

THE WILD MAMMALS
OF
MALAYA
and offshore islands
including Singapore

LORD MEDWAY

with fifteen coloured plates by
Mazli Matsom and Hamidah Suhaimi

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Order Perissodactyla

TAPIR, FAMILY TAPIRIDAE

TAPIRS are large, heavy mammals, with four toes on the fore foot, three on the hind foot, each toe ending in a small hoof.

The Malayan tapir is totally protected by law.

MALAYAN TAPIR **Tenuk, Chipan, Badak murai, Badak tampong**

Tapirus indicus Desmarest *Plate 14 e, i and ii*

DISTRIBUTION: In South-East Asia from about latitude 18°N, south to Malaya and Sumatra. In Malaya dangerously few in number, although still widespread throughout remaining forests on the mainland, from the lowlands to high ridges and mountain tops. Tapir tracks are still occasionally found in Templer Park and Ampang Forest Reserve, Selangor, close to heavily settled areas.

IDENTIFICATION: See illustrations of adult and young. On both fore and hind feet the toes are rather widely separated; the middle toe is larger than the others. The tracks of both fore feet (4 toes) and hind feet (3 toes) of adults are 15–17 cm broad. The dung is dropped in piles of compressed spheroidal nodules about 5 cm in cross-section diameter, full of fibrous vegetable material. The pile of droppings is often partly covered by scrapings of litter, turf, or topsoil. Measurements (one male): head and body length 227 cm.¹⁷⁰ Weights 260–375 kg.²⁹

HABITS: Their tracks indicate that adult tapirs are solitary, being accompanied only by dependent young. Active largely but not exclusively by night, wandering long distances on regular trails through the forest. The natural diet is poorly

known, but apparently obtained by snatching mouthfuls of foliage from the carpet and shrub layers of the forest undergrowth, and not by browsing or grazing intensively at any spot. In captivity thrive on a daily ration of 7–8 lbs of alfalfa hay and 2–3 lbs of meal mixture containing vitamins and minerals, supplemented by bread, potatoes, fruit, and green vegetables if grazing is not available.⁸⁹ In Malayan zoos, tapirs have accepted leaves and shoots of Straits Rhododendron, sweet potatoes and tapioca, among other foods. Unlike the rhinoceros, tapir in the wild do not normally wallow.

VOICE: Normally silent. Captives utter short whistling calls and, under stress, high pitched squeals.⁹⁵

LIFE-HISTORY: Gestation period 390–395 days.¹⁰⁸ One young is born. A female calf at one day old was 35 cm high at the shoulder, and weighed 6.7 kg. On this young female the first suggestion of adult colour pattern began to appear at 82 days, but juvenile stripes still persisted, albeit faintly, particularly on the underparts, until over 153 days of age, when the tapir was approaching adult size.¹¹⁵ The longest recorded life span is of a male, believed to have been 18 months old when captured, which survived a further 29 years 4 months in captivity.⁵⁴

SUBSPECIES: None recognized.

RHINOCEROSSES, FAMILY RHINOCEROTIDAE

THE rhinoceroses have thick, horny skins, scantily haired. There are three toes, terminating in small hooves, on each foot. One or two horns are borne on the muzzle; these are deriv-

RHINOCEROSES

atives of the skin, of similar composition as hair, and have no bony core. Despite its reputation, the horn of the rhinoceros has no medicinal value.

Rhinoceroses are totally protected by law.

JAVAN OR LESSER

ONE-HORNED RHINOCEROS

Rhinoceros sondaicus Desmarest

Badak raya

Plate 14 d

DISTRIBUTION: Formerly occurred from north-eastern parts of India, through Burma, Thailand and the Indochinese region, south to Malaya, Sumatra and Java. Now known definitely to survive only as a small population in Hudjong Kulon reserve, in western Java. In Malaya in the past there have been confirmed records from Province Wellesley, Perak, Pahang and Selangor; the last known specimens were shot at Ujong Permatang, Selangor, in 1928, and Telok Anson, Perak, in 1932.⁶¹ Large rhinoceros tracks, possibly of this species, were reported from eastern Johore in 1949.¹⁸

IDENTIFICATION: See illustration. The skin bears a mosaic-like pattern of roughened thickenings, and is heavily folded. Distinguished from Sumatran rhinoceros by larger size, the single horn, and by the presence of three continuous folds of skin running over the back, one in front of and one behind the shoulder, and one over the rump. Measurements: height at shoulder 1.4–1.7 metres. The footprints of mature adults exceed 22 cm in average diameter.⁴⁹

LIFE-HISTORY: Gestation period about 17 months.¹⁸⁶ One young is born. The longevity record in captivity is held by a male which was taken at about eighteen months of age and survived a further 21 years.¹⁶¹

SUBSPECIES: None recognized.

SUMATRAN OR ASIATIC

TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS

Didermocerus sumatrensis (Fischer)

Badak berendam

Plate 14 c,

Figure 11

DISTRIBUTION: From north-east India, through Burma, Thailand and Indochinese region, to Su-

matra, Malaya and Borneo. In Malaya once common throughout the mainland, but nowadays surviving only as solitary animals or small groups in restricted areas of forest from the swampy lowlands to the hills of the interior.

IDENTIFICATION: The presence of two horns on the muzzle is diagnostic, but may not be obvious, especially in the wild. This rhino is better distinguished from the Javan rhinoceros by the presence of only two deep and permanent folds of skin crossing the spine, one in the region of the shoulders, and the second over the hind quarters. Its skin is regularly granular. It is hairier than other rhinoceroses, especially when young. Footprints of adults range from 17–22 cm in diameter. Measurements: head and body 2.5–2.8 metres, shoulder height 1.0–1.3 metres. Weight about 900 kg. Rowland Ward's record trophy from Malaya measured 15 inches along the outside curve of the front horn, 7½ inches the rear horn.³⁹ The dung is similar to that of the tapir, but the nodules are larger, about 9 cm in greatest diameter.

HABITS: Solitary, or single adults with young. Formerly abundant in lowland forests, e.g. the Dindings.¹⁸⁸ Recent records are from all types of forest, including high mountains. Frequent regular wallows, and visit salt licks and mineral springs. The natural diet consists of leaves and shoots of a wide variety of trees and shrubs, many characteristic of fringing forest or secondary growth. Small trees are pushed over and broken up by trampling before the foliage is eaten.¹⁷⁵ The captive female at Copenhagen Zoo is fed on lucerne hay, supplemented by 10 kg daily of mixed raw potatoes, carrots and apples, and small amounts of rolled oats.⁵

VOICE: Reported to range from shrill whistles and peculiar humming sounds emitted when

at peace and enjoying a wallow, to whistling screams and harsh grunts when wounded.⁵¹

LIFE-HISTORY: Gestation period in one instance said to have been 7 months;¹⁰⁸ this record has been questioned, and is certainly very much

shorter than among other rhinoceroses. One young is born. Longest recorded life span, a female which lived in captivity for 32 years 7 months.¹⁶¹

SUBSPECIES: *D. s. niger* (Gray)

Order Artiodactyla

PIGS, FAMILY SUIDAE

THE pigs are distinctive and well known. They have four hoofed toes on each foot, of which the central pair are larger than the lateral and carry most weight. There are two species in Malaya.

WILD PIG

Sus scrofa Linnaeus

Babi hutan

Plate 15 f

DISTRIBUTION: From Western Europe and the north coast of Africa, eastwards to Japan, south to Ceylon and to Sumatra and Java. In Malaya widespread in all types of forest, including bush and *belukar*. Also recorded in the past from the islands of Langkawi, Penang and Singapore (where, in 1895, they were 'far too abundant').⁵⁰

IDENTIFICATION: See illustration. The bristly hairs are predominantly black in adults, and form a crest over the shoulders and along the back in the midline. The young are marked with longitudinal stripes of light and dark. Height at shoulder about 80 cm.⁷⁴ Weight: one hunter's maximum recorded as 127 kg (286 lbs).¹⁰⁷

HABITS: Solitary, or in small parties of an adult female with young, or a group of immatures of both sexes. Active by day and night, particularly in the evening and early morning. Females with piglets, and groups of young pigs, shelter under specially constructed 'nests', which consist of heaps of green vegetation, including many kinds of small woody plants, rattans or leafy shoots plucked as available from the surrounding forest and systematically piled over a scrape in the ground.¹³⁴ Wild pigs feed principally by rooting

in the soil, especially in valleys or damp spots, or in cultivated land. In rural areas they do much damage to sweet potato, tapioca and other crops.

BREEDING: Average gestation period 115 days, extremes 101–130 days.¹⁰⁸ Litter size variable in different parts of the world from 1–11; no figures are available for Malaya. Longevity record among captive pigs from the Indonesian region, 12 years 9 months.¹⁰⁸

SUBSPECIES: *S. s. peninsularis* Miller in south Johore and Singapore; *S. s. jubatus* Miller elsewhere on the mainland; *S. s. jubatulus* Miller on Langkawi.

BEARDED PIG

Babi bodoh,

Babi puteh, Babi jokut

Sus barbatus Müller

Plate 15 g

DISTRIBUTION: Sumatra, Malaya, Banka and several islands of the Riau archipelago, the Natunas and Borneo. In Malaya records from Lower Perak District and central Pahang, south to Johore; sporadic in occurrence, in places subject to irregular mass movements.

IDENTIFICATION: See illustration. Larger than the Wild pig; distinguished by the pale colour and short bristly coat, longer head, fringe of elongated bristles along the jaw line and a bris-