the comprehensive checklist of all 1605 recorded species in Indonesia, along with a description of where the species may be encountered and their endemic and threatened status. Its compact size makes it a good field guide that will not be a burden to carry on excursions. Despite the limited depictions of many Javan and New Guinean endemics this guide is a worthy companion for those who are interested in the Indonesian avifauna.

*The Editors*