

Biodiversity Record: Raffles' banded langur at Dairy Farm Nature Park

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Subject: Raffles' banded langur, *Presbytis femoralis femoralis* (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae).

Subject identified by: Max D. Y. Khoo and Benjamin P. Y.-H. Lee.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Dairy Farm Nature Park; 7 April 2021; 1445 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observers: Malcolm C. K. Soh, Benjamin P. Y.-H. Lee, Max D. Y. Khoo, Rekha Mohan, Cyrena S. Lin, Saranya Dhanabalan and Joshua J.-M. Koh.

Observation: A lone example was observed with a pair of 8 × 42 binoculars from a distance of 20 m. It foraged in a tree approximately 7 m above the ground (Fig. 1) for 15 minutes, before moving further into the forest. The monkey had a long black tail, blackish upperparts, medium grey chest, greyish crest and pale grey bare skin around the eyes.

Remarks: *Presbytis femoralis femoralis* is regarded as a critically endangered species in Singapore with 67 individuals left in the wild (Lim et al., 2008; Ang et al.; 2021). The population was previously understood to be restricted to the Central Catchment Nature Reserve (CCNR) after the last individual in Bukit Timah Nature Reserve (BTNR) died in 1987 (Yang & Lua, 1988; Ang et al.; 2021). The featured sighting is the first record of this species in the Bukit Timah area in 34 years.

The Bukit Timah Expressway divides BTNR and Dairy Farm Nature Park (DFNP) from CCNR, making it difficult for wildlife to cross between the forest patches. In 2013, the National Parks Board (NParks) completed an ecological bridge (EcoLink@BKE) to connect these forest patches (Chung & Li, 2014). Since then, the trees planted on the bridge have grown considerably, some attaining heights of more than 15 m, thereby making the habitat suitable for use by arboreal animals. It is not known if the featured langur had used the EcoLink@BKE to cross from CCNR. It may also have crossed via the Rifle Range Flyover, but that seems less likely as the langur would have had to travel around 75 m, while fully exposed, on the road or pedestrian footpath.

NParks has been enhancing and restoring habitats as part of the Nature Conservation Masterplan that was launched in 2015 (NParks, 2019). This endeavour has been strengthened by the launch of the Forest Restoration Action Plan in 2019, which focuses on tree planting and habitat restoration in the nature reserves and buffer parks like DFNP (NParks, 2019). In addition, two rope bridges were installed along Old Upper Thomson Road to facilitate the movement of arboreal species like the Raffles' banded langurs (NParks, 2021), and more rope bridges will be added to the Central Nature Park Network where appropriate. Hopefully, these efforts will improve habitat quality and connectivity, which are essential for the recovery of endangered species like the Raffles' banded langur.

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Fig. 1. Side view of the lone Raffles' banded langur, sitting on a tree and partially concealed by foliage, at Dairy Farm Nature Park. (Photograph by: Max D. Y. Khoo).