



# Sumatran Ranger Project Quarterly Report 3

September 2023, Leuser Ecosystem, North Sumatra

# Executive Summary

The last quarter has been business as usual for Sumatran Ranger Project with lots of planning for upcoming projects including a community workshop and construction of our 10<sup>th</sup> predator-proof livestock corral and first elephant field hut.

Thanks to our partners at Thin Green Line Foundation one of our rangers Pera will be attending the first Asian Ranger Forum in India at the end of the year. Pera has been with SRP for five years, initially starting as administration support then moving into a ranger role where until recently, she was the only female ranger on the team. Pera is extremely dedicated and passionate about her role in conserving biodiversity and supporting communities and has worked so hard for this professional development opportunity.

At the end of September, we farewelled head ranger Jasson as he relocated to Spain to await the birth of his first child with Spanish wife Marta. Jasson is the energy behind SRP and is so incredibly passionate and hard-working, leaving big shoes to fill. We look forward to welcoming him back in late 2024.

Amy Robbins (Program Leader)



*Ranger Pera collecting elephant dung data*



*Sumatran Ranger Project rangers*



## **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.*

# Patrols

We are pleased to report two consecutive months of zero snares in July and August. During September nine snares were destroyed including some targeting Sumatran tigers.

Orangutan activity was high this quarter as expected, coinciding with the durian fruiting season with numerous nests found across all three months but no further requests for assistance from landowners to move crop-raiding orangutans on. Elephants were monitored in July, with direct sightings of mature and adolescent bulls along the forest edge and in an oil palm plantation. No damage was reported from landowners. Rangers always maintain a minimum safe distance of at least 50 metres from wild elephants and usually from the safety of a tree.

Sumatran tiger and Malayan sun bear tracks were recorded this quarter, with fresh scratch marks from both species measured and recorded. The two can be distinguished by the number of scratches; four for tigers and five for sun bears.



*Measuring elephant footprints*



*Orangutan nest in a durian tree*



*Sumatran tiger claw marks*



*Rangers with snares*

Species	Sighted	Tracks	Faeces	Scratches	Nest	Wallow	Damage	Food remains	No.
Malayan sun bear <i>Helarctos malayanus</i>		1	1	12					14
Leopard cat <i>Prionailurus bengalensis</i>			10						10
Sumatran orangutan <i>Pongo abelii</i>					19				19
Thomas leaf monkey <i>Presbytis thomasi</i>	1								1
Wild boar <i>Sus scrofa</i>		43			1	7			52
Sambar deer <i>Deer unicolor</i>		7							7
Sumatran tiger <i>Panthera tigris sumatrae</i>		2							2
Crested serpent eagle <i>Spilornis cheelae</i>	1								1
Palm civet <i>Paradoxus hermaphroditus</i>			3						3
Reticulated python <i>Malayopython reticulatus</i>	1								1
Sumatran elephant <i>Elephas maximus sumatrensis</i>	10	7	18						35

Summary of species recorded in Q3



# Human-Wildlife Conflict

One event involving livestock predation by a Sumatran tiger was recorded in August. Rangers responded to a request for assistance from a livestock owner grazing his cows within an oil palm plantation less than 1km from the National Park. A single cow was killed, and the owner refused assistance with removal of the carcass. Noise deterrents were donated to the owner and information about safer grazing distances relayed. The tiger's pugmarks measured 12cm x 13cm. To date, this is the third livestock predation incident the rangers have responded to in 2023, the same number recorded during 2022. A 10<sup>th</sup> predator-proof livestock corral is due for construction.



# Camera Traps

We were fortunate to receive amazing support from Memphis Zoo when a generous staff member organized the donation of eight trail cameras. This was much needed equipment for our wildlife monitoring programme, and we captured some interesting wildlife on the cameras recently, including Sumatran serow and Thomas leaf monkeys at a natural mineral lick and this stunning Muntjac (below.)



*Male Pig-tailed macaque*



*Silvery langurs with brightly coloured orange infant*



*Muntjac*



*Banded palm civet*



*Sumatran serow*

# Communities

Thanks to our partners at Deep Energies, our seedling programme has grown significantly with the variety of crop seedlings increasing all the time. Species being grown include durian, mango, Ketapang, rambutan, mahogany, coffee, Jengkol and others. The four staff employed for this programme have transformed the SRP office site into a plant nursery and their community spirit is evident in the ever-growing diversity of species being grown. All these seedlings will be donated to communities who have expressed a desire to transition out of oil palm or rubber for more lucrative crops that will improve livelihoods. Community support is vital if we are to continue to pursue our long-term vision of protecting the forest edge and reducing environmental harm. When communities feel empowered and supported, they are more inclined to be open to changes to long-standing practices and to support our work by allowing the rangers to patrol in and around their land.



At the end of September SRP hosted a community meeting in Pancasila to discuss the community's needs around human-animal conflict. Rangers asked the community what issues are the most pressing concerning wildlife. Elephants are an ongoing concern for this community due to the damage they inflict on plantations and buildings. Locals have been using fireworks but say the elephants are showing signs of desensitization and do not always respond to these noise deterrents. We have purchased loudspeakers to trial as alternatives and plan to construct early detection huts here for landowners.





# Thank you to our supporters



## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

### Australasian Society of Zoo Keeping (ASZK)

Program Leader Amy was invited to speak as a keynote at the annual ASZK conference in Sydney, Australia in August. The presentation about SRP was received with great enthusiasm and interest and the conference committee donated their fundraising raffle proceeds to SRP. We are so grateful for the zookeeping community who work so hard to support conservation programs all over the world.



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