



Sumatran Ranger Project Quarterly Report 4

December 2022, Leuser Ecosystem, North Sumatra

Note from Program Leader

Our Vision

To ensure long term protection of the forest edge within the Leuser Ecosystem in North Sumatra.

Our Mission

To halt activities that are a threat to the environment and to wildlife, and to support forest edge communities in ways that benefit people and the environment.



Rangers at elephant focus group discussion in November

The past three months have been business as usual, monitoring elephants, routine patrols and responding to wildlife conflict events. There were three human-wildlife conflict incidents the team were called for assistance with this quarter; one involving elephants, one a tiger and one an orangutan. Next month we will send four rangers for training in human-elephant conflict, in Jambi province.

The total number of snares destroyed this quarter was five – a great result a zero-snare count month in October.

In November the rangers attended a focus group discussion on Sumatran elephant movements around the village of Sumber Waras, where there is frequent elephant conflict, and the impact of the risks to the community. This focus group was facilitated by the Sumatran Orangutan Society.



Ranger Pera removing a wire snare

Patrols

Five snares were destroyed in the last quarter, an almost 60% reduction since the previous quarter which is pleasing. One snare was a leg-hold style made from rope and disguised in the undergrowth, designed for the animal to step into; and the rest were wire noose snares almost invisible to see, set along animal trails in the undergrowth.



A wire noose snare in-situ



A leg-hold snare disguised with leaves

Malayan sun bear tracks were found, between seven and 11cm wide, all new (between one and seven days) and several very fresh bear claw markings were seen.

In December Patrol Team B spent time monitoring the herd of Sumatran elephants. 10 vertebrate species were recorded on patrol in the last three months.



Malayan sun bear footprint & scratch marks



Recording the GPS location of a wild boar wallow



Species	Sighted	Tracks	Faeces	Scratches	Nest	Wallow	Damage	Food remains	No.
Malayan sun bear <i>Helarctos malayanus</i>		4		5					9
Leopard cat <i>Prionailurus bengalensis</i>			14						14
Sumatran orangutan <i>Pongo abelii</i>					9			1	10
Pig-tailed macaque <i>Macaca nemestrina</i>	2								2
Wild boar <i>Sus scrofa</i>		43			6	5			31
Thomas leaf monkey <i>Presbytis thomasi</i>	3								3
Sambar deer <i>Deer unicolor</i>		9	1						10
Sumatran porcupine <i>Hystrix sumatrae</i>		1							1
Palm civet <i>Paradoxus hermaphroditus</i>			5						6
Striped bronzeback snake <i>Dendrelaphis caudolineatus</i>	1								1

Summary of wildlife findings in this reporting period. Sumatran elephants are covered in separate patrol data and later in this report.

Sumatran elephants

During the December patrol the relic herd of elephants was monitored from Sumber Waras to Tangkahan. Data collected included dung, footprints, tracks, crop damage, as well as direct sightings. Due to the thick foliage the rangers were unable to determine the number of elephants or sex ratio but managed to capture some lovely images of multiple elephants.



Collecting data on juvenile elephant dung

Footprint data was collected of varying circumferences up to 119cm.



Ranger Togar inside a large elephant footprint



Human-wildlife Conflict

The village of Pancasila has requested support for safe livestock grazing and the team has identified a suitable area to construct a predator-proof livestock corral. The same village has also dealt with significant human-elephant conflict in the last few years and in order to better equip the landowners to deal with conflict events as they happen, SRP is fundraising for wet weather gear, rubber boots and head torches. This village is 32km from SRP headquarters and is not quick to reach when the community calls for assistance. If you'd like to support the fundraiser, please visit

<https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/supporting-elephants-and-locals-in-north-sumatra>

On Christmas Day rangers were called to a request for help after a cow was predated by a Sumatran tiger. The incident occurred approximately 800m from the National Park around 4am within an oil palm plantation. The tiger's footprints were measured at 13cm long x 13cm wide. Our team used noise deterrents to move the tiger away from the plantation and towards the forest.



Also in December the team was called to assist with a conflict event involving Sumatran elephants. A small herd came into a privately owned oil palm plantation and destroyed trees and dwellings. SRP responded with noise deterrents donated to the landowner as the elephants had moved on.



Oil palm tree destroyed by elephants

In November a conflict event occurred in privately owned durian trees with a Sumatran orangutan. The orangutan ate and destroyed ripe durian fruit which represents a fairly significant loss of income to the owner. Initial attempts to move the orangutan back to the forest were not successful but additional noise deterrents were able to move the animal away from the trees. The orangutan stayed for two days, making nests in the tree (pictured).



Camera Trap Program

We are down to our last camera traps after years of being exposed to extreme weather. We are seeking funding this year to purchase more cameras to once again have the capacity to monitor the forest edge in places of interest. We hope these will be used to assist with biodiversity surveys outside the protected National Park. Over the last quarter we captured images of wild boar, pig-tailed and long-tailed macaques, silvery langur, banded palm civet, Sumatran porcupine, moon rat, monitor lizard, and Muntjac.

Pictured from top is the Banded palm civet *Hemigalus derbyanus*, Long-tailed macaque *Macaca fascicularis*, and Muntjac *Muntiacus muntjac montanus*.



Thank you to our supporters



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