

Jungle Times

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*Photo of the Month Credit:
Richard Burger*

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Leopard Cat MSc

Amanda Wilson

Since March 2020, the leopard cat project has been running smoothly despite the situation with the Movement Control Order due to the Covid-19 pandemic. After weeks of walking in the plantations at night to search and capture cats, four male leopard cats have been successfully collared as of the end of June in two nearby oil palm plantations, two cats in each plantation. Each time we caught a cat, we tried to track it down continuously until we could pretty much predict where the cat is when we go tracking in the morning.



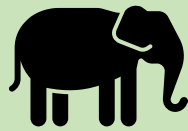
The GPS collar deployed allows us to look into how big of an area the cats use, how they move about and what time they are most active. Juggling with schedules to track four cats each week can be challenging especially when the cats are not able to be tracked down on the day, we schedule to look for them. Walking miles under the scorching sun in plantation areas feels very rewarding when we are able to track down a cat. So far, three of the male cats are pretty much predictable except for one cat which was an unfortunate case. We believed it was predated few days before we finally tracked it down after a month of failed searches. The collar was retrieved back but further analysis on the data needs to be done to determine how, when and what possibly happened to it. It is no surprise that they are susceptible to various attacks from predators such as pythons, monitor lizards and even dogs in the plantation area. Ratu, a female leopard cat that was caught at the end of August last year was also accidentally tracked down while looking for one of the male cats in Pendirosa plantation.

The team is thrilled to know the individual is still alive and thriving. Plans on capturing back Ratu is on the list as she was not able to be tracked down since December 2019 due to the flooding events. The collar was still detectable and seemed to be working fine but is draining out of battery. Fortunately, it may still be attached to Ratu. Retrieving the collar could uncover vital data which could indicate the cat's movement especially during flooding season.



As for the three cats, each individual seemed to rely, on varying degree, for both forest and plantation areas. The areas of the cats' range seemed to be in close vicinity with human activities, but they also rely on forested areas for resting sites. The most recent captured individual surprisingly spend most of its time in a nearby hilly, limestone area with reasonable forest covers despite its rocky terrain. More data is required to compare and identify the variables that influence on the cat's movement and activities. As for this coming month, the team will be going out for another nocturnal survey to start looking for another male cat that we could attach with the GPS collar we were able to retrieve back. Field tracking for the rest of the cat will continue to collect as much data as we could.





Regrow Borneo

UPDATE

DGFC and KOPEL visited the Regrow Borneo sites and it was very clear that much needs to be done before tree planting can begin. The most difficult work is the clearing of the grasses (over one story high) and the vines which choke every tree that have both taken over the entire area. The clearing has to be done by hand which takes a lot of time, energy and money. It was over 3km walking to the sites, through dense shrubs, vegetation and crossing the occasional creek. The day was all worth it though as we also saw the trees planted by KOPEL 20 years ago which have grown successfully, keeping the grasses and vines at bay and returning the area into forest once again.



Team members from Kopel and DGFC have started the hard work at their first 2-ha Regrow Borneo site in Pin Supu Forest Reserve. Clearing the grass and vines is one of the most tedious job of the whole replanting operation.



Photo of the Month!



**A mother Malay forest scorpion carrying her babies.
- Taken by Richard Burger**



Danau Girang Field Centre

Danau Girang Field Centre was opened in July 2008. It is located in the Lower Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary, Sabah, Malaysia.

Danau Girang is owned by the Sabah Wildlife Departments and supported by Cardiff University. Its purpose is to further scientific research with the aim of contributing to long-term conservation projects in the area and develop a better understanding of our environment and the living things we share it with.

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