

Seidensticker, J., Christie, S., Jackson, P. (eds). 1999. Preface. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger Conservation in Human-dominated Landscapes*, pp xv-xix. Cambridge University Press.

Thapar, V. 1999. The tragedy of the Indian tiger: starting from scratch. In *Riding the Tiger: Tiger Conservation in Human-dominated Landscapes*, eds. J. Seidensticker, S. Christie, P. Jackson, pp 286-306. Cambridge University Press.

-
- ¹ Director, Research and Conservation, Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia. <siti@wildlife.gov.my>
- ² Technical Advisor, Tiger Unit, Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia. Contact author <kae@wildlife.gov.my>
-

Black Jungle Cat Sighted in Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve

A rare black jungle cat (*Felis chaus*) has been sighted in Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, by Field Director G.V. Reddy, Valmik Thapar, Shashi Kapoor and R.S. Chundawat.

Later discussion revealed several reserve staff, drivers and guides had seen the cat (or others) several times.

Melanistic jungle cats are extremely rare in India. Three specimens in the Bombay Natural History Society collection came from the Arcadia Tea Estate, Tamilnadu, in 1940; Belgaum, Karnataka, in 1912; and Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh in 1914. Pocock (1939) and Roberts (1977) reported occurrence of melanistic jungle cats in Karachi, Tharparker and Thatta (all now in southern Pakistan).

Melanism is usually found in hot humid areas, but the jungle cats recorded in Pakistan and Gwalior were in dry areas.



An Early Record of Snow Leopard in Myanmar

by David Mallon¹

The far north of Myanmar contains a small part of the Eastern Himalaya, including the country's highest peak Hkakabo Razi (5881m). This area lies within the overall range of the snow leopard (*Uncia uncia*) though it was not listed by U Tun Yin (1967) in his account of the mammals of the country. However this may reflect the fact that few field surveys had been carried out in the area, which is remote and has very difficult access. Blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), an important prey species of snow leopard in much of its Himalayan and Transhimalayan range, was also omitted by U Tun Yin (1967) but has recently been discovered in the Hkakabo Razi area (Rabinowitz 2001; Wikramanayake et al. 1998).

A snow leopard record for Myanmar that seems to have been previously overlooked was provided by Kaulback (1938).

In May 1935 he found snow leopard tracks in snow at an elevation of about 4,350m on the southern side of the Diphuk La pass, close to the northern border of the country, at approximately 97° 20'N, 28° 10'E. Local hunters have also reported seeing and killing snow leopards in northern Myanmar in recent years (Rabinowitz 2001). Kingdon Ward (1934) was offered three snow leopard skins for sale at Gongsar Gumpa (approximately 97°E, 30°N) in SE Tibet not far from the then Burmese border and snow leopards are reported to occur in the adjacent Hengduan Mountains of northwestern Yunnan (Ji 1999). A few records in southeast Tibet and southwest Sichuan Province are shown in Zhang (1997), but the distribution and status of the snow leopard in this southeastern corner of its world range are still poorly-known.

Most potential snow leopard habitat in the mountains of northern Myanmar lies within the Hkakabo Razi National Park (3885 sq km) designated in 1998, based on recommendations by the Wildlife Conservation Society.

CAT NEWS

N° 39 · Autumn 2003

Edited by Peter Jackson

ISSN 1027-2992



IUCN
The World Conservation Union



SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION

CAT SPECIALIST GROUP

29 Lake Close, London SW19 7EG

United Kingdom

Tel: ++44 (20) 89 47 01 59