

## Banded leaf-monkeys at Upper Thomson

**Subjects:** Banded leaf-monkey, *Presbytis femoralis* (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae).

**Subjects identified by:** Contributor.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, northern-most stretch of Old Upper Thomson Road, on state land between Old Upper Thomson Road and Upper Thomson Road; 23 October 2014; 0957 to 1020 hrs.

**Habitat:** Young secondary forest.

**Observer:** Contributor.

**Observation:** A troupe of nine, which included two infant-in-arms, was seen foraging in young secondary forest approximately 50 m east of Old Upper Thomson Road. The first infant, with white head, was held close to the chest of an adult (Fig. 1). The second infant, with black head, white chest and black cruciform pattern on its back (Fig. 2), appeared more adventurous and briefly ventured away from its mother. The second infant was observed to reach out and pluck leaves to eat (Fig. 3). Adults in the troupe (such as a male shown in Fig. 4) were extremely wary of the observer. After 23 minutes the troupe retreated further from Old Upper Thomson Rd and deeper into the forest.



Fig. 1. Zoomed-in side view of a female leaf-monkey with white-coloured young infant held close to her chest. Photograph by Nick Baker

**Remarks:** The banded leaf-monkey, also known as banded surili, is regarded as a ‘critically endangered’ species in Singapore (Lim et al., 2008: 198). The local population seemed to be confined to a patch of secondary and freshwater swamp forest at the eastern part of the Central Catchment Nature Reserve (see Teo & Rajathurai, 1997: 369, as *Presbytis femoralis femoralis*). The present record shows that a troupe with infants has crossed Old Upper Thomson Road and is utilising the adjacent young secondary forest that is not within the Central Catchment Nature Reserve, and thus not a protected nature area.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 illustrate young infants being white with a black mid-dorsal stripe and a black transverse stripe across the shoulders, forming a black cruciform pattern over the dorsum of the animal. This infant pelage colouration is characteristic of leaf-monkeys of the genus *Presbytis* (see Corbet & Hill, 1992: 172). Ang et al. (2010) confirmed that infants of banded leaf-monkeys in Singapore are black and white, not orange according to earlier reports. This observation is supported by the present photographic records.



Fig. 2. Female leaf-monkey with her child (left). Note the distinctive colour pattern of the juvenile. Photograph by Nick Baker

**References:**

- Ang, A., M. R. B. Ismail & R. Meier, 2010. Reproduction and infant pelage colouration of the banded leaf monkey (Mammalia: Primates: Cercopithecidae) in Singapore. *The Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*. 58 (2): 411-415.
- Corbet, G. B. & J. E. Hill, 1992. *The Mammals of the Indomalayan Region: A Systematic Review*. Natural History Museum Publications and Oxford University Press, U.K. 488 pp.
- Lim, K. K. P., R. Subaraj, S. H. Yeo, N. Lim, D. Lane & B. Y. H. Lee, 2008. Mammals. In: Davison, G. W. H., P. K. L. Ng & H. C. Ho (eds.). *The Singapore Red Data Book. Threatened Plants & Animals of Singapore*. Second edition. The Nature Society (Singapore). pp. 190-207.
- Teo, R. C. H. & S. Rajathurai, 1997. Mammals, reptiles and amphibians in the nature reserves of Singapore – diversity, abundance and distribution. *The Gardens' Bulletin, Singapore*. 49 (2): 353-425.

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Fig. 3. The same individuals as in Fig. 1. The infant is reaching out to grasp a leaf.

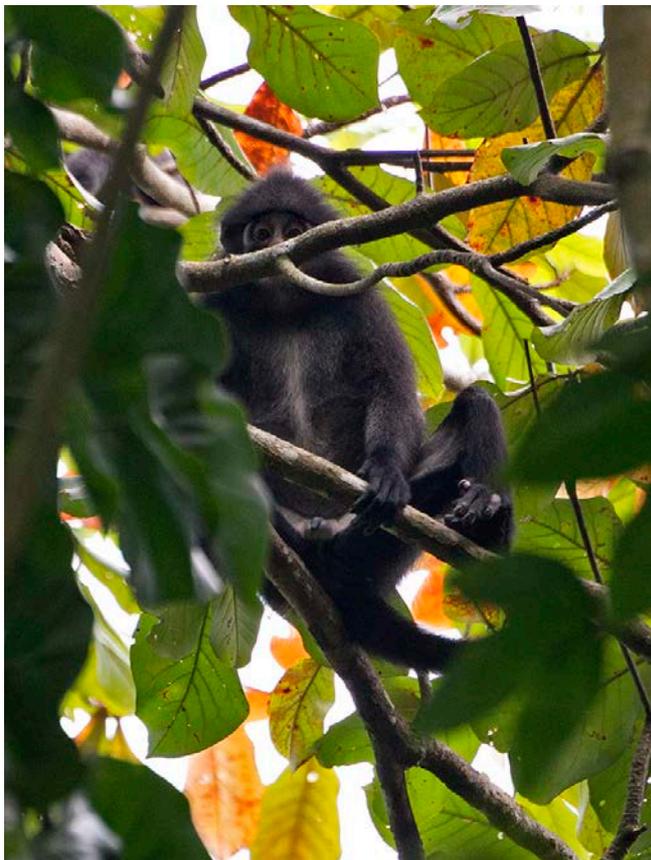


Fig. 4 (left). Frontal view of a male leaf-monkey seen at 1003 hrs. Note the white stripe on his chest and abdomen, and another white stripe on the inside of his thighs, meeting at the groin.

Photographs by Nick Baker