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MAMMALS OF THE KELABIT PLATEAU NORTHERN SARAWAK

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Between September, 1945, and December, 1949, Mr. Tom Harrison, now Curator of the Sarawak Museum, made a collection of mammals on the Kelabit Plateau in northeastern Sarawak. The collection was made while Mr. Harrison was on military and other duties in the interior of Borneo. Knowledge of Bornean mammals has hitherto been based almost entirely on material from the coastal regions of the island. The present collection is the first comprehensive collection made in the interior and therefore is of considerable interest. It is also from the transitional region separating the Baram fauna, which tends to be quite distinctive, at the subspecific level, from the North Bornean fauna.

The interior uplands of northern Sarawak have been described by Harrison (1949). They consist of a central forested area with an altitude of about 3,000 feet, separated from the coastal lowlands by a 6,000-foot mountain belt. Within the forested uplands are several islands of flat, open tablelands that are extensively cultivated by the native peoples. The largest of these tablelands, in the area under consideration here, is the Bario plain, a group of grassland islands in a rectangular area that measures about thirty miles from north to south and fifteen miles from east to west. The plain lies more than 3,000 feet above sea level. This upland area contains the headwaters of the Trusan, Limbang, and Baram Rivers, which flow northwest into the South China Sea. It is adjacent to the border of Indonesian Borneo, from which it is separated by what Harrison calls the "spinal range" of mountains, 5,000-7,000 feet in altitude. The spinal range is a natural divide, since on the Indonesian side drainage is to the east into the Celebes Sea.

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The localities represented in the collection are (see map):

A. Localities on the Kelabit Plateau:

Bario, Kelabit village at about 3°45' N. and 115°27' E., elevation 3,700 feet.

Pa Bengar, Kelabit village southeast of Bario, elevation 3,300 feet.

Pa Dali, Kelabit village south-southeast of Bario, elevation 3,000 feet.

Pa Mada, Kelabit village, elevation 3,000 feet.

Pa Main, Kelabit village southeast of Bario, elevation 3,100 feet.

Pa Trap, Kelabit village northeast of Bario, elevation 3,500 feet.

Batu Patong, Kelabit village south-southeast of Bario, elevation 3,000 feet.

Pa Umur, Kelabit village east of Bario, elevation 3,000 feet.

B. Localities adjoining the plateau but walled off by high mountains:

Long Lelang, village near the headwaters of the Akah River, elevation 1,400 feet.

Long Akah, village on the Baram River, elevation 700 feet.

Pa Berang, Murut village, elevation 2,000 feet.

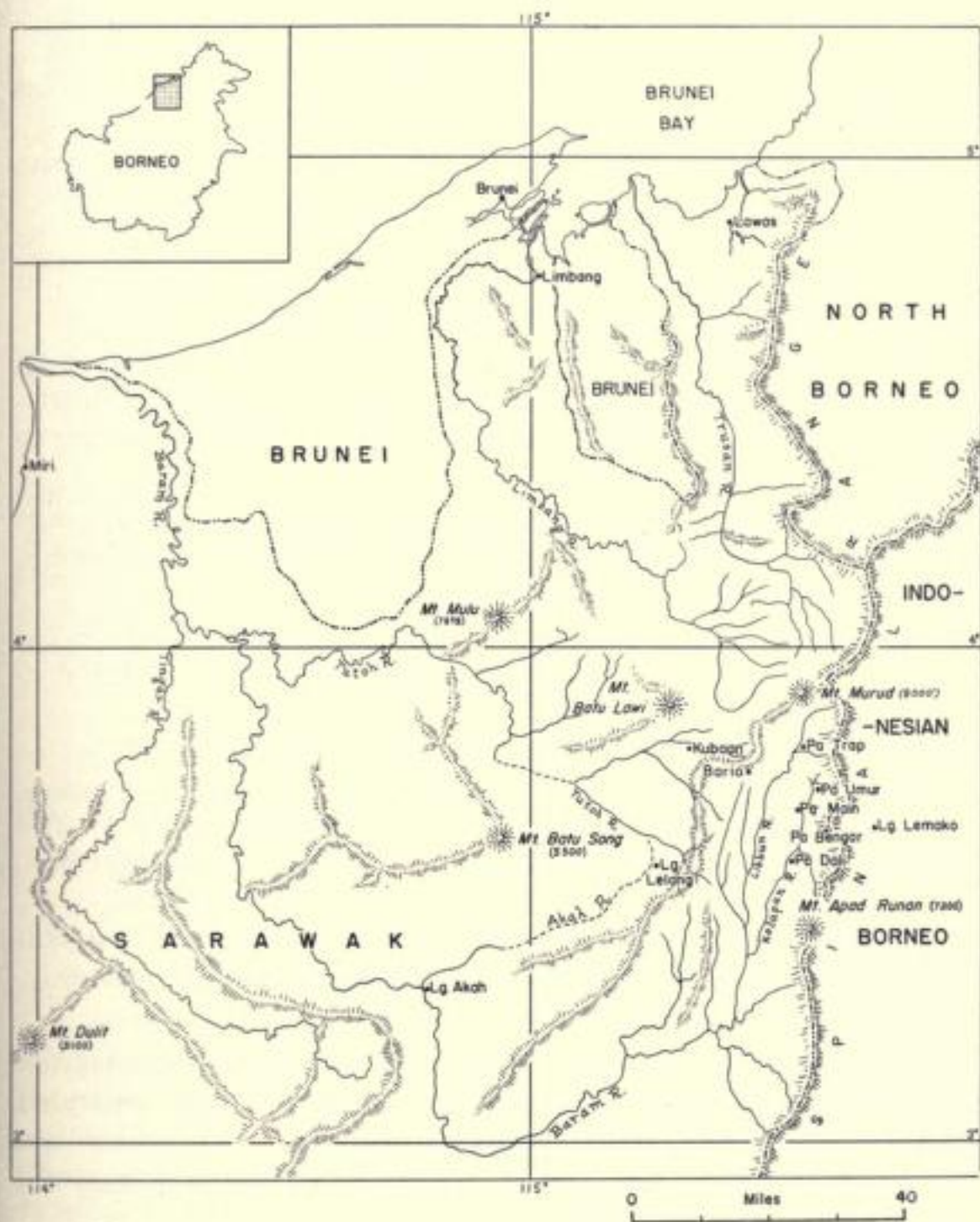
Long Lemako, village in Indonesian Borneo, elevation 2,500 feet.

The collection consists of 202 specimens, representing 51 species. These were made up in the field, most of them with the skulls inside. About one third are without skulls. There were no field measurements, and measurements appearing in the text were made by me on the dried skins. All measurements are in millimeters. Measurements of series of specimens are expressed as the mean, followed by the extremes in parentheses. In Chicago the skins were torn down, cleaned, and remade. The occipital region had been removed from the skull in all but one or two instances.

This material was collected under extremely difficult conditions, as a by-product of far more urgent military and civil operations, and by a man untrained in preparing mammal skins. Mr. Harrisson is to be congratulated on the energy and enterprise he showed in undertaking such a project, not the least part of which was transporting the collection to the coast. Statements enclosed in quotation marks in the text of this report are quoted from data on field labels or in the collector's notes.

The collection will be divided between the Sarawak Museum and Chicago Natural History Museum.

The only previous report on the mammals of the Kelabit Plateau is by Lönnberg and Mjöberg (1925), based on a collection made by Mjöberg. Twelve species are listed. Two of these (*Trichys lipura*



Map of Northern Sarawak, showing localities mentioned in the text. Data from Harrison (1949).

as exhibiting either northern or southern affinities. A seventh, *Ratufa affinis*, is almost exactly intermediate between *sandakanensis* of North Borneo and *baramensis* of Sarawak. The six forms that can be assigned as either northern or southern are:

Northern affinities: *Tupaia tana paitana*, *T. minor baluensis*, *Presbytis hosei hosei*, *Hylobates moloch funereus*, *Callosciurus notatus dilutus*.

Southern affinities: *Tupaia minor minor*.

The Kelabit fauna would appear to be more closely allied with that of North Borneo than with that of Sarawak.

Although the altitude of the plateau is not great, undoubted montane elements are present in the fauna and certain forms common at lower altitudes appear to be wanting. Six montane forms are represented: *Tupaia montana baluensis*, *Callosciurus jentinki jentinki*, *Nannosciurus whiteheadi*, *Dremomys everetti*, *Rattus rapit rapit*, *Diplogale hosei*.

Ten species are not represented in the collection from altitudes above 3,000 feet and may be presumed to be lowland forms. Further collecting may produce some of these at higher altitudes, but most are so abundant where they do occur that it is unlikely they would have been overlooked in the Kelabit collecting. The absence of *Echinosorex* on the plateau appears to be a local hiatus. Very large mammals, such as deer, were not collected because of difficulties of handling and transportation. Lowland elements apparently absent on the Kelabit Plateau are: *Ptilocercus lowi*, *Tarsius bancanus*, *Macacus irus*, *Presbytis cristatus* (*pyrrhus* of authors), *Nasalis larvatus*, *Pongo pygmaeus*, *Tomeutes hippurus*, *T. lowi*, *Nannosciurus exilis*, *Viverra tangalunga*.

ADDITIONAL RECORDS

Harrisson notes six additional species as occurring on the plateau but not preserved because of their large size. These are:

Cervus unicolor, sambar deer.—Common. Often shot by T. H.

Muntiacus sp., barking deer.—Abundant. Often shot by T. H.

Sus barbatus, bearded pig.—Seasonally abundant. "The staple source of Kelabit meat."

Bos sondaicus, temadau.—"Occasionally wanders over from the grasslands fifty miles away in the headwaters of the Bahau (which flows into the Batang Kayan River), where I have seen many. A

single one roamed the jungle between Pa Main and Mt. Murud for months. Many hunters went after it, without success."

Helarctos malayanus, Malay bear.—Common. Thrice seen by Harrison and often taken by Kelabits for the skin.

Arctictis binturong, binturong.—"Quite common, especially around Pa Main. Seen by Harrison."

"The Sumatran rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sumatrensis*), once common in the area—in the last century even breaking fences around padi fields—has not been reported anywhere in the area for twenty years. There are living Kelabits who have killed more than ten."

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