

AN
ILLUSTRATED GUIDE
TO THE
FEDERATED
MALAY STATES

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BIG GAME SHOOTING.

By THEODORE R. HUBBACK, author of "Elephant and Seladang Hunting in Malaya" (*Rowland Ward, Limited, London*).

There is a certain fascination about the expression "Big Game Shooting" which appeals to most Britishers, and a country which provides such shooting will invariably be sought after by a certain section of the sport-loving community from our island home.

Malaya has been visited up to the present by very few sportsmen in search of Big Game, chiefly because very few people know anything about the country as a field for the Big Game hunter, and also because the many difficulties to be encountered have frequently proved on enquiry to appear so great that the would-be hunter-visitor has turned his attentions to some better known locality.

But the difficulty of obtaining a trophy generally enhances its value to the possessor, and those who are prepared to face a certain amount of hard work and inconvenience, and are well posted up with

take what was necessary for the "commissariat," and depart up-country or wherever news of game took one. If Malay coolies are treated like children, are not asked to do much work or carry more than 25 to 30 pounds a day, are allowed to amuse themselves as they think best when the day's work is over, even though their singing does set one's teeth on edge, the sportsman will find that he can manage fairly well with them, and that they will enter into the spirit of the expedition as far as their intelligence will allow them to do so; but if, on the other hand, they are treated at all harshly or even like what they really are, paid servants, they will spend most of their time sulking, and will not help towards the enjoyment of the trip.

Big game shooting in Malaya means the
The Game. hunting of elephant, *sělädang* (the local type of *Bos Gaurus*), and rhinoceros.

On a shooting trip the game will have to be searched for and tracked until found. A lucky chance may give the hunter the opportunity of sitting up for a tiger, but such chance should in no way be counted on.

Elephant and *sělädang*, on the other hand, can be found with fair certainty in many places in the Federated Malay States, and although with the opening up of the country one has to go farther afield to reach the hunting districts, facilities for travel have so much improved since the advent of the automobile that one is able to reach a district in a day which a few years ago would have taken three or four to reach. There is

now little hunting to be obtained in Selangor or Negri Sembilan, the greater portion of these countries have been opened up with roads and railways, and it would not be worth the while of the visitor to try and obtain game in either of them. In Perak elephants are still to be found near the coast, and in Upper Perak seladang, rhinoceros and elephant can still be obtained, but the State where by far the best shooting is likely to be accomplished is the eastern State of Pahang. Very little of Pahang has been opened up, and there are many valleys which are sparsely populated, are well watered, and hold quantities of big game. The State of Pahang is watered mainly by the Pahang river, which is the name given to the river made by the junction of the Tembeling and Jelai rivers; there are numerous other smaller rivers which help to swell the broad flood of the Pahang, notably the Krau, the Semantan, the Triang, the Bera, the Jinka, the Jumpol, the Luit, and the Lepar. All these, which are navigable for small boats for some distances from the main river, lead one to good hunting grounds, and a trip of a couple of months spent in Pahang in search of big game would, with reasonable luck, result in success.

It must, however, be remembered that the hunting is difficult, that although there is plenty of game to be found it is not always easy for the visitor, who would presumably be ignorant of the language, to get the village Malays to work for him, and many disappointments must be expected before good trophies are obtained. The best rewards will come to those who



Photo by T. R. Hulmeck (Copyright) *Facing Page 244*
RHINOCEROS (SUMATRENSIS) SHOT IN 1914 AT 4,000 FEET ON MAIN RANGE ABOVE KUALA LUMPUR

disturbed, however, they fully realise the danger of the salt licks and travel long distances after their visits, the tracking of a beast from a salt lick often being a long affair; on the other hand, if a lick is visited which has been left unvisited by man for some months, it is quite possible that the beast may be found lying up close to the salt lick and every precaution should be taken in approaching the spot.

It must be borne in mind, however, that it is not a legitimate way to obtain game by waiting for it in a salt lick: in fact, under the present game laws it is considered a serious offence. In the past, it has been a common practice for Malays and Sakai to build *nachans* in salt licks and wait for the game to come to them, instead of tracking it in the jungle. This habit is now punishable by a heavy fine.

Fresh tracks picked up in a salt lick may have been made by some beast now many miles away. It is, of course, an extremely interesting experience to find tracks in this way, and eventually to bag the same beast hours later after long and careful tracking. No sportsman worthy of the name would think of sitting up in a tree to shoot such a magnificent beast as a wild elephant, or a sëlädang, or a rhinoceros.

The
Rhinoceros. There are two species of rhinoceros to be found in the Malay Peninsula, the Javan rhinoceros (*rhinoceros sondaicus*) and the Sumatran rhinoceros (*rhinoceros sumatrensis*). The former is very rare, and, as far

as the writer knows, has never been recorded south of about 4 degrees north of the equator.

The Sumatran rhinoceros is still to be found in remote spots in the mountain range which forms the backbone of the Peninsula. Their hunting requires a very considerable amount of patience and a good deal of endurance. A rhinoceros is one of the most exasperating animals to hunt. It loves the hills and adores the mountains. Immediately on becoming aware that it is being followed, it will make for the steepest ground that it can find in the near vicinity, and its short sturdy legs soon make short work of any mountain side, however steep. A rhinoceros thinks nothing at all of going straight up a thousand feet or so for the pleasure of going straight down the other side. No zigzagging about for him, no hammering down a path in front of him in the way an elephant does in steep ground, just a sharp dig with his three toes, and probably a little gritting of his teeth, and up he goes until he reaches the top.

A rhinoceros, however, is a fool until he gets the hunter's scent; then he becomes one of the wisest animals in the jungle. In hunting rhinoceros, the chief thing to do is to try and locate him before he locates you. This is very difficult, because a rhino does not make much noise feeding, only occasionally breaking down saplings to feed on the leaves, and when he sleeps, which he does quite frequently, he makes no noise at all. He has, however, quite an extensive vocabulary of his own,

consisting of little squeaks and chuckles when he is feeding or wallowing, no doubt to show his contentment, and roars and grunts when alarmed, no doubt to try and pass on some of his own fear to the source of his alarm, and sometimes the hunter can locate him by the sounds he makes in this way.

Like all other branches of still hunting and hunting by tracking, luck enters into the thing a good deal; once on the red-hot tracks of a rhino, a little luck, and you will get a shot.

Perseverance also counts a great deal in hunting rhinoceros. It may seem absolutely impossible in dense jungle to hope for a further chance at a beast which has broken away perhaps half a dozen times during two days of most exhausting hunting, on each occasion the chance of getting a shot having seemed a certainty; but the opportunity will come, and the trophy, if the entire head is taken, is worth quite a lot of trouble to secure. In hunting rhinoceros in the mountains, the sportsman must be prepared to follow a rhino for a week or longer if he is determined to take home the much-coveted trophy.

In the State of Perak near the coast in the vicinity of the Dindings there were at one time large numbers of the Sumatran rhinoceros, and they can still be found there, but in most parts of the Malay Peninsula they are only to be found near the mountain ranges.

Malays often report the presence of a rhinoceros on the evidence of the tracks of a tapir, which they carelessly mistake for the tracks of a rhinoceros; the

track of the latter, which distinctly shows the broad blunt-ended centre toe-nail, should never be confounded with the track of a tapir, which is smaller, and which has four toes on the front foot—a rhinoceros has only three—the largest toe-nail on the fore foot being much more pointed than the centre toe-nail of a rhinoceros.

Tapir are fairly common over the centre Peninsula, but are not likely to be sought after by sportsmen. They carry no trophies, are extremely shy, and although interesting animals can scarcely be classed as "Big Game."

Game Wardens have now been appointed to each State, and full particulars will be supplied by them to any resident or visitor who wishes to hunt big game in the States of the Federation. Letters addressed to the Game Warden of the State at the State capital would reach their destination.
