

RAPID ASSESSMENT OF WILDLIFE POPULATION USING CAMERA TRAPS AT ULU MUDA SALT LICKS, KEDAH

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Abstract - Salt lick has been recognised as a crucial natural phenomenon that supplies the necessary minerals to wildlife, especially herbivores. The need of the herbivores to compensate for their lack of sodium intake from plant tissues has made the salt lick a hotspot for wildlife and a suitable site to study the species diversity in a certain habitat. An assessment of the wildlife population was conducted at salt licks in Ulu Muda, Kedah, by using camera traps. A total of 12 camera traps were deployed at six different salt licks from February until March 2022. Twelve species from eight families were recorded at all salt licks. Asian elephant (*Elephas maximus*) was present at all salt licks, followed by wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) at five and Malay tapir (*Tapirus indicus*) at four salt licks. The presence of eight species categorised as Vulnerable (VU) and Endangered (EN) at the salt licks and one endemic species to Northern Peninsular Malaysia further substantiate the urge to monitor all the salt licks closely and to understand the dynamics of wildlife visiting the salt licks. Later, this information can formulate actions toward conserving these hotspots.

Keywords: Ulu Muda, salt lick, camera traps, biodiversity, wildlife