

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF NEPAL



NAHSON BULLETIN

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Elev. 4400 m

Elev. 4600 m

Photo : Dr. M. K. Chalise

The Snow Leopard (*Uncia uncia*) - A Protected Species of Nepal

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EDITORIAL

Snow Leopard Investigation in Langtang

During February 2002, NAHSON and University of Washington conducted a field training program in Conservation Biology at Langtang National Park (LNP) for park rangers from around Nepal. The training program also involved a two-week field survey of several of the parks endangered wildlife species including the snow leopard. Although there have been reports of snow leopard sighting in LNP in the past, confirmation of its presence has been lacking in recent years. During the survey, fresh snow leopard tracks were discovered in the snow around the river plain at Kyanjing village (elev. ~3750m). This is exciting news as it confirms the currently presence of snow leopard in the park.

The understanding between NAHSON and UW lead collaborative advance activities in close coordination with Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) particularly with the warden and staffs of LNP. The preliminary findings in this reference stimulated both collaborating partners and an approach initiated to concern institution like International Snow Leopard Trust (ISLT) for the technical support and latest update of the species information. The ISLT, Seattle is encouraging to this collaboration and supportive to the days to come. Their support leads us to proceed on the research of snow leopard habitat and ecology in the year 2003 and 2004.

The research could reveal that there are some snow leopards in the upper part of LNP. The information further assured by the collection of fresh tracks; scats and also evidence of periodic killing of livestock particularly yak and horses. Such incidents may lead the threat of retribution (i.e. killing) against the snow leopard. Therefore, conservation educational program in the study area were conducted to popularize the importance of snow leopard among the villagers and livestock herders. Currently the snow leopard investigation is an integral part of collaborative integrated project in LNP to establish a broad database on the status of snow leopard population and its status as well as to explore the related ecology of the habitat area stipulating education to the locals.