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**Cover photograph:** Tapir in the Sg. Sat, Taman Negara, Pahang (photo — T.C. Whitmore).

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**National Parks of Malaysia**

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Lowry, Whitmore and Ho Coy-Choke elsewhere in this issue, these forests may contain plants which have economic potential, but not yet fully studied or exploited, such as the wild fruit-trees, or those which may contain a valuable chemical substance. Therefore, it is important for us to preserve these unique habitats, to ensure that future generations will be able to enjoy and make use of their potentialities.

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## The Distribution of Large Animals in Taman Negara

MOHD. KHAN BIN MOMIN KHAN<sup>1</sup>

Taman Negara is situated in the States of Pahang, Trengganu and Kelantan covering a total area of 1677 square miles of typical Malayan mountain, forest, river and stream and contains most species of indigenous wild life and vegetative growth excluding that typified by estuarine and coastal areas.

In the National Park the wild life is managed not for direct economic purposes, but primarily for recreational, aesthetic and scientific purposes, with some economic benefits as by-products. The ivory is not taken for revenue and the game is not hunted, either for meat or for sport. In this reserved area no kind or category of wild life is given precedent to the detriment of any other. This is a difference that is not always understood or taken into account by critics of wild life management policies. It makes a trenchant distinction between wild life management in a National Park and wild life management elsewhere. In our National Park we try to maintain *all* the native species of wild life—game, predators, and small mammals—in their natural proportions and relations. Instead of concentrating on some preferred kind of animal or group of animals, we try to maintain in the park a well-balanced system of wild life that will serve the purposes that are outstanding there—recreational, aesthetic and scientific.

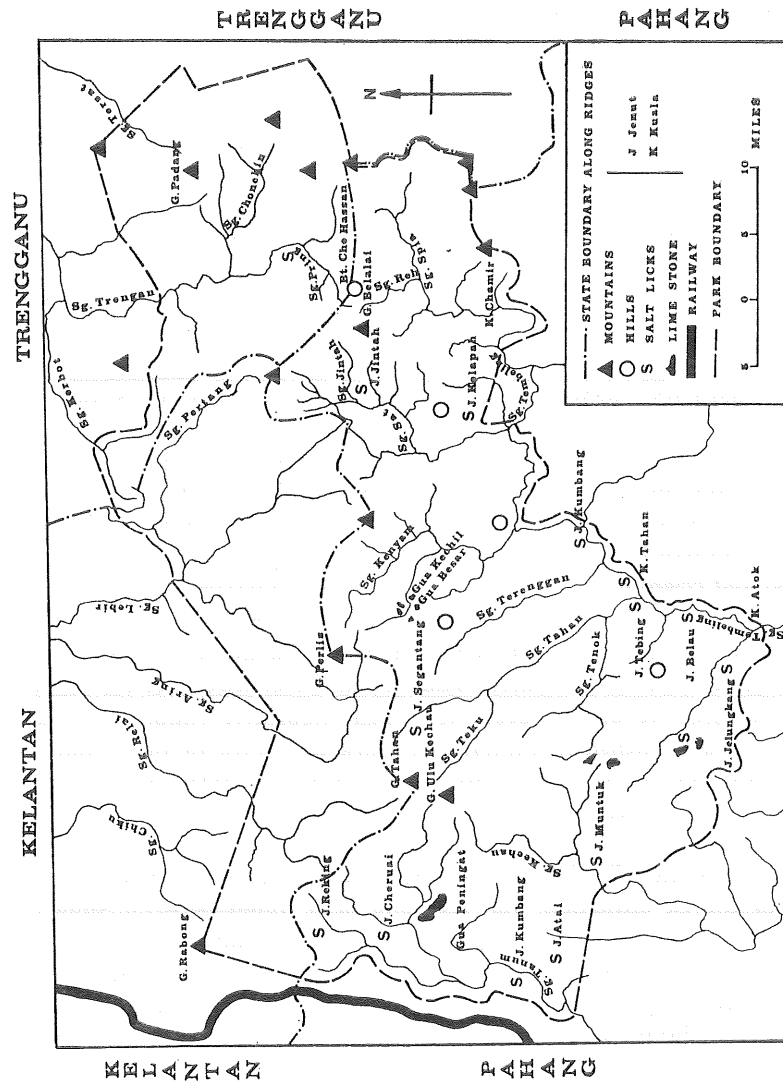
In recent years a great deal of exploration connected with large animals has been carried out in the part situated in Pahang covering about two-thirds of the total park area. Tourists have increased over the years and in an effort to answer accurately their inquisitive enquiries, park authorities have intensified exploratory work and most of the popular tributaries of Sungei Tembeling are now very well known. Still, more work is required particularly of specialized nature and the areas in Trengganu and Kelantan urgently need looking into.

The larger animals of Taman Negara have proved to be a tremendous source of tourist attraction, the seladang herd found between Sungei Terenggan and Kuala Tahan in particular is a great favourite. The appearance of tapirs, Sambhur deer, elephants, wild pigs and evidence of tigers and bears at the many salt licks of the park have often been reported in the visitors' book at the Park Rest House.

ELEPHANT (*Elephas maximus*)

From the west side of the Park in the vicinity of Sungei Tanum and its tributaries, and around the limestone massif of Gua Peningat and north

<sup>1</sup> Pejabat Pelindong Mergastua Kanan, Batu Gajah, Perak.



Taman Negara (King George V National Park)  
Based on Survey Department Material. Government Copyright is reserved.

to the Park boundary in Kelantan there exists no less than two distinct herds of elephants. Tracks of these elephants were recorded as far east as the upper reaches of Sungei Kechau. Two salt licks, Jenut Chenuai and Jenut Kumbang (Tanum) are regularly visited by the larger of the two herds numbering about ten animals. Recently the Pahang Game Department had killed two animals from this herd which wandered outside the Park boundary. The smaller herd of three to five animals may be found in the vicinity of Jenut Reking. The valley of the Tahan beyond Kuala Tenok is seldom frequented by elephants except for wandering lone bulls.

Proceeding further east, in the vicinity of Kuala Teku on the east side of the Tahan, tracks of a small herd of about 6 to 8 animals were recorded on a few occasions. These animals evidently came from the upper reaches of Sungei Kenyam Kechil, a pleasant valley with many large limestone outcrops, evidently a valley most intensively used by this herd. Tracks of this herd were recorded a short way up the main Gunong Tahan ridge, eventually heading down into the Tahan some distance above Kuala Teku. They were also noted one and one half miles below Kuala Permai going down to Kuala Kenyam crossing the Tembeling River and down for about one and one half miles. Somewhere along this stretch of the Tembeling the herd crosses the river again and makes its way to the upper reaches of Sungei Kenyam Kechil.

A herd of from 12 to 15 animals frequents the lowland southern part of the Park from Kuala Atok to Kuala Tahan moving on both sides of the Tembeling as far upstream as the Terenggan. Frequent visits are made to the Tahan salt licks particularly Jenut Belau.

Proceeding further east is the Sungei Sat in the vicinity of which are found two salt licks, Jenut Kelapoh and the more important Jenut Jintoh located well away in the upper reaches of the river. This salt lick is well patronised by a herd of elephants numbering between five to seven animals which are believed to wander northwards across the low divide via the Pertang into Kelantan. The country between the Sat and the Sg. Spia particularly the upper reaches is rough and elephants are few. A small herd of about six animals visits the vicinity of Kuala Chamir occasionally.

The few trips that were made to the upper reaches of the Reh and Kenering in Pahang, Bukit Che' Hassan in Trengganu and the valleys of the Kenering, Pring, Ulu Terenggan, and Sungei Chonchin and on the plateau of Gunong Padang produced little or no evidence of elephant apart from lone bulls which were few and far apart.

Elephants are fairly common in that part of the park which lies in Kelantan and which contains the rivers Aring, Relai and part of the upper reaches of the Lebir. Given the time it would be relatively simple to estimate the number of herds and their sizes in these areas.

It is estimated the elephant population in the park is between 40-49 animals from the herds already described, 46-55 animals including the

wandering lone bulls and a rough 58-67 animals including the animals in the Aring, Relai and Lebir areas. In the opinion of the writer this is a good estimate but work on the population should be continued so that an accurate figure may be arrived with adult sex ratios and the percentage of young.

SELADANG (*Bibos gaurus*)

In the southern part of the park between Kuala Atok and Kuala Terenggan there exist an estimated population of thirty animals. The well-known herd which visits Kuala Tahan and remains in the vicinity for periods up to a month and more is accurately estimated to contain twenty-four head although usually fewer animals appear. Mr Bernard Thong has recorded six animals in the upper reaches of Sungei Atok and the tributaries of Sungei Tenok and Sungei Kechau. This herd is believed to be distinct from the Kuala Tahan herd already described.

The valleys of the Kenyam do not hold any resident seladang herd although tracks of lone bulls were observed from time to time. Hislop (1961) once recorded the fresh tracks of a fairly large herd along the Perkai River in the lower reaches of the Kenyam and several other records of probably the same herd were made by the late Chief Game Warden, Mr. Aw, at Perkai lodge. Along the Sungei Sat a fairly large herd of about ten animals is found in the vicinity of Jenut Jintoh. The Spia appears not to hold any seladang and the only other seladang herd to be found in the eastern part of the park is over the divide inhabiting the valley of the Pring and upper Terenggan in Trengganu. A few miles downstream from Kuala Pring there is a salt lick and a well used route which leads to the upper reaches of the Terenggan and across a low divide into the Pring. Further east on the banks of Sungei Chonchin and at the foot of Gunung Padang, tracks of about six seladangs may be found but since the Chonchin and Terenggan is only a short distance apart and separated by relatively low country, it is probable that the same herd from Terenggan visits the Chonchin valleys.

On the west side of the Park tracks of two more herds of seladang may be found in the valleys of Sungei Tanum. In the vicinity of Jenut Kumbang and Jenut Atai tracks of about six animals were recorded and this herd is known to feed outside the park boundary. Further north still along Sungei Tanum in the vicinity of Jenut Reking a herd of about ten animals is known to exist. This herd is being harrassed by poaching.

Including lone bulls the National Park holds between 62-68 head of seladang.

RHINOCEROS (*Didermoceros sumatrensis*)

The Sumatran Rhinoceros is a very rare species of animal now existing in the States of Malaya and three individuals are known to exist within

the boundaries of the park. Visual record of one animal crossing a river was reported by a senior game ranger in the vicinity of the Spia. It is probable that at least one other animal may exist in the valleys and in the upper reaches of the Spia. C.S. Ogilvie has recorded tracks of the species from the valley of the Spia and G.R. Leonard in a survey to the east of the Spia up to the border of Trengganu came across many wallows but very few of anything fresh, but the evidence, nevertheless, was conclusive that one or two animals still wander around the upper reaches of the Spia.

Hislop (1961) personally covered a great deal of the country from Gunung Tahan eastwards to Ulu Trengganu and found no evidence of existing rhinoceros although old wallows were common and he reported aborigines having told him there were one or two individuals in the steep country at the source of the Kenyam, but those reports have never been verified. It is very interesting to note that the same senior game ranger recorded visually a rhino at Kuala Tahan in 1964 and Thong who followed the animal to the upper reaches of the Tahan river found fresh tracks at Jenut Segantang. The animal was reported to have stayed there for at least three days before going over the divide into Kelantan. It is safe to say a minimum of three animals still exist within the boundaries of the park and there may be a maximum of five.

TAPIR (*Tapirus indicus*)

Tracks of tapir are often met along most tributaries of the Tembeling indicating that the species is numerous in the National Park. They are also found from lowland swamps to the steepest slopes and high ridges up to an elevation of at least 4000 ft. Tapirs are often seen by visitors to the park during the hours of darkness and photographs too were taken of the animals. An excellent photograph of one pair at a salt lick, taken by Dr. Vincent Wager appeared in Animal, Volume 11, No. 4 page 152.

SAMBHUR DEER (*Cervus unicolor equinus*)

Sambhur Deer is common within the boundaries of the National Park. An average of between seven to ten animals appear nightly at Padang Seladang and the visitor is assured the opportunity to see a few animals. Tracks of Sambhur Deer are common in all salt licks and all tributaries of the Tembeling.

SEROW (*Capricornis sumatrensis*)

Serow are rare within the boundaries of the National Park and their existence is little known. From reliable sources it is reported to exist in the vicinity of Gua Besar and Gua Peningat may contain a few individuals.

It should be noted that little or no effort was made to investigate the existence of Serow within the boundaries of the National Park. The many limestone outcrops are suitable habitats for the species and may probably contain a number of individuals.

TIGER (*Felis tigris*)

Tracks of tigers are not as numerous as those of Sambhur Deer or Tapirs and they are certainly very seldom met. Wild Pig (*Sus scrofa*) is mainly preyed upon as food and to a much lesser extent the Sambhur Deer. Young seladang and month old baby elephants were recorded as being followed by tigers but mortality of young seladang and elephant caused by tigers is believed to be uncommon. Usually tracks of one tiger are found in the vicinity where wild pigs are plentiful. It is certain tigers do a good job keeping down the population of animals which otherwise may present serious problems. Although not as numerous, nevertheless the tiger is well distributed in the National Park and may be found along all tributaries of the Tembeling River.

It is important to remember that in the National Park the wild life is managed not for direct economic purposes, but primarily for recreational, aesthetic and scientific purposes, with some economic benefits as by-products. Economic benefits of wild life include the maintenance of industries connected with fishing, such as the manufacture of angling tackle, and sporting equipments and accessories, support of lodges, hotels and other accomodation where anglers and tourists are catered for, industries that play a part in transporting tourists and anglers, and guiding, patronage of photographic industries and publication of sportsmen's magazines.

Recreational benefits of wild life include the pleasure, satisfaction and good health that accrue directly to those who participate in sports such as angling, wild life photography and wild life observation. The practice of wild life management itself, the work of park wardens, game wardens and wild life scientists, will, if undertaken in the right spirit, yield as a by-product a rich recreational reward.

The aesthetic benefits of wild life are closely related to the recreational benefits, but do not in all cases include the element of activity that is associated with recreation. Aesthetic benefits are not restricted to artists but may be experienced by all who appreciate the beauty of wild creatures.

The scientific benefits of wild life are numerous and widespread. Scientists naturally desire to know as much about life as possible. The scientific research necessary to obtain the desired information can in many cases be carried on most readily and conveniently with wild creatures as the immediate objects of study.

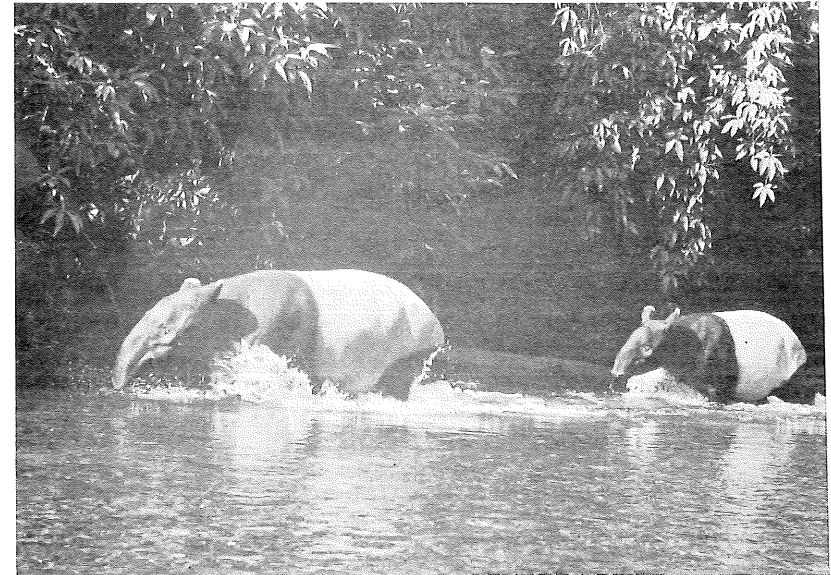


PLATE 41a. Tapirs in the Sg. Sat (photo—T.C. Whitmore).



PLATE 41b. Elephant (photo—Game Dept.)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful thanks are tendered hereby to the Chief Game Warden, Mr. Bernard Thong Kwong Sin who gave valuable information and advice and provided transport and guides to the writer for a short visit to the Park and the assistance of Enche Rafiah Muda, Mohd. Rani, Jamidin and Jamalludin of the National Park are highly appreciated.

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PLATE 42. Sumatran rhinoceros (photo—Game Dept).